



# The Future of Global Cooperation: What is missing? What could be successful?

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At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the world is confronted with a kind of a cooperation paradox. It is popularly believed that cooperation is something in which individual and collective actors pursuing common goals engage, while actors who have differing world views and pursue conflicting objectives are disinclined to cooperate. Until 1990, during the East-West conflict, however, two opposing blocs faced each other, although there was cooperation between them. Militarily, they were armed to the teeth; ideologically, they were worlds apart; and socio-economically, the development of society under capitalism was incompatible with that under communism. But the two power blocs were united by the goal of preventing the Cold War from escalating into a nuclear conflict, causing collective self-destruction.

The intensity of the antagonism did not, then, exclude peaceful co-existence under the banner of mutual deterrence. In this game it was clear that the two sides were in the same boat. And that neither could eliminate the other without running the risk of going under itself. The 1962 Cuban missile crisis showed how close the world had come to the abyss, and in Southeast Asia, Central America and the Middle East the tension was eased in proxy wars, again without it coming to a global conflagration. From the late 1950s, the policy of détente dominated, without the capitalist and communist models being abandoned.

Today the reverse paradox prevails. The world, having meanwhile become multipolar and new powers having emerged, is — if the proclamations of the G8 and G20 summits or the UN negotiations are to



Dionisio González, *The Theater of the World*. Aldo Rossi. 1979, 2011

be believed — essentially in agreement on such general objectives as green growth and fair trade, limiting climate change and the extinction of species, reform of the financial markets and the eradication of poverty and hunger. Such commentators on our times as Francis Fukuyama have therefore revived Hegel's rhetoric on the “end of history.”

Despite all the normative and ideological convergence, alas, the instruments, institutions and actors needed to turn the consensus into reality are lacking. An example of this is the “two-degree guard rail,” the international community’s intention, endorsed by almost every country in the world, to limit man-made global warming to two degrees (compared to the pre-industrial level). However, in the absence of globally binding agreements the world is, in fact, heading for far more than two degrees of warming and so for dangerous tipping points that threaten the existence of humankind in much the same way as a confrontation with nuclear weapons (which is, moreover, still within the bounds of possibility).



Why is this? Are there insurmountable differences of interests, do people see and judge the situation in the world differently, are they pursuing different values? The prisoner’s dilemma commonly encountered in game theory tells us that even players with the opportunity to cooperate and so win together will betray each other if each is unaware of the other’s choice and therefore distrusts him.

Rather than short-sighted benefit maximisation, other commentaries on our times see cultural differences as causes of cooperation refused. Whether “culture” is an obstacle to or accelerator of cooperation depends not least on precisely what this term is taken to mean. Those who consider it to be a substance that is indissoluble and transplanted only with difficulty will tend — like the eminent political scientist, Samuel P. Huntington — to assume there to be a *clash of cultures*; if, on the other hand, cultural difference — not only between ethnic and religious groups, but also between genders and generations, between top and

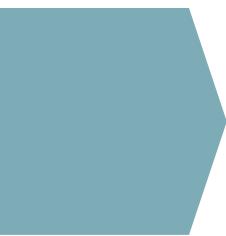
bottom, the rich and the poor, mentalities and environments — is regarded as the norm for relations in modern society, efforts will be made to create conditions under which these different worlds can best achieve shared objectives. (One may be frustrated to observe — more than twenty years after the Rushdie case — how easily agents *provocateurs* on both sides, most recently the producers of a stupid anti-Muslim video in the US and the mob stirred up by fanatics in the name of religion, can inflame the world.)

It is surprising how little we yet know about “culture” as a factor in world society. Research focuses predominantly on cooperation in small groups wanting to achieve shared objectives, a common utility (*utilitatis communio*) and a common cultural background being the main assumptions. Where, unexpectedly, cooperation does not come about, what remains — culture — is taken into account, initially to explain the failure and then, possibly, to overcome or avert it. How cooperation works in larger groups, in large international organisations or even between societies that differ culturally in some way or other (which, as has been said, is the norm) remains a mystery.

As concerned scholars as well as citizens, our aim is to get to grips with what is, by its nature, a transdisciplinary question and to do so empirically and by reference to basic theory. How, for example, do such intercultural teams as aircrews, disaster relief workers, hospital staff, police forces and civic centres operate as they and their clients become increasingly varied linguistically and culturally? Is the UN General Assembly a diplomatic stage for culturally blind power politics or, in a figurative sense, a theatre of the world’s cultures? Is there such a thing as Asian values (and do they conflict with Western Christian values, whatever they may be)? In other words, are unfamiliar cultures a source of enrichment, or do they encounter each other like cats and dogs? Furthermore, who wants to see it this way — and who assumes precisely the opposite, a humane inclination to empathy? Does it help to have travelled in foreign regions, or does that tend to feed the prejudices? How do altruistic assistance and global solidarity work in the event of epidemics, famine and philanthropic deeds? In our multicultural everyday lives, we all make certain observations, but the ambivalence of the cultural factor is certainly inestimable.

Rather than becoming set on its remedial or ruinous effect from the start, we should therefore consider the culture of cooperation itself. Cooperative relations are, after all, based not only or principally on matching interests, tit for tat, shared expectations of benefits and mutual obligations of *homo oeconomicus*. Cooperation is also and especially a mark of the “pointless” play of children; a musical ensemble improvises not (only) because they want to sell a disc; the dancers in a *corps de ballet* work together for the sheer joy of it; and a choir sings largely for the sake of singing together. Or look at a festival with its rich presentations and performances where the organizational infrastructure is always topped by an immense playfulness of actors and players in the strictest sense.

These small examples demonstrate the *intrinsic* value of cooperation as such, a value that is based on empathy and emerges from itself. The exchange of gifts, which engenders mutual obligations but may also include “irrational” profligacy, is a concept that has migrated from ethnology to cultural studies and that needs to be examined under the conditions of global interaction. What matters more than ever in global cooperation, then, is that these cultural elements are analysed and applied with extreme caution to large negotiating arenas and causes of confrontation.



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## THE EUROPEAN CONUNDRUM

Let us now change the perspective and have a closer look at Europe and the miserable state of the European Union. For the essential reform of the European Union, two major building blocks are missing: transformative policy and democratic legitimacy. The “growth package” adopted in Rome in June 2012 is far from being a master plan for the southern European countries on the model of the European Recovery Program, or Marshall Plan, for the Europe that was left in ruins after 1945. The venture still lacks any kind of spark and, moreover, any genuine new money, since all that has been done, for the time being at least, is to re-label some poorly used and distributed EU structural aid and to polish up some investments by the European Investment Bank that had already been planned. This is not the way to create a more ecological or socially fairer Europe.

More serious is the evident failure of the elites of the European executives to attach any particular importance to the legitimacy of their plans. If the radical change to the European institutional system outlined by the EU leaders was prescribed and implemented from the top down, it would probably be the EU’s final crisis — the accumulated legitimacy deficit would almost certainly mark the end of the Union, and the national populists could fight over the remains like vultures. “No taxation without representation” is the basic rule of representative democracy — those who pay taxes also want to govern themselves. It was the president of the EU parliament, Martin Schulz, who reminded the “makers” of this elementary rule of democracy.

Any acceleration towards a European economic and financial government must be approved and controlled by a European *demos*. (Let us here assume them as the “actors and players” on



Dionisio González, *Gardella Restated: The House of the Zattere*. 1953-2011, 2011

stage). Although the Gang of Four consisting of EU Commission President José Manuel Durão Barroso, Euro Group President Jean-Claude Juncker, European Council President Herman van Rompuy and the head of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, called for a “stronger democratic basis,” they did not go into the specifics. Democratic legitimacy and control are, however, essential if there is to be “more Europe.” The general public will withdraw their support from any enlargement agreed in the shadows, and in June 2012 the guardians of the German Constitution in Karlsruhe promptly intervened, because they found the process not to have sufficient democratic legitimacy from the German viewpoint. On the other hand, they ruled that the ratification of the permanent European rescue fund, the ESM, and of the European fiscal pact, was constitutional.

Thus the German Constitutional Court has ruled that Parliament must have knowledge of and be involved in the resolution of the European sovereign debt crisis and the rescue of the euro. But, even in normal times and on far less spectacular occasions, the balance of power and division of labour between legislative and executive has been shifting away from Parliament.



Everywhere the subject matter is allegedly too complex (as in the case of health policy), too technical (energy policy), or too legal (every policy). Speed is objectively of the essence because the many and varied crises in industrial society are limiting the state's ability to exercise control, forcing it into permanent crisis intervention. The restriction of parliamentary rights is one aspect of the collateral damage caused by the privatisation of politics — whose only function now is to act as a fire brigade — and it is bound to fail when an active state and regulative policy are urgently needed.

In the past, Europeanisation too has often meant, in the absence of a fully fledged EU Parliament, deparliamentarisation and less democracy. Even in earlier rulings, such as its judgment in June 2009 on the Lisbon Treaty, the Federal German Constitutional Court set itself up as the protector of nationally constituted democracy and of the sovereign state in the shape of the *Bundestag*, the German Parliament, and specifically as the guardian of Article 23 of the Basic Law, which requires the *Bundestag* to be informed comprehensively and at the earliest possible time. Karlsruhe will intervene whenever German democracy is eroded by EU rules imposed by

Berlin and Brussels. But the national perspective underestimates the real shift of political power to the supranational level at which — in far more striking fashion than the EU — such clubs as the G8, the G20 and the WTO operate. Here — in an informal and content-related way — democratic control and countervailing power create at best NGOs that are influential and receive media exposure, act as champions of local opposition or global commons and tend to merge into the transnational decision-making system as experts for one side of the argument or the other.

Karlsruhe will apply the brakes whenever the end result of fiscal union and economic government is likely to be the United States of Europe, with Strasbourg, of course, upgraded to a real Parliament. To that end, not only must the Basic Law be amended, but Germany will eventually (or perhaps even quite soon) have to adopt a new Constitution, and Europe must at last be given one. EU Commission President Durão Barroso's proposals for the further development of the EU into a "federation of nation states" point in precisely this direction. The German Constitutional Court can no longer fend off this dynamic, because the European dimension of the principle of democracy adopted for the Basic Law is undeniable.

**European identity has always been ex-centric, since much that is "European" hails from Asia (Minor), and always ex-territorial, since Europe exported its achievements to the rest of the world in both peaceful and aggressive-colonial ways. The instability of the borders to the south (and to the east) becomes almost physically tangible in the Mediterranean space**

The drawback with the extensive, though not sufficiently extensive, proposals put forward by Wolfgang Schäuble and the Gang of Four is that they are still tailored to a core or residual Europe and would widen the gap between the euro countries and the non-members of the Monetary Union, specifically the UK and the Czech Republic — in other words, they would accelerate dissociation tendencies that have already grown not only in London and Prague, but also in The Hague and Helsinki.

However, it would be wrong to think that a core Europe would be stronger than the EU 27 or a greater Euro-Mediterranean region: only as a large power can Europe counterbalance the *political* competitive advantages of the United States or China. And at this point democratic legitimacy and transformative policy come together again: a Euro-Mediterranean Union (by analogy with a Baltic Sea Union, an Alps-Adriatic Union, etc.) will not only provide the working basis for a real development pact: it may also offer a federal perspective for the sustainable democratisation of the region.

A Europe of the Regions has so far been envisaged and arranged on far too small a scale, as a provincial prop for a large quasi state ruled from Brussels and legitimised from the

capitals. Regional associations on the basis of a common cultural heritage and multicultural encounters may revive the good old principle of European federalism — they rise above the nations that often operate today as blockading powers, but they are also still near enough to the cultural characteristics and networks of the people of Europe.

## NEW MÉDITERRANÉE?

Since antiquity, the harbours of the Mediterranean have exerted a fascination over travellers and cultural researchers. Visiting them today, however, one is presented with no more than a shadow — part run down, part picturesque — of their former grandeur and importance. These ports once lay at the heart of the first trans-Mediterranean phase of globalization, the central axis of which shifted to the Atlantic in the sixteenth century. Nowadays, the turnovers of even the larger Mediterranean harbours, such as Istanbul or Marseilles, are easily outstripped by the container terminals in East Asia and the Gulf.

Harbour cities as places of movement, immigration and emigration, as places of inclusion and exclusion, develop distinct modes of being that not only reflect different cultural traditions and political and social self-conceptions, but also contain economic potential and communicate how they see themselves as part of the larger structure that is “Europe.”

The Mediterranean serves as a passageway for around one third of all global transports of crude oil and natural gas. Its harbours are largely the destinations of cruise liners and ferries, just as its airports are the starting and end-points for beach holidays and city breaks. Fishing, another an icon of southern Europe, has also changed in character. The photograph in the pizzeria of a fisherman mending his net promotes the *Méditerranée* brand but bears little connection to the reality of the heartlands of mass tourism.

Due to the expansion of EU fleets and the invasion of Asian fishing boats, overfishing endangers species such as tuna and swordfish; in many cases, the maximum sustainable yield can no longer be reached and overall fishing quotas have decreased substantially. The current United Conventions Law of the Sea grants each state an exclusive sovereign right over a coastal zone, extending up to 200 nautical miles into the sea, for the exploration and exploitation of resources. This is in addition to the continental shelf, the (notional) extension of the continent underneath the surface of the sea. In the “small” Mediterranean, this gives rise to much overlap, which could well become a point of conflict in the future — especially when it comes to gas fields and offshore drilling rights.

However, the sea incurs most damage from its interaction with land use — industrialized agriculture, fierce urbanization and holiday paradises, with their high levels of consumption and waste, are what puts the most strain on the Mediterranean. Tourism and industry enter into

competition, but they are also directly related. Salinization, eutrophication (caused by effluents) and algal growth pose a further danger to the Mediterranean ecosystem that is warming as a result of climate change.

The Rhône and Po rivers, in particular, carry copious masses of heavy metals and chemical substances into the Mediterranean; nitrates and phosphates, which enter the rivers through permanent over-fertilization, cause algal bloom to proliferate on coasts where water exchange is restricted. Freshwater inflow is decreasing constantly, compounding disadvantages connected to the slow rate of salt water renewal in the Mediterranean (every 80 years). According to estimates, the Mediterranean annually absorbs 500 million tonnes of slurry, 600 000 tonnes of nitrate fertilizer, 200 000 tonnes of phosphorus fertilizer and many further thousands of tonnes of heavy metals and radioactive waste, primarily from French nuclear power stations. Coastal dwellers, seafowl, crustaceans and fish are severely affected by these toxic inflows. The coasts of northeast Spain, the French Riviera and the Adriatic are particularly contaminated.

Shipping, oil harbours and refineries pollute the Mediterranean with toxins; a constant convoy of tankers moves between the Suez Canal and Gibraltar. A tanker collision causing an oil spill would be devastating for the entire Mediterranean ecosystem, as was demonstrated by the heavy pollution of the Lebanese coast in 2009. An estimated 800 000 tonnes of oil flow into the Mediterranean annually, making it among the most polluted seas in this respect too. The waste generated by cruise liners, in particular, equals that of small cities and is not always disposed of according to regulations; the high carbon emissions these popular fleets emit are another matter.

The harbour cities of the Mediterranean are still located at the intersections of global networks, but they no longer possess a sense of self or vitality. The impression given today by cities like Genoa, Almería, Palermo or Piraeus corresponds all too closely to the image of the PIGS. This porcine acronym — regardless which stockbroker, Eurocrat or clown thought it up — stands for a crisis that concerns the entire European Union. Many in the north would be happy to cut loose of the quartet at the earliest opportunity, while the dominant mood in the south is one of “let’s break the yoke of Brussels.” Together, they evoke the image of a nation-state yet more incapable of regulation or effective action than the increasingly challenged supranational community of the EU.

The southern periphery of Europe, extending from Portugal to Greece via the North African states, is nowadays regarded as a zone of threat, almost like the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War. The South — formerly a political compass point generally evoking positive and carefree associations in the popular imagination and in political culture — has been designated by politicians and the popular opinion as the source of the greatest security risks: Islamist terrorism, “contagious” euro-collapse and waves of refugees from the global South.

## HISTORY, TERRITORY, EMPIRE

A supranational construct of Europe that imposes boundaries but also makes them negotiable has contradiction built into its genetic code. Looking at maps of Europe at various times since antiquity, this hardly seems new — Europe's external borders as well as its internal ones have shifted infinitely often. However, the era of nationalism and the nation-state — with its illusion of the coincidence of territory, language, history and collective identity — has encouraged a certainty of definition more incompatible than ever with a porous external border. The European Union, as a “supranational partnership of convenience that is, as a matter of principle, open to expansion,” has borders that are inherently fluid; they are regulated by European law and notoriously contested in border regions.

In the Mediterranean space — the “middle sea” between Europe, Africa and Asia — these fluid borders are all the more problematic, since they cannot be symbolized by a fence or equivalent territorial demarcation. Instead, borders literally disappear into the shimmering horizon and can only be maintained through the occasional patrol. Here, the experience of globalization contemplated by Georg Simmel over a century ago becomes social fact: borders are cultural regulations that (can) take form spatially. The European Union is thus best understood through its borders.

But its borders are also where its sovereignty is most strongly under attack. Ultimately, this is an expression of the perennial problem of European identity. It is an identity that has always been ex-centric, since much that is “European” hails from Asia (Minor), and always ex-territorial, since Europe exported its achievements to the rest of the world in both peaceful and aggressive-colonial ways. The instability of the borders to the south (and to the east) becomes almost physically tangible in the Mediterranean space: in water, boundary lines become fluid and ambiguous and their validity is contested. The weather, the conditions of the ships, and patrols add to the uncertainty.

Until recently, the Mediterranean was a hotbed of instability, not to say a combat zone. This is something forcefully evoked in Mathias Énard’s extraordinary novel *Zone*, whose protagonist, like some furious Achilles, harkens to the echo of past battles and retraces more recent massacres — from Homer’s Trojans to Jean Genet’s Palestinians, from the Spanish Civil War to the Algerian War, from the crimes of the German occupying force in Greece and the deportation of the Jews from Thessaloniki to the murderous collapse of former Yugoslavia or as another review put it, from the Battle of Thermopylae to Napoleon’s Montenotte Campaign, Gavrilo Princip’s pistol-shot, the deportation of the Greek Jews, the slaughter of the Palestinians in the camps at Sabra and Shatila, the disembowelment of a Serbian grandmother with her crucifix. In Serbia, the Mediterranean is occasionally called the “blue cemetery.”



Dionisio González, Hotel Bauer, 2011

If Mediterranean politics are to be realistic, they must be aware of this history of violence so as not to have to experience it anew. The process of becoming history can also, however, teach us about the ways in which the Mediterranean space, with its harbour cities and its islands, was peacefully interwoven and politically, economically and culturally connected. The concept of the *polis* was famously developed and put to the test in the Mediterranean by one of the world's first naval powers — the city-states of the Delian League — in the fifth century BC. Their



symbol was the Acropolis in Athens, whose construction was ordered by Pericles and which has now become the tumbledown icon of the Mediterranean “pigsty” in the evening news.

Without wanting to idealize this league of *poleis* (*hoi Athenaíoi kai hoi sýmmachoi*) and render it excessively topical, it nonetheless contained a political core relevant to how we might think of contemporary transnational cooperation: a horizontal association, unusual for its time, of small cities granting democratic involvement to their full citizens, emerging as political power in place

of an oriental land power, the despotic Persians. Symmachy allied city-states on the Greek mainland, in western Asia Minor, in Thrace and on the Aegean Islands; their meeting-place was first the Cycladic isle of Delos, then Athens, while the League's financial resources, amassed through members' tributes, were kept in the temples of Apollo or Athena.

Founded as a defensive front against the Persians, whom it defeated at the Battle of Salamis, the League became an instrument of Athenian hegemony. Colonization went hand-in-hand with the export of democracy, until the League came primarily to serve the interests of domination and exploitation — then, as now, democracies waged wars of aggression. Athens' brutal attack on the insubordinate inhabitants of the small island of Melos is evidence of this, as is the environmental crisis that took place in the fourth century BC, attested by archaeological finds, caused by slag heaps from lead mines and radical deforestation for the purpose of acquiring firewood to fuel furnaces.

Whereas older empires (with the exception of the Vikings) were land-bound, in modern times the sea forms the natural and systemic environment of the international state order. The crystallization of modern statehood and economy was substantially advanced during the "age of discovery," a process of trans-Atlantic, globalizing colonialism that took place first under the aegis of Portugal and Spain, then the Netherlands and Britain; international relations, international law and free global trade to a great extent developed on this basis. Here, the Mediterranean was no more than the starting point from which the Florentine Amerigo Vespucci and the Genoese Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic, leaving from Lisbon and Cadiz.

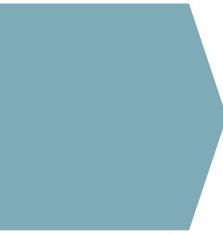
Maritime expansion differed considerably from terrestrial expansion in that it was neither guided nor constrained by borders. This *de facto* universalism, or spontaneous cosmopolitanism, left a lasting mark on maritime law and relations of trade and traffic that span the world today; however, it also increasingly became a function of terrestrial development, based upon the composition, concentration and cooperation of nation-state systems. From the sixteenth century onwards, the Mediterranean was relegated to the periphery.

## CULTURE, TRADE, MIGRATION

Scholars like Swiss-Slovenian historian Desanka Schwara have described the Mediterranean region as a nested structure of diaspora communities. In imperial spaces, migrant milieus were founded on the basis of sea long before modern nation-states were shaped and consolidated. The most important representatives of these communities were merchants, mariners and pirates; people who were highly mobile, who placed great importance on their freedom of movement and who — in the interests of profit and booty — were bound not by the loyalties of

nations but those of religion and the extended family. The Mediterranean lay before them as an expanse for the acquisition of goods, passengers and ideas; they turned it into a dense communication zone of different worldviews and rivalling beliefs, which became manifest in a chequered calendar of religious holidays. At the same time, the boundaries between sanctioned trade and criminal and clandestine privateering, between theological dispute and missionary zeal, were fluid.

The Mediterranean as zone of diaspora, in which “routes” counted more than “roots”: this view must not lead to the romanticization of mobility and deracination, for in earlier epochs, too, migration was often violently induced. In and of itself, diaspora — literally “dispersal” — is not the breeding-ground of innovation and cosmopolitanism; it only becomes this under favourable circumstances of urban tolerance. The more neutral term “networks” thus seems more apt. Be that as it may, the physical interactions and imagined bonds in the Mediterranean region established neither a clear common identity nor a territorial unity; rather, they created “margins” (see Natalie Zemon Davis), interstitial worlds. These hark back to Europe’s cultural origins in Mesopotamia and radiate into the north and south Atlantic regions, the colonized areas of Africa and Asia, and the many Mediterranean diaspora communities worldwide. In this sense, Méditerranée can be found with the Sopranos in New Jersey, the Papakonstantinou in Melbourne, and the Mandelbaums in Los Angeles and Shanghai.



**The powers that long ago characterized the Méditerranée ought not to be held up as a contemporary ideal. Certainly, the downfall of the Mediterranean world is a history of loss. Yet it is legitimate to search in that history for a structure for contemporary Europe, elevating the network of city-states to the status of model and hub of Euro-Mediterranean unification**

Since the time of the Phoenicians and the Etruscans, networks between city-states have been especially important for Mediterranean worlds; their exchanges, as Fernand Braudel and others demonstrated, endowed the Mediterranean area with factual unity. As long as this network functioned, it was possible for the Mediterranean region to lie at the centre of the world and to be the arena of the first stage of globalization. Its influence and formative power waned as globalization expanded along the Atlantic axis and as international relations came to be informed by the Westphalian sovereignty of denominationally homogeneous nation-states and the race for imperial spheres of influence.

For this reason, it is necessary to recall the historical urban systems whose vitality derived from the existence of a public space frequented and shared by all (male) communities. In this



Dionisio González, San Giustinian Lolin, 2011

space, the palette of professions, nations and denominations unfolded; it was able to integrate a high degree of heterogeneity and afforded considerable latitude to minorities and outsiders, opening up possibilities for social ascent and political careers. In it there developed a wealth of male-dominated systems of patronage and clientele, business connections and networks of friendship — unique in world history; the public space was where people met in taverns, coffee houses and ballrooms, where charity was practised, amidst banks and pawn shops.



One fact merits at least a brief note: this “Christian Occident” was strongly influenced and informed by Jewish and Muslim minorities and elites, while the Arabs only reached their own high level of development as a result of expansion to the south of Europe via Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt. In the late Middle Ages and the early modern era, cities like Damascus, Cairo, Kairouan, Fes, Palermo, Córdoba and other places in al-Andalus were the centres of the religious and scientific world. Theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, mathematics, astronomy and

other subjects blossomed, as did literature, architecture and medicine. It was at the Toledo School, in particular, where the leap from antique culture to modern Europe was made; Arabic was the lingua franca in which important works of world literature were composed, including those of the Golden Age of Jewish literature.

The Reconquista, the expulsion of Islam and of Jews from the western Mediterranean area, dealt a major blow to intellectual development in Catholic Europe, just as it did in the Arab world. However, without al-Andalus's achievements in translation and transfer, neither Spain's ascent to become a world power nor the later global dominance of western Europe would have been conceivable. Those who dismiss such reminiscences as "multiculturalist" romanticism are wrong. No one is denying the political and theological competition between the monotheistic denominations, or the conflicts that on numerous occasions were settled through violence. But no one should misjudge the achievements of this epoch and hence its function as model for a Mediterranean union of a new type, which it has increasingly come to be since 2001, for reasons of political expediency.

The powers that long ago characterized the *Méditerranée*, and that are now probably lost beyond retrieval, ought not to be held up as a contemporary ideal. Certainly, the downfall of the Mediterranean world since the sixteenth century, with all its diversity, represents a history of loss. However it is a history that must be observed soberly. At the same time, it is legitimate in the current crisis to search in that history for the basis for a polymorphic structure of contemporary Europe — a structure that, while devoid of any pressure to imitate, elevates the network of city-states to the status of model and hub of Euro-Mediterranean unification. The *Mare nostrum* would thus be decolonized for good and its national, ethnic and religious antagonisms mitigated.

In the coastal regions and island zones of the Mediterranean, city-states with a high awareness of their autonomy first emerged as antipodes to territorial states and later functioned as lively and self-confident enclaves. It is therefore no coincidence that much Mediterranean scholarship, including fiction and essays, refers to these urban agglomerations more than to the provincial and agrarian hinterland formerly considered by many anthropologists and travellers as the Mediterranean world's centre of calm and guarantor of stability. There are now an infinite number of centres on the map of the Mediterranean: the towns established by the Phoenicians and Etruscans, Athens, Carthage and Rome in classical antiquity; the residences of the Carolingians and the Hohenstaufens; the large and small metropolises such as Byzantium and Granada, Venice and Ragusa — the list goes on. It was in the Mediterranean region that the modern city as type, with its clear pattern of urbanity and urbanization, developed *par excellence*, its model character lasting up until the American (suburban) city emerged and became dominant in the nineteenth century. Even today, most residents of the region live on the coastal strips and on deltas (most densely in the merging

metropolitan region of Cairo/Alexandria, in megacities such as Istanbul, and in agglomerations around Athens, Algiers, Rome, Marseilles and Barcelona). Viewed by night, the urban centres of light trace a line along the coastline like a string of fairy lights.

## FROM PIGS TO PARTNERS: DEVELOPMENTAL PROSPECTS

Reasons for why nearly all the Mediterranean countries have, in social and economic terms, lagged behind in recent decades are now much discussed (and ethnicized). Overreliance on revenue from commodity and agrarian exports, tourism and money transfers from migrant workers meant that their economies failed to keep up with capitalist globalization in the 1970s. Another reason is that, since the 1980s, parts of these same economies have adapted rapidly to global casino and kamikaze capitalism, investing revenues in speculative real estate and financial transactions, while leaving intact essentially anachronistic state apparatuses and social structures. The consequences of this are manifest today. Mental and institutional path dependency is difficult to overcome, yet nothing less than a radical change of direction is demanded of these crisis-ridden societies. This cannot succeed through external “advice” or pressure, but only in the framework of a pan-European sustainability offensive that desists from the unfavourable mix of austerity and blind growth.



**The transformation of the European consciousness must be accompanied by ongoing cultural and scientific cooperation, oriented towards the needs of the younger generation, within the framework of existing EU programmes (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Jean Monnet)**

A new type of Mediterranean union requires a more ambitious and far-reaching framework, in which the loose and disparate elements of Mediterranean policy to date are better adjusted to each other and made more sustainable. A convergence of this kind would complete the process of decolonization and confer an important role on the southern European EU member-states. The young people of the Mediterranean need a perspective beyond stagnation and emigration, pauperization and precariousness, authoritarianism and violence. A number of key political fields come to the fore: energy supply, tourism, external trade, environmental conservation and the knowledge economy.

To date, energy supply and export patterns on the southern periphery barely reflect the potential of this sun-drenched and wind-swept zone for generating renewable energy. Renewable

energy from the south must not only be incorporated into northern European electricity networks but also, and above all, used to promote sustainable development in the countries themselves, as well as in sub-Saharan Africa. This will enable a break with the vicious cycle of oil dependence, climate-damaging economic activity and debt.

The Mediterranean region still claims approximately one third of global tourism and this has had a deep influence on its infrastructure and mentality. At the same time, decades of mass tourism has caused severe ecological and economic damage. Instead of being a mass influx from the North to the service centres of the South, tourism needs to be transformed into a respectful and creative encounter between the two cultures.

Despite industrial development and the growth of a service sector, the Mediterranean countries have remained caught in an asymmetric division of labour with the rich EU countries. This has kept them in constant dependency and, until the 1980s and again now, caused unqualified and qualified workers to emigrate. An agrarian economy that is ecologically sensitive and much better adapted to local needs and markets needs to be negotiated, as does a more balanced trading system with the North and a sensible migration regime.

The vulnerable ecological basis of the sea must be protected by promoting sustainable fishing, preventative coastal preservation and appropriate offshore energy services. The *Méditerranée* must once again become “our sea” in the European consciousness.

The Mediterranean area lacks a sustainable, locally coloured knowledge economy that transcends cultural and religious boundaries and is oriented toward the histories of the various cultures. Connections to the past may have been broken, but there is truly no shortage of role models.

This programme of transformation must be accompanied by ongoing cultural and scientific cooperation, oriented towards the needs of the younger generation, within the framework of existing EU programmes (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Jean Monnet) and the relevant sections in the association agreements.

EU “rescue funds” and “structural assistance” only make sense in the mid to long term if they are directed at alternative energies, sustainable tourism, fair trade and maritime development (among other things). Only then can vague and *ad hoc* restructuring lead to sustainable development and the political tutelage of the North turn into cooperation between equals. Of course, these opportunities for development have only been broadly outlined above (and, given the crisis management thus far, are counterfactual). The key point is that decision-makers and the public debate need to provide the EU Growth Pact with perspectives for the future, perspectives that include the institutional reform of the EU and the Mediterranean union.

## POSTSCRIPT: COOPERATION AND HUMAN NATURE<sup>1</sup>

Let me conclude with the challenge of supraregional, global cooperation. Could globalisation be asking too much of international organisations, governments and of us as human beings? Despite the worldwide consensus on the dangers of climate change and the shrinking limits of the earth system, climate negotiations have been marking time for years and the expectations of the earth summit to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 are steadily declining. As political scientist Dirk Messner puts it: "The international system that emerged after the World War II no longer appears to match the demands of the twenty-first century. Rather than global cooperation, global policy is increasingly beset by national egoisms, distribution conflicts and struggles for power. Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes seem to be winning out against Kant, who coined the term cosmopolitan society (*Weltbürgergesellschaft*) as long ago as 1784. Is globalisation again bringing to light what economic theory has long preached: human beings are egoistic creatures preoccupied with optimising their own interests? The realistic school of international relations, too, might feel vindicated. It sees states as actors seeking to maximise their national interests in the anarchic world of the international system. Are human beings being thwarted by their own nature?"

In a column in the *New York Times* David Brooks wrote in 2007: "From the content of our genes, the nature of our neurons and the lessons of evolutionary biology, it has become clear that nature is filled with competition and conflicts of interest." The successful Russian-American writer Ayn Rand sends the same message in her novels. For moral obligations and cooperation between human beings she has only scorn and derision. Egoism, she claims, is what drives human beings, the only obligation anyone has is to him- or herself. This view of the world is not new. In the nineteenth century, the British philosopher Herbert Spencer was already describing the life of men and states as a never-ending struggle which is a matter of the "survival of the fittest." Yet one may be very surprised to see social-Darwinism of the kind to be endorsed by Paul Ryan, Mitt Romney's running mate in 2012 and a Vice-Presidential candidate of the United States of America.

Against these popular and dangerous assumptions Frans de Waal, a biologist, ethnologist and evolution researcher, has shown that, since *Homo sapiens* emerged some 200 000 years ago, human beings have been heavily dependent on each other for survival. In the course of their lifecycle everyone, whether young, old or sick, needs the support of others. The unique cooperative abilities evolved by our ancestors allowed them to reach into previously unexplored areas in search of food and resources and, crucially, to coordinate the hunt for large animals.

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1. The following section owes much to cooperation with my colleague and co-director of the Center für Global Cooperation Research in Duisburg/Germany.

Cooperation for mutual benefit, or reciprocity, is a basic building block of human existence. In de Waal's view, humans are therefore primarily gregarious animals and social beings. They can be described either as highly cooperative creatures at pains to keep egoistic urges under control, or as beings which, though extremely competitive, nonetheless have to strike a balance between competition and cooperation in order to survive as a species.

Michael Tomasello, Director of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, reaches similar conclusions. He ascribes the unique characteristics of human beings that set them apart from other animals to their ability to cooperate. Shared goals, knowledge and beliefs, as well as the ability to think in terms of a joint "we," are the foundations of humankind's cultural success story. Cooperation, in other words, became evolutionarily advantageous. If human cooperation fails on a significant scale, the result is a rupture in civilisation, war, crisis. The basis of cooperation is not least the capacity for empathy, to which Theodor Lipps in the late nineteenth century had already referred. When we watch a high-wire artist, we instinctively hold our breath, we share his experience. Seen from any of these angles, the image of humans as self-interested utility-maximisers is a rather poor caricature of the evolution of humankind.

The ability of human beings to cooperate is also confirmed by the social sciences. In numerous studies on successful and unsuccessful attempts to protect such commons as forests, fisheries and water resources, Elinor Ostrom, winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, has identified some essential requirements for cooperation: communication, trust, reputation, reciprocal behaviour, jointly developed sets of rules, evolving we-identities and means of punishing opportunistic behaviour. These are the foundations of successful cooperation. The "natural state" of human beings is not, then, ruthless competition and conflict. Cooperation is possible, but it can also fail without the backing of suitable institutions.

So why are the institutions necessary to cope with the global systemic risks not emerging at the beginning of the twenty-first century? The theories of evolution based on the natural and behavioural sciences might provide an answer to this question. Issues such as globalisation, climate change, tipping points in the earth system, and challenges to humankind have been discussed only in recent decades. The realisation by human beings that they are not only dependent on each other at a local level and in their national societies, but in fact constitute a global risk community is fairly new in the history of humankind. A theory of world society is thus still in its infancy. Cooperation was essential to the success of *Homo sapiens* as a species early in its evolutionary history. The hard question of our times is: Will humans learn to raise their evolutionary success programme as gregarious animals and beings capable of cooperating to the level of global society before serious global systemic crises arise? And how might this learning process be accelerated? Can "we-intentionalities" be scaled up to global level? Can human beings develop empathy in a global society context? Can the new communication technologies help in this respect?

The theories of cooperation similarly provide useful pointers to the reasons for the current dysfunction of international cooperation. Owing to the major power shifts in the world, some of the main conditions for successful cooperation are under considerable pressure or have yet to be created. A glance at the G20 formation quickly reveals how it differs from the western clubs — from the G7 to NATO — with their declining clout: trust, dense communication patterns, reputation, “we-identities,” common sets of rules and joint learning processes have yet to be developed between the old and new powers. Whether this investment in the cornerstones of global cooperation will be effected quickly enough for serious globalisation crises to be avoided and what form institutions capable of managing global problems should take are not trivial questions.

THE WORLD, NOW MULTIPOLAR AND HOST TO NEW POWERS, IS ESSENTIALLY IN AGREEMENT ON GENERAL OBJECTIVES SUCH AS GREEN GROWTH AND FAIR TRADE, LIMITING CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE EXTINCTION OF SPECIES, REFORMING THE FINANCIAL MARKETS AND ERADICATING POVERTY AND HUNGER. YET DESPITE ALL THE NORMATIVE AND IDEOLOGICAL CONVERGENCE, THE INSTRUMENTS, INSTITUTIONS AND ACTORS NEEDED TO TURN THE CONSENSUS INTO REALITY ARE LACKING. THIS ESSAY DEBATES PROBLEMS OF COOPERATION WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND PROPOSES NEW AREAS AND AXES OF MULTILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN. THE AUTHOR DISCUSSES IN DETAIL THE PROSPECTS FOR GREEN GROWTH, SOFT TOURISM AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY IN THIS AREA. THESE WOULD ENCOURAGE CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE NEW ARAB DEMOCRACIES AND GIVE A PERSPECTIVE TO THE UNEMPLOYED YOUNGSTERS OF THE REGION. IMPULSES FROM THE SOUTH MAY THEN SUPPORT A NEW FEDERALISM AND MACRO-REGIONALISM IN EUROPE.

# BIOGRAPHY

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Since 2007, Claus Leggewie has been director and chairman of the board at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, Essen. In 2008, he joined the German Advisory Council on Global Change, where he is director of the project *Climate and Culture*. In 2012, he became co-director of the Käte Hamburger Collegium “Political Cultures of World Society” at University of Duisburg, Essen.

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In 1989, he became Professor of Political Science at Justus-Liebig University. From 1986 to 1989, he held a chair at Georg-August University in Göttingen. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Rostock in 2008.

Between 1995 and 1997, Professor Leggewie held the Max Weber Chair at New York University. He has been a faculty fellow at the Remarque Institute of New York University and fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. He has also been a visiting professor at both Université Paris-Nanterre and Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen in Vienna.

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