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Policy Brief

What is a Nation ? by Ingmar Karlsson

Summary

The article analyzes what do terms such as nation and nationalism mean in the current age. The author provides the reader with an extensive historical background of the topic. He explains the relevant notions from the perspective of various philosophical approaches. The possibility of emergence of a European nation and the challenges waiting on the way to common European identity, are addresses, as well.

What is a nation?

The heart of ethnic nationalism is *völkisch*, a German concept which is difficult to translate. It is based on German romanticism and the German cultural and spiritual reactions to the Enlightenment and the idea of universality derived from the French revolution. *The Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) concept, and the idea that some races were historically bound to certain definite areas, contrasted with this.

The nation is thus seen as a birthmark. People are born as Germans, Swedes, Frenchmen or Turks. People with foreign origins are considered a threat to national unity and purity and to a national culture which defines itself vis-a-vis "the other". The common ancestry is the end of history and has to be protected against everything foreign.

Every people is not only entitled to its own sovereign state but it also owns a historical predetermined area once and for all time for its own exclusive use. Areas once inhabited by a national group should rightfully be returned to them, by force if necessary, and with the expul-

sent inhabitants as the outcome. Anyone leaving this mythical fellowship is stamped forever with the mark of Cain. To this kind of nationalist, it is inconceivable that people with different national backgrounds could live together. Minorities are tolerated at best, but they are and remain second class citizens.

Myths about Race, National Unity and Purity

With few exceptions – Iceland for example – governments and peoples can not demonstrate a long, unbroken, historical continuity and ethnic homogeneity. The cradle of nations does not lie in a mythological obscurity, on the historical battlefields of Troy or Kosovo Polje but between the covers of history books. In many cases, nations were created by romantic nationalistic historians. They began looking for common denominators for a nation to be. Thus, history, language, national soul, "Volkgeist", culture and race came to play their part.

The written language played an important role in creating a nation. Language did not therefore precede the nation. Instead the emerging national state created its national language in

order to legitimize itself. According to a classic definition, the difference between a language and a dialect is that a language has a government and an army.

National conscription, compulsory education and the development of mass media with supra-regional distribution were the channels used by the architects of nations in the 19th century in order to create contact between the centre and the periphery, and borders that appeared natural on the basis of geography, language, ethnicity or religion. In particular, the emergence of national education systems and the mass media contributed to communicating a sense of affinity to a national collective, to extending the cultural horizons and getting away from provincial narrow-mindedness. The creation of national symbols and myths and re-writing of history were also part of the process of nation-building.

A nation can thus be described as an idea searching for a reality which a minority often violently forced upon a majority with standardization as a goal and with an iron glove as an instrument to eradicate previous diversity. Nations were thus constructed and invented. People felt that they primarily belonged to a province, a town or an empire rather than a national state, and they seldom protested when they were transferred from one kingdom to another. Eric Hobsbawm spoke of a mass production of nations in the 19th century, when cultural hallmarks were created for later presentation as authentic and ancient. The "real" aspects needed the "fake" and "foreign" in order to define themselves. The weakness and lack of credibility of the national identities which were proclaimed, meant that they needed polarization in order to take root.

The order of precedence of the factors that characterise a nation has always been subject to discussion - ranging from mutual traditions and collective political awareness, common antecedents, affiliation to a tribe or people, joint territory, customs and language, culture and religion. Objections can be made to all these factors. The

inhabitants of the USA are a nation notwithstanding their widely differing origins. The Swiss are undoubtedly a nation despite their different languages, religions and cultures, while not all those who speak the German language are members of the German nation.

Any attempt to give a content to the concept of the nation must therefore automatically imply a distortion of reality. Karl Popper, the philosopher, stated at the end of the Second World War that:

"It has been said that a race is a collection of people who are united, not by their origin but by a common misconception about their antecedents. Similarly, we can say that a nation is a collection of people united by a common misconception about their history".

The shaping of a nation can be both a progressive and a regressive process. It can come to a definite end, pause but return with renewed strength, as we have seen in the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet empire. In the early 14th century Dante wrote about "Slavs, Hungarians, Germans, Saxons, the English and other nations", describing his own nationality as "Florentine". Nowadays, only the Hungarian, German and English nations remain. The Saxons were absorbed by the last two, for various historical reasons. However, the German nation did not come to include the equally Germanic Friesian, Dutch, Flemish and Luxembourg nations and Dante's Slavs divided into some ten different peoples each of which now considers itself a separate nation.

The supposedly original population of France, the Franks, were only a small proportion of the mixed groups of Romans, Gauls, Celts, Bretons, Normans, Burgundians, etc., who gradually spread outwards from the Ile de France to become present-day France. In the Seine basin alone they probably only represented some ten per cent of the population in the 6th and 7th centuries.

Thus France does not consist of ethnic Franks. Instead, a number of ruling families with a Frankish element, succeeded in forming other immigrant groups into a unit, a group that, until the French revolution, only consisted of the upper echelons of society. Even after the Revolution, the lower strata of the population remained as they were, farmers, peasants, soldiers and craftsmen from Normandy, Provence, Aquitaine, Gascony or Brittany, speaking many languages. During the French Revolution, the inhabitants of Marseilles did not understand the language in which the Marseillaise was sung. The state came first and the national collective was established later within its territorial framework as a result of a gradual cultural standardization. Peasants in France could not be described as Frenchmen until the Third Republic at the end of the 19th century and the Basque, Breton, Corsican and Catalan areas of France still do not feel fully integrated into the French state and nation.

In present-day France, the third of the country situated in the north east is ethnically more Germanic than southern Germany. The north of Bavaria is still today called Franconia, and Charles the Great, or Charlemagne, represents a central chapter in the history of both France and Germany. Frenchmen thus become Germans and Germans French. If we continue even further back in time, the picture changes again.

The French historian Ernest Renan wrote 125 years ago: "There is no doubt that Lorraine once belonged to the German nation, but almost everywhere where inflamed German patriots invoke ancient German rights we can substantiate the existence of even older Celts, and before them the Allophylian people, the Finns and the Laplanders lived there, and before that there were cave people and orangutans before them. There is only one right in such a historical philosophy, and that is that of the orangutans who were unjustly driven out by an evil civilisation."

According to ecclesiastical law, the German nation originally included the peoples of Scandina-

via, Poland and Bohemia. Frederick the Great of Prussia normally conversed in French, and spoke only broken German. The King of Prussia's appeal to his people during the Napoleonic War of 1812 was also made in Sorbian and Polish. When Prussia became the nucleus of a united Germany in 1871, it had more Polish than German inhabitants. The British are not a homogenous nation, either. The Celtic Britons who had not been driven into the western fringes of the country in the 5th century by the Germanic Angles and Saxons were later absorbed by the invaders. A further ethnic mix occurred after the Danish invasion in the 9th century and the Norman Conquest in the 11th century.

The mother tongue of Cavour, the founder of the Italian nation, was French. He had primarily dreamt of an Italy based on a Turin-Milan axis. One of the leaders of the Italian "Risorgimento", Massimo d'Azeglio, said in 1860: "Having created Italy, we must now create Italians." 150 years later, there is still reason to question how deeply rooted the Italian identity is. Many Italians regard present-day Italy as a foreign invention and consider themselves to be primarily Florentines, Venetians, Neapolitans, Bolognese etc. The antagonism between north and south is expressed in the political party Lega Nord which would like to free the industrial and modern north from what it considers to be the poor "African" south.

The Polish and Hungarian nations in the 17th century consisted of nobles who, together with the king, lived off the labour of the peasants and craftsmen. Still in the 19th century, the peasant population living to the north-east of Warsaw spoke a language called Mazowiane, and described themselves as Mazovians. At the beginning of the 19th century, only 40 per cent of the population in Hungary were Hungarians. Their numbers doubled during the next 125 years, while other ethnic groups increased by only 70 per cent. This was not due to their higher nativity but to the fact that the Slovaks, Serbs, Ger-

mans and Jews who moved into the cities from the countryside were transformed into a Hungarian middle class and proletariat. Two of the most common Hungarian family names are Horvat and Toth which in Hungarian means Croat and Slovak.

The wars in former Yugoslavia were not caused by a nationalism with medieval roots but originated from the nationalist ideas that arrived in South-Eastern Europe from the West in the 19th century. Both real and alleged political events from the 14th century onward were cited as justification for cruelty. The conflict between the Serbs and Croats had its origins in the 20th century and began, in military terms, with the establishment of the Croatian Ustashi state in 1941.

The Serbian minority in the Habsburg Empire cooperated politically with the Croats until the breakdown of the double monarchy. The idea of a southern Slav state was first put forward by a Croat, the Catholic Bishop Strossmayer, who, as his name reveals, had Germanic forbears.

An artificially constructed ethnic definition of citizenship allowed the individual no choice. The Serbian war for the creation of a Greater Serbia was an extension of this principle. As long as all Serbs were not gathered in one state, the existence of the Serbian nation was considered to be under threat, and in the same way all Croats had to be incorporated into a new Greater Croatia, according to the Croatian nationalists.

The Serbian and Croatian argument against the Muslims was that "we have always been here while you have been here only since the 15th century". This is not only incorrect but also elicits the next question as to why the 15th century should be selected as the point of departure for territorial claims. Following this method of reasoning, we might ask why the Slavs who arrived in the Balkans in the 6th and 7th centuries should not be sent back to the parts of north-eastern Europe where they came from, and why all Orthodox Christians should not be returned to Byzantine/

Istanbul? According to Serbian and Croatian logic, the former Yugoslavia should be emptied of all people except the Albanians, whose presence can be proved farthest back in time.

Tension in the Balkans rose further with the Greek claimed the sole rights to the name Macedonia. The conflict between Athens and Skopje is another example of how preposterous a nationalism based on historical myths becomes when subject to close inspection. On the Greek side, a straight line is drawn from 2,300 years ago, from Alexander the Great to the present. In the early years of the 6th century Greece was exposed to such a massive Slav immigration in the Middle Ages that the area was often called "Slavina". In the early 19th century, for example, 24 per cent of the Athenian population were Albanians, 32 per cent Turks and only 44 per cent Greeks. Nor was the Greek war of liberation from the Turks in the 1820's an out-and-out Greek war. The Suliote heroes, about which Lord Byron wrote, were Albanians.

Eric Hobsbawm writes about the Greeks who took part in the Greek war of liberation: "The real Greeks who fought for what would be the founding of a new independent national state did not speak classical Greek any more than Italians speak Latin. The glories of Pericles, Aeschylus, Euripides, Sparta and Athens meant nothing to them, and to the extent that they were aware of the history they found it irrelevant. Paradoxically, they were closer to Rome than to Greece (Romaica), i.e., they saw themselves as the heirs of Byzantium. They fought as Christians against the unbelieving Muslims, as Romans against the Turkish dogs."

Macedonia, whose name is the reason for the current dispute, was a divided area at the turn of the century, with different languages, religions, ethnic groups and identities. Hobsbawm gives the following description of the area in about 1870:

"The inhabitants of Macedonia had been distin-

guished by their religion, or else claims to this or that part of it had been based on history ranging from the medieval to the ancient, or else an ethnographic arguments about common customs and ritual practices. Macedonia did not become a battlefield for Slav philologists until the twentieth century, when the Greeks, who could not compete on this terrain, compensated by stressing an imaginary ethnicity... The Greeks later described the inhabitants in the parts of Macedonia that they annexed as "slavophone Greeks". In other words, a linguistic monopoly masked as a non-linguistic definition of the nation".

Thessaloniki, where the surge of Greek nationalism was at its peak with the slogan "Macedonia is forever Greek", had a population in the early part of the 20th century which was almost 60 per cent Jewish, while the Greek and Turkish populations each amounted to 18 per cent. Among these Turks was the young man who would become Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey. Northern Egypt with its quarter of a million Greeks concentrated in Alexandria and large parts of Turkish Asia Minor were substantially more Greek than the part of Macedonia which now belongs to Greece. It was only after the exchange of population with Turkey after the First World War, agreed by treaty and carried out by force, that there was a Greek majority in the area.

The Bulgarians are a mirror image of the Greek case. The Bulgarians were originally a Turkic people who migrated to Eastern Europe in the 7th century, encountering and conquering Slav tribes who had come into the area in the previous century. But while Slavs who migrated to Greece were assimilated, the Bulgarians became Slavs to such an extent that only their name reminds of their origins. There is not a single word in modern Bulgarian which can be traced to the people who gave the language its name.

The Romanian identity provides yet another demonstration that myths are stronger than facts. According to the national Romanian myth, the Romanians are the result of a merging of the

Dacians, a Thracian people, and Latin Romans. The Dacian-Romans disappeared from history when the Roman legions departed in the 3rd century AD, but according to Romanian accounts, they settled in inaccessible mountain regions where they survived invasions by the Teutons, the Slavs, the Magyars and the Tartars, reappearing in the 11th century as the Vlachs, a Latin-speaking nation.

It has been historically proved that these Vlachs, small numbers of whom are now spread all over the Balkans in the form of splinter groups, were assimilated by the Slavs and the Tartars. This Slavic element was particularly emphasized in the early years of the communist era in Romania, and the history books even went so far as to claim that the Dacians were a Slav people. Subsequently, when Ceaucescu began to develop policies which were independent of Moscow, the Slav connection was denied, and the Dacian-Roman theory was emphasized, to the detriment of the substantial Hungarian and German minorities.

The Nation - a Daily Referendum

Thus, nations are not eternally defined entities, but they are in fact created. They are "imagined communities", in the words of the American anthropologist, Benedict Anderson. Nationalism is a two-faced, Janus-like creature. It is synonymous with self-determination for those who have the good fortune to live in a society which has its own history, language, culture and religion, but it can also be xenophobic, intolerant, aggressive, hegemonic and authoritarian, lacking the will and ability to allow others what the nation claims for itself.

The kind of nationalism which we see today, promising a brilliant future on the basis of an illustrious past (often artificially constructed and mysterious) is not a disease which can be cured with quick, radical cures or wished away on common-sense grounds. We must be able to find an antidote to the fear, hatred and insis-

tence on homogeneity on which xenophobia and racism thrive, making it clear that these feelings have nothing to do with nationalism or nationality. If we want to ensure that the nationalists do not monopolize discussion about the "nation", we must apply and employ an open the concept of the nation.

Adherence to a nation must be an act of choice, and not a birthmark. Instead of "ethnos", in which a sense of affinity is based on mythical racial ties of blood, our perception of the national must be a question of "demos" – an open, universalist concept of the nation which focuses on the individual level, in which the nation is based on acceptance by citizens and their belief in a political order which protects their freedoms and rights. The individual can choose to join, but he can also leave the nation. The nation may be ethnically homogenous, but it can also consist of several different peoples, as in the case of Switzerland. National culture is not static or laid down by history, instead it is a dynamic creation based on free and independent citizens.

As a result, the starting point in the fight against racism and xenophobia must be the concept of nationality which was defined by the above mentioned Ernest Renan in his classic address at the Sorbonne on 11 March 1882, entitled "What is a nation?"

As far as Renan was concerned, national affinity was not a question of race, religion or place of birth, but was instead a matter of "a daily referendum".

"A nation's being is based on all individuals having something in common, but also an ability to forget many things. No Frenchman knows whether he is a Burgundian, an Alani or a Visigoth. There are hardly ten families in France who can prove their Frankish origins, and even if they could, evidence of this kind would be incomplete due to the many unknown instances of cross-breeding which put all genealogical systems into such disorder... A nation is a spiritual principle,

with its origins in the deep complexity of history, an intellectual family, but not a specific group shaped by the earth... A nation is a grand solidarity constituted by the sentiment of sacrifices which one has made and those that one is disposed to make again. It supposes a past, it renews itself especially in the present by a tangible deed: the approval, the desire, clearly expressed, to continue the communal life. The existence of a nation is a daily referendum...

However, nations are not something eternal. They have begun, they will end. They will be replaced, in all probability, by a European confederation. But such is not the law of the century in which we live. At the present time the existence of nations happens to be good, even necessary. Their existence is a guarantee of liberty, which would be lost if the world had only one law and only one master."

Renan's words are still relevant 126 years later. National identities and their daily confirmation in the form of national frontiers and national symbols still set clear limits to a sense of European community. The national state is still democracy's principal arena and platform for a political debate in which everyone has common points of reference, plays by the same rules, accepts opponents and is able to achieve compromises, and live with them.

Towards a European nation?

The European identity is often described in a somewhat high-flown manner as having its foundations in antiquity; free thought, individualism, humanism and democracy had their cradle in Athens and Rome. On the other hand, neither Greek nor Roman civilizations can be described as European. Both were Mediterranean cultures with centers of influence in Asia Minor, Africa and the Middle East.

Christianity with its roots in Judaism was also a Mediterranean, non-European religion. Byzantium was a Christian power which marked the

limit to Roman claims of sovereignty, as did a large part of post-Reformation Europe. The result of the schism between Rome and Byzantium was the development of another culture in Russia and south-eastern Europe. Following the Reformation a large part of continental Europe was preoccupied for several centuries with religious wars and rivalry between Protestants and Catholics.

More recently, historians have played down our antique heritage. Instead, European ideals are traced back to the Renaissance and the concept of the individual as the smallest and inviolable element of society. The Enlightenment and the French Revolution contributed with the demand for freedom, equality, fraternity, democracy, self-determination, equal opportunities for all, clearly defined government powers, separation between the powers of church and state, freedom of the press and human rights.

The ideas that are triumphant in Europe today are those of market economy and democracy. By definition, this also includes the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia as European powers. However, Europe does not only represent modernity and tolerance but also religious persecution, not only democracy but also fascist dictatorship - Hitler was the first to use the idea of a European house. The collectivist ideals of Communism, colonialism and racism disguised in scientific terms also have European roots.

European identity cannot be defined on grounds of cultural heritage and history. The explanation is as simple as it is obvious. Economic and political integration between European nation-states has not yet progressed so far that it is possible to speak of common interests.

Edmund Burke's wise words that political order cannot be created at a drawing board but has to emerge gradually thus still has its validity for the European integration process. A stable foundation of legitimacy for the EU will only be achieved when Europeans perceive a European political identity. This does not imply that they

will no longer feel themselves to be Swedes, Finns, Frenchmen, Portuguese, Hungarians, Slovaks or Turks but that the sense of a European common destiny is added to these identities. Even after more than five decades of European integration, this development is still in its infancy and it has been slowed down by the enlargement with 12 new member states.

Nation-states evolved after a long period, often filled with conflict. They are ideological constructions and a national identity is ultimately a political standpoint. A prerequisite for a strong national identity is that citizens have a sense of loyalty to the state because it redistributes social resources and provides education, infrastructure, a legal system etc.

The same prerequisites hold true for the creators of Europe. As in the process that led to the creation of European nation-states, the EU will also be an elite project for the foreseeable future and the European identity an elite phenomenon. To be sure, the technocrats and bureaucrats in Brussels are a new European elite but are they representatives of an European culture or merely an international "civil service" who, with the passing of time, increasingly alienate themselves from the people whose interests they are meant to serve? The problem is that these people arouse negative stereotype reactions among citizens. Eurocrats are not regarded as the first among Europeans but as overpaid bureaucrats interfering in matters that do not concern them.

Efforts to create a European identity

The creation of national symbols and myths and the rewriting of history were as mentioned above part of the process by which European nations were formed. Brussels appears to have had this in mind when in 1984 decision was taken the EC should improve contact with its citizens and, so to speak, create a European identity, centrally and from above.

At a summit meeting in Fontainebleau, the European Council found it "absolutely essential that

the Community fulfils the expectations of the European people and takes measures to strengthen and promote the identity and image of the Community vis-à-vis its citizens and the rest of the world".

The Adonnino Committee was set up for this purpose, with the task of starting a campaign on the theme "A people's Europe". This initiative was based on a quotation from the preamble to the Rome Treaty on "an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe", and on the Tindemans Report of 1975 which said that Europe must be close to its citizens and that a European union could only become reality if people supported the idea.

An outcome of the work of the committee was the decision that the EC should have its own flag. When the flag was raised for the first time at Berlaymont on 29 May 1986, the EC anthem - the "Ode to Joy" from the Fourth Movement of Beethoven's 9th symphony was played for the first time. Thus, by means of a flag and European national anthem, the Union acquired the attributes of a nation-state. A European Day was also established. The choice fell on 9 May, the date on which Robert Schumann held a speech in 1950 that resulted in the first European community, the European Coal and Steel Community.

Consequently, the Adonnino Committee appears to have assumed that a European identity could be created on the initiative of politicians and bureaucrats. In 1988 the European Council decided to introduce a European dimension into school subjects such as literature, history, civics, geography, languages and music. Legitimacy for future integration would be created by invoking a common history and cultural heritage.

Every European people has however its more or less genuine historical myths, experiences and view of history. There is no European equivalent to the Académie Française, Bastille, Escorial, La Scala, Brandenburger Tor or the opening of Parliament at Westminster. There is no European unknown soldier. Common history has been experi-

enced by many as against and not with each other in the great European wars. The main task of the "Europe-makers" cannot therefore be to impose a common identity originating in antique or medieval times on the Europeans but to develop a political self-confidence and ability to act in line with the role of Europe in the 21st century.

A European public opinion must emerge before we can talk of a real European citizenship but at present, regionalism and nationalism undoubtedly have another strength than pan-europeanism. European trade unions do not exist at present, neither other interest groups nor, above all, trans-boundary European parties and a European general public.

The way towards a genuine European identity is thus both difficult and long and more likely to be curbed than speeded up by the enlargement with 12 new members. It has proved difficult enough to bridge the cultural and linguistic differences between Catholics and Protestants, Latins, Germans, Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians in Europe. The task of integrating the Baltic, Slav and Orthodox Europeans and later on a secular Muslim Turkey will be infinitely more difficult. The larger and more heterogeneous membership becomes, the greater the need will be to differentiate between various member states and to create a Europe moving at different speeds and thus the political union, the monetary union, the common security and defence policy will not extend over the same geographical areas. A union of up to 30 members at varying stages of economic development can only function if it is organised along multi-tracks and at different levels.

Cultural diversity - obstacle or prerequisite for a European identity?

European political oratory often maintains that Europe can only be defined through its unique heritage of diversity and lack of conformity and that, paradoxically, its very diversity has been its unifying principle and strength.

However, European linguistic diversity is probably the greatest obstacle standing in the way of the emergence of a European political identity and thus the European democratic project. Multilingual European democracies certainly exist but the prime example, Switzerland, has chosen to remain outside the EU.

A true democracy is non-existent if most of its citizens cannot make themselves understood with each other. Rhetoric apart, not even leading European politicians are today able to communicate with each other without an interpreter, and very few can make themselves understood to a majority of European voters in their own language. There is no public European debate, no European political discourse because the political process is still tied to language.

The question of language is basically one of democracy. The political discussion would be divided between A and B teams with many excluded because of their lack of knowledge of foreign languages if only English and French were the official EU languages. At the same time, the problem of interpreting is becoming insurmountable. Some form of functional differentiation will therefore be necessary, making some languages more equal than others. Although this would have a negative effect on European public opinion in the small member states.

Before the enlargement an average 66 per cent of "the old" EU citizens were monolingual while 10 per cent spoke at least two foreign languages. Ireland is at one extreme with 80 and three per cent respectively, while only one percent of the population in Luxembourg is monolingual and no less than 80 per cent speak at least two foreign languages. In order to function as Europeans and safeguard our interests, we Swedes must become tolerably fluent in at least one other major European language apart from English. Swedish remains the basis of our cultural heritage and domestic political discussions, but in order to play a constructive part in Europe we must develop into

citizens of Luxembourg as far as language is concerned.

A collective political identity is created by sharing experiences, myths and memories, often in contradiction to those held in other collective identities. They are, moreover, often strengthened by the comparison with those that are distinctly different. Not just Robert Schumann, Alcide de Gasper, Jean Monnet and Konrad Adenauer should be counted among the fathers of European integration, but Josef Stalin as well. The Cold War enabled a sense of unity to be mobilized among Western Europeans, but who can play the role of opposition now in order to provide Europeans with a common identity?

There is an inherent danger that Europe will choose to define itself vis-à-vis its surrounding third world neighbours and that the Mediterranean will become the moat around the European fort. The creation of a pan-European identity risks being accompanied by a cultural exclusion mechanism. The insistence from some quarters to include references to Europe's Christian heritage in a European constitution and the resistance to a Turkish membership on religious grounds are examples of these tendencies. The search for a European identity in the form of demarcation against "the others" would lead to a racial cul-de-sac while at the same time the mixing of races continues to rise in Europe. A European identity must therefore be distinctive and all-embracing, differentiate and assimilate at the same time. It is a question of integrating the nations of Europe, with their deeply-rooted national and, often, regional identities and to persuade citizens to feel part of a supra-national community and identity.

Can a continent with 500 million citizens and 23 official languages really be provided with a democratic constitution? In the ideal scenario for the emergence of a European political union, the European Parliament must first be "denationalised" and this assumes a European party system. Secondly, it must have the classic

budgetary and legislative powers. The Council of Ministers must be turned into a second chamber and the Commission should be led by a "head of government" appointed by Parliament.

National parliaments would consequently lose their functions. They would be transformed into regional parliaments and would thus have the same position vis-à-vis Brussels as the parliaments in the 16 federal German states have today. It is easier said than done to abolish the democratic deficit by giving greater powers to the parliament in Strasbourg, because the dilemma of representation versus effectiveness would immediately come to a head. If every parliamentarian represented about 25,000 citizens, as is the case in Sweden, the gathering at Strasbourg with 27 member nations would have to be increased to more than 19,000. If in the name of efficiency, the number was reduced to 500, with constituencies of more than a million citizens and everyone was guaranteed an equal European vote, Luxembourg, Malta and Cyprus would not be represented at all and Sweden would have a maximum of 8 representatives in the European Parliament. It might be capable of functioning but could not by any means claim to represent a European electorate. The democratic deficit would continue.

Europe as an entity can only be achieved with the help of and not against nations and their special characteristics. Therefore the future of the EU rests in the common interests of member states and not in the political will of a European people for the simple reason that such a this does not exist.

Instead regional and national identities will grow in importance in a world that is becoming evermore difficult to oversee and which is evermore rapidly changing. Citizens will be living more and more in a state of tension between several loyalties, their home district, state, nation, Europe and the international community, increasingly required to think globally but act locally. New ancient regimes and new regions are emerging everywhere in Europe. By actively supporting the

process of regionalization, Brussels and individual capitals can show that EU is taking its institutions closer to its citizens and thereby creating greater scope of cultural and linguistic diversity than the nation-states have been capable of doing. By contributing to a new vision - the Europe of diversity and regional government based on subsidiarity - the idea of Europe can be made more comprehensible and attractive.

In this way, the regional identity can strengthen the emerging European identity. Now that regions are increasingly turning to the EU in their fight for resources for regional development and to attract investment, Brussels and the EU will be seen as regionally friendly rather than the national capital.

The nation-state is thus being nibbled at from two directions. At the same time, we will experience a renaissance for nation-states and regions and their gradual merger in a transnational community. Those who support the region and nation must not necessarily reject Europe, but the traditional nation-state with community-based traditions, identity and loyalty will remain indispensable as a strength and source of political stability. Nation-states are therefore essential in order to legitimize a new European order but structural asymmetry, conflicting interests and unexpected courses of development will lead to relations between the nation-state and European integration that are difficult to manage and oversee.

A forced unifying process produces counter reactions in all the member countries. A European identity is possible only where there is a community of interests among the citizens. The single market will increase the mobility over the borders and thereby slowly contribute to the emergence of a European identity but it will be one of many complemented by different national and regional identities such as, for example, Benelux, Ibero-Europe, the Nordic countries and a within the EU reunited Czechoslovakia.

The increased mobility and the growing immigration from non-European countries will strengthen the multicultural component that is indispensable for a new sense of identity. A European 'supranationality' will however first be accepted when there is no hierarchy of national, regional and supra-regional identities but when every individual sees them as self-evident and as part of their daily life. A policy for preserving diversity will thus be a precondition for creating a European identity, that would not replace the national identities but instead create support and strength for political institutions that are neither national nor the framework of a European superstate.

The hitherto clear links between state and nation will thus grow looser. European integration from this point of view will not mean that a new superstate will appear but that power is spread out. Cultural identities will remain rooted at the national level but will at the same time spread further down to ever more distinctive regional identities. We will have neither a new European superstate nor sovereign nation-states. Nations will not disappear but we will have nations with smaller states and national cultures with softer outer casings.

Cultural nations will thus become divorced from a territory. People will have a sense of belonging to a special area and its cultural and political history but this area need not necessarily be linked to a nation-state with defined territorial boundaries. The European political identity could emerge in this way while at the same time leaving the cultural national or regional identity intact while European diversity will not only remain but even flourish. The democratic deficit can never be abolished unless this kind of development takes place, nor would the project of a European Union be realized.

With the enlargement the European Union will in the foreseeable future become a community of states without a precedent – something more than a loose association of states but not a federal state

in the classical sense. It will to quote Jacques Delors be "an unidentified political object".

At the same time, Europe is moving towards the confederation which Renan referred to. The classic national state was born in the 19th century, in a world which was characterized by self-sufficiency and a high degree of economic independence, very little spatial and social mobility and limited communications with others. As a result, the state and its territory constituted an entity which was self-sufficient and finitely defined, not just in its national ideology, but also in reality. As a result of economic integration, mass tourism, refugee movements, satellite TV, etc, this epoch has long since passed.

National frontiers have not only become more open; they are being steadily eaten away and diversity within them is increasing. As was the case in the process in which European national states developed, the European Union will continue to be an elite phenomenon. The lack of interest which can still be seen in elections to the European Parliament shows that there is a long way to go. There is lukewarm media interest, the candidates are often unknown and the poll figures are low. What drives people to the ballot box is more dissatisfaction with domestic politics than a sense of participation in a European political process.

Hence Europe is neither a "communication-community" nor an "experience-community", if we try to anglicize two German concepts. Nevertheless both these factors are essential for the development of a collective political identity. An identity of this nature is built up on the basis of shared experience, myths and memories – often in opposition to similar elements in other collective identities, as mentioned before.

Therefore the principal assignment for the "makers of Europe" cannot be to try to give Europeans a common identity based on a distant past in antiquity or the Middle Ages, but instead to develop political self-confidence and

an ability to take action which corresponds to Europe's role in the next century. Hence, a European identity will not be established by central directives from Brussels or from the capitals of member states, or conjured up at seminars or conferences. Instead, it will arise because citizens of the individual European states feel that they, personally, have something to gain from integration and that, as a result, they say yes to the EU in their daily referendum.

Supranationality will not be accepted until there is a situation in which national, regional and supranational identities are no longer set in a hierarchical order. Everyone must feel that all these identities are self-evident and part of their daily lives. As a result, a policy based on preserving diversity will be a prerequisite for creating European identity which neither should nor can replace a national identity, but which is able to support and strengthen political institutions which are neither national nor the framework for a European superstate.

Questions which involve cultural policy, education and historically based social welfare systems and values must therefore continue to be the concern of the national state. This involves rendering unto the national state what is the national state's, and to the EU what is the EU's, that is to say a security and foreign policy structure, the single market, and a common refugee and immigration policy. The relationship between a European identity and national identities might then take the form of a foreign and security policy, in a broad sense, which lays the foundations for a common European political identity. This means a "nation" in Renan's sense, in which the individual can feel a political affinity irrespective of his ethnic or geographical origins, without therefore needing to feel part of a European "Volk" or of a European "national civilization".

This will loosen up the historical links between the state and the nation. In this perspective, European integration does not mean the emergence of a new European superstate, but instead a disper-

sion of power. Cultural identity will continue to be based on the national level, but it will also be disseminated downwards to increasingly clearly defined regional identities. We will neither have a new European superstate nor sovereign national states. Nations will not disappear. Instead, we will have nations with fewer state features, and national cultures with softer shells.

At the national level, the German national concept would be retained, but in its original Herdian form, in which a nation does not necessarily have to be expressed in the form of a state. Johan Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) was both a nationalist and an internationalist, who stressed the concept of cultural patriotism. No people was superior to any other. Resting on secure and solid cultural foundations, each nation could contribute its special characteristics and cultural achievements to an international community of nations.

If we are to achieve this, a narrow nationalism must be replaced by a healthy patriotism characterized by five patriotic commandments which Michael Mertes, Chancellor Kohl's close assistant formulated in an article in *Frankfurter Allgemeine* 20 years ago:

- You shall respect the patriotism of other nations as much as you wish your own patriotism to be respected by them.
- You shall be a loyal citizen of the country to which you belong by birth or by free choice.
- You shall accept and respect your neighbour as a compatriot irrespective of his ethnic, cultural and religious background, if he is prepared to be a loyal citizen of the country to which both of you belong.
- Your love for your country must never be divided from your love for liberty.
- You shall therefore defend your religious freedom of religion and freedom of thought, and that of your neighbours, and resist all attempts to force you or your neighbour into a conflict of loyalties between your civic and human duties.

- You shall not make an idol of your own country, for there are universal values above all nations, including yours.

Ambassador (R) Ingmar Karlsson

Ingmar Karlsson is a member of the High Advisory Board at the Global Political Trends Center. He graduated from the School of Economics, Gothenburg, and has a BA degree from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden in Economics. He also holds the degree, Doctor of Divinity from Lund University and Doctor of Political Science hc at the University of Vaxjo. He is currently a Senior Fellow at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Lund. From 1967 onwards, he has been employed at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After working at the Swedish embassies in Bogota, Vienna, Alger, Damascus, Beijing and Bonn, he became Ambassador and Head of policy planning at the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1996 - 2001, he served as an Ambassador in Prague and Bratislava. Between 2001 and 2009, he was the Consul General in Istanbul. Ambassador Karlsson has published 15 books on a variety of subjects including Turkey-EU Relations, Kurdish question, Islam and Europe.

Emekli Başkonsolos Ingmar Karlsson

Ingmar Karlsson, Küresel Siyasal Eğilimler Merkezi (Global Political Trends Center - GPoT) Yüksek Danışma Kurulu üyesidir. Göteborg Ekonomi Okulu'ndan mezun olduktan sonra, İsveç'te bulunan Göteborg Üniversitesi'nde Ekonomi üzerine yüksek lisansını gerçekleştirmiştir. Kendisi, ayrıca Lund Üniversitesi'nde ilahiyat dalında doktora derecesine sahiptir. 1967 yılından itibaren İsveç Dışişleri Bakanlığı'nda çalışmaya başlamıştır. Bogota, Viyana, Cezayir, Şam, Pekin ve Bonn'da bulunan İsveç büyükelçiliklerinde çalıştıktan sonra, İsveç Dışişleri Bakanlığı'nda Politika Planlama Başkanı ve Büyükelçi ünvanını almıştır. 1996-2001 yılları arasında, Prag ve Bratislava'da Büyükelçilik yapmış; 2001-2009 yılları arasında ise İsveç'in İstanbul Başkonsolosu olmuştur. Kendisi, halen Büyükelçilik ve İsveç Dışişleri Bakanlığı Politika Planlama Başkanı görevlerini yürütmektedir. Büyükelçi Karlsson, Türkiye - AB ilişkileri, Kürt sorunu, İslam ve Avrupa dâhil olmak üzere birçok konuda 15 tane kitap yayımlamıştır.

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Global Political Trends Center (GPoT) was established as a research unit under the auspices of Istanbul Kultur University in 2008.

GPoT Center aims to produce innovative and distinctive policy recommendations by analyzing the contemporary trends in regional and international politics.

GPoT Hakkında

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