

The Sociologists' Struggle for a European Identity



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Contents

1. Abstract	1
2. Abbreviations	2
3. Introduction	2
3.1. European Culture and Western Civilization	2
3.2. Social Europe	4
3.3. Cosmopolitan Europe	5
3.4. German Europe	6
4. Concluding remarks	7
5. References	8



Abstract

In recent years, the European identity has been widely researched by sociologists who take an interest in mass and elite identification with the European project. In this article it is argued that the European identity is not only a research object for sociologists interested in identification: it is also their creation. Sociologists theorize and shape a European identity in, by and through their writings. The main objective of this article is to narrate the history of European identity making in sociology. In the first part, it is argued that these two different, clashing approaches to the European identity—namely, the civilizational and the cultural approaches—can be discerned in sociological works throughout European history. They persist in the post-war period when the European identity increasingly comes to depend on the EU. The objective of the second part is to show that the post-war identities 'Social Europe', 'Cosmopolitan Europe' and more recently, 'German Europe' are equivocal. It is found that they are interpreted differently depending on whether sociologists endorse the civilizational or the cultural approach.

Keywords: Civilization; Culture; European identity; Sociology; Sociological discourse; EU

Abbreviations: EEC: European Economic Community; ECJ: European Court of Justice; ECHR: European Court of Human Rights

Introduction

In sociological studies on the European identity, the European identity tends to be strongly associated with the EU, as the main contemporary promoter of the European integration process, to such an extent that Europe and the EU have almost become equivalents [1,2]. The reasoning is that the integration of European member states presupposes a shared or overarching European identity. In other words, it is presumed that the identity implicitly or explicitly organized by the EU is in fact the European identity, fully compatible with the national identity [3-5]. In the case of EU-oriented European identity research (typically public opinion research), the issue is then not so much to find out what it means to be European, but, instead, to determine the percentages of people who consider themselves as European and identify themselves with the European project [6]. In EU-oriented studies that presume that the European identity is an elite construct, the issue is to ascertain the patterns of interests, values and ideas of the educated, owners, managers, and professionals who benefit from EU policy and governance (the so-called 'Eurostars') [6,7]. Such research typically tries to identify, and problematize, the distance between the European elite and the rather un-European masses that are alienated from the EU [2]. The European identity, it is here argued, is not only a research object for sociologists interested in identification with the European project: it is also their creation. That is to say, sociologists who study the European identity do not study an external, a pre-existing ready-made and fixed European identity that can be studied as a 'world out there'. Instead, they also theorize and shape a European identity in, by and through their writings. In fact, the sociological engagement with the European integration project seems to be fairly recent. Saurugger et al. [8] note that 'the past few years have seen the burgeoning of social approaches to the European Union', while Favell et al. [9] observe that 'sociology is finally being called for by mainstream studies of the European Union (EU) seeking new inspiration.' Hort [10] argues that 'the sociology of Europe and its various movements and unions is still in its infancy' and sees its value mainly as 'an attempt to overcome the divisions within European studies.' Sociologists' engagement with the European identity and the sociological enquiry into the social and cultural fabric of European integration, on the other hand, is longstanding and much older than the field of European integration studies. Parsons [11] emphasizes that 'the roots of sociology as a science are deep in Europe'. In other words, the genesis and transformation of sociology appear to be tied up with the becoming of Europe.

Sociology, having grown out of European humanism, with its powerful classicist attachment to ancient Greek and Roman literature, the European enlightenment and romanticism, can be understood as a guardian of the European identity. This is certainly how Georg Simmel

understood the sociological enterprise when he defined the latter as the striving for the realisation of Europe [12]. Europe, for Simmel, has always been 'the locus of spiritual values which the contemporary cultured man reveres' [13]. In his *Idea of Europe* (1915), Simmel claimed that the European identity is first of all manifested in 'cultured men' like Goethe and Beethoven, 'the creatures of "Europe"' as he calls them. In a similar fashion, Charles de Gaulle would later invoke Dante, Goethe and Chateaubriand as exemplary Europeans [5]. The idea that Europe is reflected in the opinion of the majority or of the political-administrative elites would have been sheer absurdity to these men.

The main objective of this essay is to narrate the history of European identity making in sociology. That is to say, the attempt will be made to retrace the implicit and explicit sociological theorizations of the European identity in the works of contemporary sociologists. Their underlying commitments will also be the focus of attention. Such 'sociological history of ideas' does not pretend to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative of the variety of meanings that sociologists attribute to 'Europe' and the 'European identity'. Not all sociologists endorse Simmel's romanticism and his icons of European culture; not all of them identify Europe as 'the locus of spiritual values'. In fact, only an interpretive sociologist, who believes that there is such a thing called the 'spirit' of Europe and who is committed to Kultur, subscribes to such a view. The latter runs counter to the vision of Europe as a civilizational or technological construct. In the first part of this article, it is argued that these two different, clashing approaches to the European identity—namely, the civilizational and the cultural approaches—can be discerned in sociological works throughout European history. They persist in the post-war period when the European identity increasingly comes to depend on the EU. The objective of the second part is to show that the post-war identities 'Social Europe', 'Cosmopolitan Europe' and more recently, 'German Europe' are equivocal. It is found that they are interpreted differently depending on whether sociologists endorse the civilizational or the cultural approach.

European culture and western civilization

The European identity is a political and cultural construct that develops in the context of European integration of different kingdoms, duchies, principalities and cities. The Carolingian Empire was the first political form in which a binding European identity was created to integrate the west and east Frankish kingdoms. The European identity not only was a uniting force, but it also set the Carolingian Empire apart from its rivals, which included the Avars, Normans, and Moors—the non-European [4]. The European identity became an issue when Napoleon dissolved the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. Napoleon sought to reconstruct a new, post-aristocratic and post-Christian Europe of nations. His new empire, he hoped, would integrate Central and Eastern Europe, including Russia, on the basis of a new European identity that was rooted in the Enlightenment values of the French Revolution [14]. Goethe, Simmel's romanticist

icon of European culture, it is reported, supported this adventurous enterprise. He welcomed Napoleon amidst the chaos of death, disease, starvation and German humiliation brought about by Napoleon's armies. Napoleon was, for Goethe, the promethean hero, who, after Charlemagne, had inaugurated a new European era. Writers like Goethe and Friedrich Hölderlin imagined and hoped that Napoleon's victory, which symbolised the defeat of the old, oligarchic, anti-Hellenic Germany, would bring a new Hellenic Frankish, or Franco-German, soil. In this new world, they hoped, the German poetic genius would help create the new homo Europæus. Intellectual centre were thought to be the central institutions of the new European identity making. Such expectation was well-founded given the fact that the European university is 'regarded historically as the European institution par excellence' [15]. Inspired by Plato's Academy and the Hellenic culture of learning or paideia, the European university arose in Christian Europe. In 1088, the first university of Christian Europe was established in Bologna, in the Holy Roman Empire, to spread academic culture—a culture that was further spread, as George Steiner points out, via the more inclusive coffeehouses and salons, popular spaces for intellectual discussion and artistic expression [16]. The newly founded University of Berlin (1810) was expected to make an important contribution to the Bildungsideal, the German, romanticist version of the Hellenic paideia, as a way of turning the German middle classes into Europeans, in the sense of providing them access to European culture, to the culture of the mind [17]. Throughout the centuries, the academy has been regarded as the guardian of the European identity from a Bildung of paideia perspective, of course. Goethe, a 'creature of "Europe"', as Simmel puts it, misinterpreted Napoleon's project of European integration. Goethe was misled by the French Emperor's admiration of Voltaire (whom Goethe had translated). He, however, did not realise that Napoleon's united Europe would not be the dreamed cultural or literary project (expanding the Republic of Letters), which would inaugurate a new European renaissance. Instead, European integration was a civilizational program: Napoleon was a military, a man of organization, administration, strategy, and technology. Engineering, mastery and materialism rather than by poetry, creativity and idealism were to guide his European integration. The first French sociologists, positivists like Henri de Saint-Simon and August Comte, therefore also equated the quest for Europe with the Napoleonic project of organizing a civilization based on enlightenment principles. For them, Europe, the new Europe that Napoleon had inaugurated, was a new technological civilization. In their views, the new European civilization was a welfare-producing machine in which anarchy, violence, and intellectual and religious discord would be things of the past. 'Sociology', a term coined by Comte, was thought of as the post-metaphysical science of social reform that would provide the knowledge for the engineering of civilization after the French Revolution.

The technological and socialist utopia was the nightmare scenario for the first German sociologists who embraced the

enchanting European ideals of Bildung. These interpretive sociologists—men like Ferdinand Tönnies, Georg Simmel, Ernst Troeltsch, Max Weber and Max Scheler—were, like Goethe, more concerned with Europe's cultural decadence than with social reform or the lessening of the sufferings of the uncultured masses. Against this particular idea of European integration as Napoleonic civilisation, they defended the German notion of Kultur [18]. For them, the post-Revolution French ideal of civilisation had strong ideological (both socialist and liberal) and imperialist connotations. Western civilization typically implied superiority vis-à-vis inferior (often labelled unenlightened) peoples, like peasants, Jews, or East Europeans, which legitimated colonization and subjugation of those 'hardly European' deemed less civilized [14]. Given their awareness of the German Drang nach Osten, as well as the Napoleonic project (and defeat in Russia), the German sociologists, often Jews themselves, typically considered Western civilization as synonymous with Eurocentrism, colonialism and imperialism. European culture, on the other hand, for such sociologists, referred to the humanization. Commitment to higher, typically Hellenic, ideals was the mark of such culture [18]. European culture referred to the more profound depths of society, in particular to the intellectual, aesthetic and erotic spheres that Weber [19] distinguished. Weber, in his *Science as a Vocation*, defended European culture which he associated with the Humboldt University—against the debilitating processes of civilizational demands, including technological determinism, compulsory division of labour and specialization, standardization, project work, and team work. While Western civilization bore a materialist, technological and administrative character, European culture embodied the *esprit de finesse*.

During the Great War, the German sociologists witnessed that the culture of Goethe and Beethoven appeared powerless in the face of the uprooted masses in technological civilization. When the first German sociology chairs were established, in the Weimar Republic (1918-1933), the sociological project was one of cultural revitalization after barbarism. In the German universities, committed to the Bildungsideal, sociology was meant to shape a European identity for the new Germany, which would be inspirational enough to resist the socialist and fascist temptations. After the collapse of the Weimar Republic, and after another defeat in a world war, the German sociologists Weber [20] narrated witnessed, in despair, the final breakdown of the ideal of the university that they had defended. The trampling of the new European identity meant the victory of sheer technological, military and administrative forces over erotic vitality, potency and creativity. Various disenchanting European intellectuals, including Klaus Mann, left with the wrecks of a defeated Europe now squeezed between two world powers, preferred to take their own lives rather than to live in a thoroughly degenerate Europe. Others, yet, did not give up the hope of resurrecting another new European culture from the ashes. This is the hope from which the European Union was eventually born.

Prior to the world wars, the Napoleonic challenge had been primarily to supersede the Holy Roman Empire and the Carolingian legacies, and to create a new Europe based on enlightenment values and the legacies of the French Revolution. After the Shoah, and under the Russian threat, the old, Carolingian challenge of integrating the western and eastern Franks, France and Germany, arose once again [21,4]. The creation of a common market for coal and steel, placed under a supranational authority and including six member states, was meant to make another war between Germany and France materially impossible. The European Economic Community (EEC) brought about more and enlarged European integration, including three new member states in 1973. The EEC, as the historian Judt [21] emphasizes, was 'a Franco-German condominium' in which the West German desire to be part of post-war Europe was fulfilled at a high price (financing European integration) without complaining. The Franco-German governors of Europe, Brandt and Pompidou, Giscard and Schmidt, Mitterand, Delors and Kohl, sought to shape a Europe of citizens and workers, that is, a Europe that would not privilege a particular elite of corporate, bankers, politicians and civil servants [23]. In contemporary sociological researches, this new, EU-based, European identity has been referred to as 'Social Europe' and 'Cosmopolitan Europe'. Conversely, 'German Europe', widely mentioned in sociological discourses today, refers to the regress of this Cosmopolitan Europe. In German Europe, the German state, no longer dependent on the French state, becomes an imperialist actor, colonizing other member states. Though these various labels for the EU-based European identity may have been coined in specific contexts, it is clear that sociologists interpret them differently. Hence, the same labels for the European identity may refer to conflicting understandings of what it means to be European. These are now discussed in the next sections.

Social Europe

The contrast between Western civilization and European culture is especially manifest in the sociological discussion of Social Europe. Sociologists who, similarly to Napoleon, identify Europe as a post-Christian civilizational project have a strong tendency to theorize Social Europe as a new stage in the development of a European post-metaphysical civilization. Along this line, the welfare state and social policy replace the Church and *caritas* of 'Christian Europe'. In such a view, Social Europe is the engine of social reform, which, if not overtly socialist as the St. Simonians and Comte had hoped for, at least mitigates the 'side-effects' of capitalism in the development of a technological civilization of plenty. In this conception of Europe, the welfare state, ultimately the product of social science is the key European institution. It promotes full employment, income redistribution, social rights and civil society dialogue, and the protection of workers against poverty, unemployment, job insecurity, and dehumanizing working conditions. Giddens [24] & Giddens et al. [25] assert that Social Europe is Europe's 'jewel in the

crown', whereas poverty and unemployment is 'the scourge of Europe' [26]. Similarly, Mau et al. [1] argue that 'the European welfare state has proved to be one of the most important social innovations of the last century'. Berend [27] claims that 'the greatest historical achievements of post war Europe were the creation of the European Union and the welfare state.' It is through the EU and the welfare state, the backbone of Social Europe, that the member states have managed to resist the totalitarian and military alternatives for a peaceful and prosperous civilization.

For Giddens, as well as for sociologists like William Outhwaite [28], Mau et al. [1], Roche [29] and Beck [30], the (West) European welfare state program is the core element of the post-war European identity. Technology and industry are, in this Europe, indispensable. Indeed, the 'common economic prosperity' [26] which Social Europe is meant to promote is achieved through industry and technology. Social Europe refers to the mechanism for redistributing the common economic prosperity, in line with the solidarity principles. Beck [30] claims that these principles include fairness, equalization (protection of the weaker), reconciliation of former enemies (like France and Germany), and non-exploitation. Such principles are designed to counter the merciless capitalism and rivalry for natural resources that tears Europe apart. The principles of Social Europe constitute a collective identity that sets Europe apart from other technological civilizations, including Russia and America. Sharing risk through social insurance, limiting economic and social inequality, promoting workers' rights, and cultivating a sense of mutual responsibility or solidarity across Europe, all this 'gives the European societies their special quality', Giddens [25] claims. This sets Europe apart from American-style capitalism. Hence, not only the fear of working-class radicalism and Russian-style communism [31], but also 'anti-Americanism' is an important ideological orientation in the making of Social Europe [32].

From a civilizational perspective, the key feature of the post-war European identity is enlarged solidarity or interconnectedness, characterized by overarching (European) unity in (national, regional and local) diversity [28,7,1,26]. It is a new European identity that, in many ways, is post-Enlightenment. It breaks with the modern (or West European) pattern of sovereignty and nation-building. Sovereign statehood and nationalism have torn Europe apart, eventually resulting in what is believed to be the most radical collapse of European culture, namely, the Shoah. As Eder [33] argues, Social Europe, as a post-war European identity, presumes the Shoah, and the corresponding disillusionment with the Enlightenment narrative that is found in Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, a key text for post-war sociology. Social Europe, Eder [33] explains, is 'the story of a solidary people capable of taming Leviathan and Behemoth'. Giddens [26] argues that via sovereignty transfers and the creation of European institutions, member states actually increase rather than surrender their sovereignty, in what he calls

'sovereignty+'. Member states give up formal sovereignty, as a legal concept, but in terms of real sovereignty they gain. Indeed, each member state, being part of a bigger whole, is now empowered to confront and regulate forces of global capitalism that are not confined to national boundaries. To make Social Europe work, and make it survive financial crises, Giddens explains, more sovereign power for the EU is required.

Other sociologists have identified the challenge of creating a post-war European identity as a challenge to stimulate cultural revitalization after the annihilating violence of the world wars. For sociologists who share Simmel's commitment to European Kultur, the European identity cannot be primarily defined by economy or labour or by sovereignty transfers, but instead refers to European culture. Such sociologists tend to criticize Social Europe as a civilizational construct, because such a Europe is held together by bureaucracies that stifle and discourage intellectual and artistic creativity and, ultimately, as Weber had foreseen in his *Science as a Vocation*, destroy the academy. Bauman [34] articulates this viewpoint when he argues that 'the future of political Europe hangs on the fate of European culture'. Likewise, Beck [30] voices a typical German sociological defence of European culture when he declares that 'without its values of freedom and democracy, without its cultural traditions and dignity, Europe is nothing'. European culture, however, is not the culture of the 'masses' in need of employment. And it is not the culture of the 'Eurostars' who have a stake in the bureaucratic apparatus of Social Europe. Instead, European culture is preserved and created by Europe's artists and intellectuals, who are connected to a rich diversity of European languages, local traditions and social autonomies. Defined as a Building project, Social Europe must be understood as a complex of cultural policies, meant to stimulate cultural revitalization [35].

Cosmopolitan Europe

In contrast with Social Europe, Cosmopolitan Europe does not refer to the phenomenon of a socially or culturally distinctive Europe, but, instead, refers to the globalization of European integration. The cosmopolitan European identity is a post-nationalist binding force to integrate Europe and the world society, while it sets the EU apart from its more nationalist rivals, including America, Russia and China. Hence, as Baban [36] argues, as nationalism and cosmopolitanism are rivals, modern nation-state building, which developed along nationalist lines, cannot be the model for cosmopolitan integration. As a civilizational construct, Cosmopolitan Europe is organized for addressing the new global challenges of the world society beyond the borders of the EU, including issues of ecology, migration and demographic issues. Cosmopolitan Europe is an EU organized for developing into a global force, invested with the sovereign power that would enable it to tackle global social problems. Beck et al. [37] emphasize that Cosmopolitan Europe is a 'cosmopolitan empire' that

'is based entirely on sovereignty'. For Beck et al. [37], the key feature of Cosmopolitan Europe is the political-administrative transformation of national sovereignty into 'cosmopolitan sovereignty' [37].

Ultimately, Cosmopolitan Europe, for Beck et al. [37], is the organization of a globalized solidarity and reconciliation of enemies beyond the nation and beyond Europe. 'The European miracle is the reconciliation of traditional enemies!', Beck et al. [37] explain. The making of a cosmopolitan European identity is to produce this miracle of reconciliation after centuries of intermittent wars, through the progressive furthering of the enlargement process. The EU and Social Europe started with the reconciliation of France and Germany. Cosmopolitan Europe can generate new peace projects, like the reconciliation of Greece and Turkey, Germany and Russia, Serbia and Kosovo, Israel and Palestine. Cosmopolitan expansion of the EU must be understood as a peace-making project in conflict areas, like the Balkans, that would otherwise collapse in a state of war, impoverishment, despotism and barbarism, so the argument goes. Given the history of war and the many conflicts in Europe, Cosmopolitan Europe was always going to expand from the original rich six to today's twenty-eight members [38]. 'Cosmopolitan integration', Beck and Grande emphasize, is made possible through tribunals, like the Nuremberg Tribunal, and the memory of the Shoah and other genocides. Richard Münch, quite similarly, identifies the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which rules on EU law (and human rights cases), as a central organ of cosmopolitan sovereignty. For Morris [39] and Johnson [40], the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) is 'the conscience of Europe' [40]. Morris argues that through the ruling of the ECHR, a 'cosmopolitan paradigm' in judicial interpretation is instituted, which is particularly relevant for judging asylum seekers' cases. The cosmopolitan paradigm prioritizes the human rights of stateless persons over state concerns and national interests, while it transfers national sovereignty to transnational court rulings.

Habermas [41] argues that Cosmopolitan Europe is grounded in the modern European legacy of international law. Cosmopolitan Europe, for him, is a post-national model of European integration made possible by the extension of the European political culture of democracy and rule of law beyond the sovereign nation-state [42]. Delanty [43] emphasizes that this post-national model means that European integration 'is best understood as a transformation of nations rather than entirely as a supranational process.' Hence, as Delanty [43] explains, 'European identity can be conceived of as an Europeanization of identities, that is, an internal transformation of national identities. The result is a pluralisation of Europe into different national projects.' The cosmopolitan European identity, accordingly, entails a shift in national self-understanding and the problemization of Europe's cultural and political subjectivity [43]. Cosmopolitan Europe, from this angle, is a reflexive problematization of the European identity, including a

contestation of the cosmopolitan European identity. If there is to be a Cosmopolitan Europe, the argument goes, and then the European identity must be open, impossible to be reified by the EU, as an instrument for European integration purposes. As Rumford [44] formulates this argument, 'if Europe is to become more cosmopolitan, it will be because it remains open to questions of identity and its relation to the rest of the world, and because it recognizes the multiplicity of cosmopolitanisms that are possible, and also the plurality of Europes that this presupposes.' As a post-Shoah project of cultural revitalization – Bildung for the global era Cosmopolitan Europe can be understood as a new, more open, relation between Europeans and their strangers. From this cultural angle, the cosmopolitan European identity is one that includes the stranger and the appreciation of exotic, or perhaps erotic, strangeness (otherness), to the point that the distinction between the European and the stranger is dissolved. Amin [45] argues that Cosmopolitan Europe is a 'land of strangers'. The new Europe, he argues, is, a 'migrant space'. Europe is now home to millions of people from non-European backgrounds and affiliations of global reach, to such an extent that inclusion, recognition and appreciation of migrants, through a cosmopolitan ethic of hospitality, has come to define the cosmopolitan European identity. Cosmopolitan European integration is organized around the inclusion of the migrants. The new interactions not clashes of civilizations but dialogues between old and new Europeans of all kinds pave the way for new cultural revitalizations. Demonizing the alleged strangeness of the migrants, by contrast, not uncommon in nationalist populism, Euro scepticism and Islamism, is anti-European, from such a viewpoint [46].

German Europe

Since the Euro zone crisis, from the moment that it has been unmasked that the Greek state had been lying about its budget deficit, therein supported by banks like Goldman Sachs, to hide its excessive debts [27], Cosmopolitan Europe has been torn apart and regressed into what Beck [30] has labelled 'German Europe'. In German Europe, impoverishment in Southern Europe and prosperity in Germany are two sides of the same coin, while the political and economic fate of indebted member states has come to depend on decisions taken in the Bundestag [30]. Keith [46] points out that such impoverished member states have come to resemble a German periphery, a set of developing economies, or new colonies that are to be taught Prussian discipline and German orthodoxy by the Merkel government who holds the real power. In the EEC, German power had been limited, especially by French political initiatives. During the Euro zone crisis, it appears that France has become politically impotent, to the point that the destiny of European integration has come to depend on German sovereign power to resolve European crises [47]. Albert Brackmann, professor of medieval history, had declared, in a booklet for the SS, in 1935, that 'the German people were the only bearers of civilization in the East, and as the main power in Europe, defended Western civilization and

brought it to the uncivilized nations' quoted in [14]. The civilizational orientation of German Europe is not dissimilar to the one formulated by Brackmann, as Balibar suggests [31]. Sociologists use the term 'German Europe' critically, to refer to the collapse of Cosmopolitan Europe. "'German Europe" is a non-starter', Giddens [26] stresses. German Europe, he warns, triggers further European disintegration and further divisive resentments – a reminder of fascist legacies. Giddens [26] declares that the European citizenry has to reclaim its jurisdiction from the Bundestag. German Europe, Giddens argues, is the product of the failure to transfer national sovereignty. The Euro zone crisis reveals that a powerless EU lacks the real sovereignty to transform itself into a federal, transnational political community that could actually resolve the crisis as a European issue. In German Europe, Giddens [26] explains, Europe has a German face, namely the face of Merkel, the only leader Europe has left in a failed Cosmopolitan Europe in which the President of the European Council, first Herman van Rompuy and now Donald Tusk, is anonymous and does not have the authority 'to speak for the EU'. For Giddens [26], 'a federal solution, backed by greater legitimacy and leadership capacity on an EU level, is the only feasible way forward.'

For Beck, German Europe signifies the failure to generate cosmopolitan sovereignty and the corresponding prioritization of European tribunals and courts. As a result, the EU lacks the power and authority to reconcile East and West, North and South: 'I am not surprised that people in Spain or Greece should protest when faced by a system that produces unfairness and inequality to such a degree and forces the weakest to shoulder the costs that have been generated by a finance system which has run amok', Beck [30] notes. The Eastern and Southern European member states are left defenceless in German Europe, when confronted with the brutal forces of global capitalism [38,48]. According to Streeck [49], such destruction is the logical outcome of the institution of the currency union. Economic and monetary integration has often been presented as the becoming of Europe. Streeck [49], however, echoes Ralf Dahrendorf's critique of the currency union that he had formulated in 1995: 'the currency union is a grave error, a quixotic, reckless and misguided goal that will not unite but break up Europe.' When European leaders opted for monetary union in 1992, the legitimation was that European economies would converge toward one another and Southern and Eastern Europe would adopt German standards of wage discipline, government spending, trade surplus, and international competitiveness. But economic and political cultures across Europe are all different, Streeck argues, rooted in different social structures and political legacies. Forced homogenization ignores such European differences and therefore generates highly undesirable effects. Streeck's contention, inspired by Dahrendorf, is echoed by Offe [48], who declares that 'the Euro zone was a giant mistake from the beginning', and that 'the greatest remedial responsibility in today's Europe is compelling: Germany.'

German Europe is a hegemonic enterprise: German capitalism, divorced from democracy as Streeck explains, is the European model to follow. The message to the failed members of the Euro zone, or of the EU as such, is to become like the Germans. From a cultural point of view, German Europe signals the defeat of the Hellenic Germany that Goethe and Nietzsche had hoped for, and the victory of the Prussian spirit an anti-poetic spirit that they detested. Beck articulates this vision when he starts off his German Europe with a quote from Thomas Mann, heir to Goethe: 'not a German Europe but a European Germany' is the European challenge. And Beck adds that the Euro zone crisis has created the disastrous situation of an EU that fails to live up to Europe's Hellenic ideals. Beck (points to the bitter irony of the Greek tragedy: 'do we really need to remind ourselves that Greece is not just a debtor nation but also the cradle of Western civilization, its guiding ideas and values?') German Europe, on the other hand, he notes, is inspired by the anti-Hellenic Protestant ethic. The neoliberal austerity patterned on the ideological claim that cutting social budgets would be good for growth—it imposes on the East and South is 'Protestant severity', which in German Europe is defined as 'economic rationality', namely, 'industrious obedience' [22] and wholehearted devotion to efficiency, productivity, detail, and quality in the manufacture of finished products. For Beck, the Lutheran Merkel personifies the imperialism of German Europe; the imprinting of 'Protestant severity' on colonized others, which implies the death of Cosmopolitan Europe. In German Europe, the Merkel government pursues a populist European policy that serves to strengthen the national power base: 'brutal neo-liberalism to the outside world, consensus with a social-democratic tinge at home'.

Concluding Remarks

'The European identity is an unresolved concept', Kaija Schilde observes. This is, indeed, illustrated by the diverse and conflicting theorizations of Europe in sociology. And these, it has been argued in this paper, manifest diverging commitments to values or ideals. In different nations the European identity may signify different things, both for elites and masses. As Fligstein notes, being European may mean being post-fascist and democratic for Spaniards, whereas for the British it may mean being different from the American, or being true to a particular pragmatist tradition. For Central and East Europeans, the European identity is typically invested with meaning in the context of Ottoman and Soviet legacies. Similar dividing allegiances are to be discerned among sociologists. The contrast between the civilizational and cultural perspectives of the European identity is, arguably, an illuminating way of making sense of sociological discussions on Europe. But these conflicting views of Europe also reflect the different sociologies or sociological vocations. On the one hand, sociologists, with a certain positivist habitus, assume that science in general, and sociology in particular, is part of Western civilization and an important social force in stimulating the development of that civilization. On the

other hand, interpretive sociologists consider sociology as a cultural expression that is part of European culture; sociologists themselves aspire to becoming 'cultured men', like Goethe. Sociology, in this view, is a creative force meant to stimulate the revitalization of European culture of intellectual development after the barbarism a form of Re-Europeanization or Re-Hellenization that is undermined by the forces of Western civilization, ideology (fascism, communism and Neoliberalism in particular), and excessive bureaucratization and technologization.

The different meanings attached to the terms Social Europe, Cosmopolitan Europe and German Europe, which are recurrent references in contemporary sociological discussions on the European identity; reflect the civilizational and cultural angles. Social Europe, as well as a sociologist's commitment to Social Europe, is in many ways a continuation of the Saint Simonians project of organizing a post-metaphysical or materialist civilization of plenty, after the world wars. Correspondingly, reflexivity, flexibility and the ability to seize new opportunities for technological development are the highest values. Robotics, for instance, according to Giddens, is highly promising. He foresees that it will define the workforce in the near future. As a technological optimist, he explains reassuringly that though such development will destroy some jobs, it will also create new jobs. Taking into account the spin-offs and changes in lifestyle patterns, the net gain should be positive. For interpretive sociologists, such technological utopia is a horror scenario because the robotization of human worlds will exacerbate European nihilism, and annihilate the scarce remains of European culture of the mind (among others, the Humboldt University). According to Moutsios, this destruction has already taken place with the Bologna Process: 'academic autonomy, as a European creation, is being dissolved under the Bologna Process and, thus, the university is essentially being de-Europeanized.' What this particular case illustrates is the clash between the civilizational urge (uniformization and centralisation in order to control) and the commitment to a rich cultural life for each and every one.

Cosmopolitan Europe as a civilization is one that mobilizes sovereign power for the EU to address the global challenges that affect the entire world. Thereby, Europe would once again become the central actor of the world, reshaping the world in its own cosmopolitan image, whereas other actors (America, Russia, and China) fail to emancipate themselves from their inward-looking nationalist legacies. From a cultural angle, Cosmopolitan Europe is primarily identified with the global challenge of migration. That is, cosmopolitan European integration, characterized, as Baban notes, as a space of hospitality, mainly refers to the integration of migrants into the European cultural complex. Europe, Amin suggests, is thereby re-imagined and revitalized, through the cosmopolitan interactions with migrants. German Europe is a problem for the post-war European identity, both from the civilizational and cultural perspectives. No sociologist is committed to the project of German Europe.

The civilizational critique of German Europe is that it is a force of European disintegration, which ultimately fails to develop a Europe that is capable to address today's challenges. The culturalist critique, articulated by Beck, regards the antithesis between German Europe and Hellenic Europe: the victory of the former over the latter in fact means the annihilation of the European identity.

Sociologists' commitments to Cosmopolitan Europe, as the alternative to German Europe, are, however, equivocal. The discussions reflect 'national biases'. For all discussions of sovereignty+, an Englishman like Giddens identifies 'British cosmopolitanism' as the model for Cosmopolitan Europe. London, in particular, he mentions, is open to strangers and attracts youth from all over Europe. Europeans from all over Europe are reconciled through the work, welfare and urban lifestyle that London provides. For Giddens, European cosmopolitanism is a continuation of the British liberalism of JS Mill and JM Keynes. Giddens' sociology must be located within this tradition [50]. Germans like Habermas and Beck, on the other hand, identify Cosmopolitan Europe very much as a Kantian project of perpetual peace a cosmopolitan project that Habermas connects with German federalism and the BRD experience [42]. But should Cosmopolitan Europe not transcend the particularities of individual EU member state? The cosmopolitan identity, Naraniecki [51] suggests, is born of the complex, multinational reality of the Habsburg Empire. In sum, the sociologists' struggle for a new European identity, expressing an alleged cosmopolitanism, is not entirely free from particular national or imperial histories [51].

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