

The European People's Party: Successes and Future Challenges.

With Portraits of Selected Countries

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Introduction

“Thinking Europe”, the slogan of the Centre for European Studies (CES) of the European People's Party (EPP), reflects the Centre's commitment to promoting intellectual liberty, raising awareness and facilitating the growth of EU politics from the perspective of the ideologies and the central values of the EPP and its centre-right partners.

Reflecting on values is also the mission and aim of this book, which provides a clear view of the history, intellectual basis and values of selected member parties. The European People's Party is the political family of the centre-right parties and therefore the largest union of political parties on the European continent. The EPP was established on 8 July 1976 as the umbrella organisation for Christian-democratic parties from Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Ireland, Belgium and Luxembourg on the occasion of the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979. The EPP currently has 74 member parties from 38 countries. After the 2009 elections to the European Parliament, the faction once again became the one with the most representatives.

The EPP draws its vitality from the national traditions of its member parties. Its strength comes from diversity, not homogeneity. There is no “conservative international” and that is precisely the strong point of conservative politics. With its varied traditions and wealth of historical concepts, the EPP founded – and played a major role in developing – the success story of the European Union. The traditions include Christian-democratic, conservative and liberal components that point the way to the future for the programmes of the individual EPP member parties and finally enter into the EPP's manifestos.

The parties presented in this publication provide an insight into the different historical and ideological development of the individual EPP members. The fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 made it possible for new democratic parties to be established and historical ones revitalised in Europe's formerly Communist countries. The special history of the past twenty years makes itself felt in several of the party portraits presented in this book.

The contributions to this volume not only give an impression of the EPP parties from Germany, Sweden, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Italy and France, as well as the historic developments in Southern Europe, but also provide a detailed discussion on the historical approaches and describe the special case of the British Tories.

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Foreword

The EPP – History, Values and Intellectual Traditions

The European People's Party is not just the largest European party – it is also the single most influential force in European politics and the biggest group in the European Parliament. In 13 Member States, EPP politicians hold the position of head of government, and 13 of the 27 members of the new European Commission come from the EPP's ranks.

The EPP unites Christian Democrats, conservatives, liberals and centrists. This means that, first, it is a diverse coalition with a considerable spectrum of views on many specific policies; and second, because of this diversity, it has to have a strong basis of underlying common values that hold it together. It is this diversity, as well as this stable foundation of shared values, that gives the EPP family its unique strength.

First and foremost, these values are: a Christian view of man; freedom and responsibility; subsidiarity; and a clear commitment to a strong European Union. These values not only hold our family together, they also, in their sum, distinguish us from our political competitors. After all, it was within our political family that the idea of European integration originated and the concept of the Social Market Economy was born. It is also our political family that most clearly advocates a strong transatlantic partnership and that, since the beginning of the Cold War, has continuously pleaded for a Europe whole and free. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, most of the victorious democratic movements in the East joined our family – and together we were at the forefront of enlarging the Euro-Atlantic institutions to include these new democracies.

And yet, the EPP is facing a set of new challenges at the beginning of this, the second decade of the twenty-first century. The financial and economic crisis has not led to catastrophe – largely thanks to timely and effective intervention by EU governments. But this intervention has produced a load of debt that will remain problematic for many years to come. That is why recovery is far from certain. We have to apply the successful concepts of the Social Market Economy to the world of the twenty-first century and to keep the EU competitive – not only vis-à-vis Japan and the US, but even more importantly vis-à-vis the emerging economies of Brazil, India, China and Russia. At the same time, international political success for the EU is far from guaranteed. The Lisbon Treaty has given us the preconditions for an EU that is more capable of acting internationally, but a great deal of work remains to be done even after it comes into force. We will only be able to face these challenges if we abide by our values and work tirelessly to apply them to the changing world of today and tomorrow.

This book will help us do just this, for it examines the roots of our party family, taking into account the diverse histories of the Centre Right in different Member States and spelling out what this history means for us in the face of the challenges ahead. I believe the Politische Akademie, together with the EPP's political foundation, the Centre for European Studies, has published the right book at the right time.

Wilfried Martens

EPP President

Section I: History, Intellectual Basis and Values

The European People's Party: Identity and Integration

Stefan Zotti

Summary

“The European model is based on values, culture and history. That is where the answers to the new questions come from. That is the starting point for us as Christian Democrats, moderates and centrist, members of the EPP.”¹ The Fourteenth Congress of the European People's Party that was held in Berlin at the beginning of 2001 was not the first in the twenty-first century but, with its final document “A Union of Values”, laid claim to having created a foundation for values that were appropriate for the challenges facing our present time. Not only contemporary issues, but also the political scope of the EPP that was expressed in the statement given above, made new answers necessary: the Christian party of the 1970s had developed into a collective movement of centre-right parties with “Christian Democrats, moderates and centrists” – and probably a few liberals and conservatives – in its ranks.

The European People's Party has played a determining role of European politics in the past decade – as it has throughout the entire history of European integration. As the strongest group in the European Parliament, it will be a decisive factor in European politics over the coming five years. At the same time, the EPP is confronted with challenges that make the question of its long-term position and ideological principles increasingly pressing:

- How will Europe master the most serious economic crisis since the end of the Second World War and how will this influence the European social model?

¹ European People's Party, (2001), “A Union of Values”. Adopted by the XIV Congress, Berlin, January 2001; at http://www.epp.eu/dbimages/pdf/encong_values.pdf

- Which long-term, institutional foundation does the European Union need, regardless of whether the Lisbon Treaty comes into force or not, and which vision of Europe will prevail?
- Where are Europe's geographical and political boundaries, and which common efforts must Europe undertake in the fields of inner security, as well as in foreign and defence politics?

In order to be able to formulate new answers, we must first of all investigate the roots of the EPP: only if the political and ideological potentials are understood is it possible to evaluate their viability for the future. Therefore, I will initially give an outline of the history of the EPP with the main emphasis of our interest on the ideological lines and questions that have characterised the history of the EPP and not on structural developments or those that only had a short-term effect. In a second step, political and recent election programmes and the therein formulated concepts for the future Europe will demonstrate two paths of development for the EPP's political position that will also be of lasting importance for this in the future.

From the Christian democracy of the nineteenth century to the EPP

The political roots of the European People's Party that was founded in 1976 can be traced back to the political Catholicism of the late nineteenth century. Political Catholicism came into being in those – more or less – Catholic-dominated European countries as a result of the cleavage between the church and the state and through the social problems that resulted from industrialisation. Pope Leo XIII, who wrote the first major social encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*; Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler in Mainz and Karl von Vogelsang in Vienna are paradigmatic examples for (political) activities of men strongly influenced by their religious belief and the church that were starting to make themselves felt around the turn of the century. Sometimes with great personal commitment and astonishing programmatic force, these men sought answers to the questions of the time derived from the teachings of the (Catholic) church and, in this way, a further development of the Catholic social ethic.² The origin of the Christian-democratic move-

² Cf. Boyer John W., *Christians and the Challenges of Democracy: The Heritage of*

ment in the Catholic tradition also explains why Christian-democratic parties were mainly formed in countries influenced by Catholicism such as Italy, Belgium, Austria, South Germany and France. In many other countries, including the Protestant states of Northern Europe, these impulses emanated from the existing conservative political parties.

Christian-democratic or conservative?

It is not easy to differentiate between conservative and Christian-democratic positions. It is difficult to make a simplified generalisation when there are so many characteristics that are specific to individual countries. Simon Hix and Christopher Lord date the separation between Christian Democrats and conservatives with the time of the Reformation and trace this back to the conflict between the (national) state and the church. However, it is necessary to question this hypothesis and, in the final analysis, it must be rejected. In contrast to the conflict between the church and state in the nineteenth century, the Reformation did not lead to the church and devout Catholics taking a political position.

In an idealised way, one allegation could be made for both movements that is also of importance for the history of the EPP. Christian Democracy takes a Christian view of man as its starting point: man is a free creature – the creation of the absolutely just God – fallible and prone to guilt, called upon to orient his life, through acts of active charity, on God and His commandments. On the other hand, the conservative view of man has a considerably more pessimistic view (of civilisation) and considers man more as a *hominis lupus* in need of being tamed by a strong state.

Their positions on the state's role in social and economic policies are almost a mirror-image of each other: the free market, in which the state only establishes the general conditions but, in no way, becomes involved in competition, is the ideal model of order for the conservatives. Everybody has a chance on the free market, supply and demand create the optimal distribution of goods and resources, and the question of social justice is brushed aside as being absurd.

the Nineteenth Century; in Kaiser Wolfram / Wohnout Helmut, (2004), *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918-45*. (Vol. 1), London: Routledge: 7-45

On the other hand, the Christian-democratic – or Christian-social – position is borne by the conviction that the market is, in fact, a fundamentally sensible instrument but inadequate for creating social justice. The state should not only establish the parameters for competition but also see to it that the weaker do not become victims of any form of unconstrained competition. It is also necessary for the state to assume the social responsibility for those areas that lie outside of the logic of the market (such as health and retirement insurance).

The role of the national state is especially important for the position in European politics. Taking different approaches, Hix and Lord make an apt characterisation: “From the rebirth of Christian Democratic parties after the Second World War, they have been unanimously committed to the process of European integration. This is rooted in Catholic social doctrine, and the reluctance of the Church to treat the nation state as the ‘natural’ political structure. In contrast, most Conservative parties are more eager to protect the traditional state structures. ... This division is thus a throwback to the earliest political juncture in the formation of the domestic European states: where Christian Democrats had an allegiance to a supranational structure; and Conservatives were wedded to state structures that were defined independently of Rome.”³ Up to today, the different outlooks on the finality of the integration process have had an effect on the institutional cooperation between Christian-democratic and conservative parties that began in the 1980s. This ultimately suffered a setback with the foundation of a separate conservative group in the European Parliament after the 2009 election.

Between the wars. The beginnings of networking

After the First World War, most of the countries of Europe experienced their first – albeit short – period of democracy. The proponents of political Catholicism usually found themselves in denominational parties such as the German Zentrumspartei (Centre Party) or the Christian-Social Party in Austria. Although some of these parties played an influential role in their respective countries in the years between the wars, their ambiguous attitude towards democracy, resulting from

³ Hix Simon / Lord Christopher, (1997), *Political Parties in the European Union*, Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 26 f.

the church tradition of the late nineteenth century, which went hand in hand with temptations of authoritarianism, was probably partly to blame for the rise of the fascist, authoritarian regimes that would ultimately lead to the catastrophe of the Second World War.

During their time spent in exile, the network of Christian-democratic politicians from various European countries increased and, with it, the common reflection on a European post-war order and the position of Christian-democratic parties throughout the continent. In 1924, the *Secrétariat International des Parties Démocratiques d’Inspiration Chrétienne* (SPIDIC) was established in Paris, where it was headquartered, to provide an institutional framework for cooperation between Christian-democratic parties. It remained in operation until 1939. However, this was an extremely weak frame lacking sound structures for institutional cooperation and coherent political positions and visions.

Many of the organisations that were established in exile, such as the People and Freedom Group founded in London in 1936 or the International Christian Democratic Union (ICDU) constituted in 1941, had to struggle with similar problems. These also only survived through the personal relationships of the members; as a rule, their party-political connections were limited. Such organisations were meeting places that provided important discussion forums and brought the leading members of European Christian Democracy, including the Italian priest and founder of the Partito Popolare Italiano, Don Luigi Sturzo, in contact with other Christian democrats as well as conservative and liberal politicians. Looking back on the time spent in exile, Guido Müller and Jürgen Mittag feel that “it is only correct up to a point to speak about European Christian Democracy in the exile period. ... Christian-democratic positions in European exile would be a more appropriate term.”⁴

⁴ Müller Guido / Mittag Jürgen, *Im Zeichen der Diktatur. Parteienkontakte und Europa-konzeptionen des christdemokratischen Exils*; in Mittag Jürgen (ed.), (2006), *Politische Parteien und europäische Integration. Entwicklung und Perspektiven transnationaler Parteienkooperation in Europa*, Essen: Klartext, 266. Originally in German: “... sich nur bedingt von einer europäischen Christdemokratie in der Exilzeit ... sondern treffender von christdemokratischen Positionen im europäischen Exil [sprechen lässt]“, translation by the editor.

The path to the European People's Party

Characterised by reconstruction and the search for stable political structures on the European level, the period after the Second World War brought success at elections and governmental responsibility for the re-established Christian-democratic parties. Karl Magnus Johansson describes the importance of Christian Democracy in the period immediately after the war: “The Christian democratic parties dominated in Little Europe, that is, the six founding member states of the European Coal and Steel Community and subsequently the European Economic Communities. Many of the most eminent political leaders at the time – notably Robert Schuman, Alcide de Gasperi and Konrad Adenauer – were Christian Democrats who enjoyed broad popular support.”⁵

In some countries – including Germany as well as Austria – the newly founded Christian-democratic parties gave up their exclusively denominational orientation and regarded themselves as collective parties with place for Christian-democratic, as well as conservative and liberal, positions. The experience of the war, the newly won political importance and the feeling of the growing threat from Communism led to a conscious orientation towards Western Europe: In any case, European cooperation as an instrument for peace, the economy and defence made a coherent Christian-democratic position and cooperation on the European level necessary.

As early as December 1945, the first informal talks about the creation of a new European organisation were held on the occasion of a party conference of the French Mouvement républicain populaire (MRP). After additional preliminary work, the Nouvelles Equipes Internationales (NEI) were established in 1947. These rather loosely organised networks consisted not only of national parties but also of individual persons and organisations that represented Christian-democratic positions. It became increasingly clear that, in its conception, the NEI was a compromise between an exclusively Christian-democratic orientation and an anti-Socialist collective movement as desired by the CDU/CSU.

⁵ Johansson Karl Magnus, *European People's Party*; in Johansson Karl Magnus / Zervakis Peter, (2002), *European Political Parties between Cooperation and Integration*, Baden-Baden: Nomos: 52

However, the different experiences made by other European parties on the national level made this strict dissociation from the left a matter of dispute. In the BENELUX states, as well as in Italy, the Christian-democratic parties often had close contacts with the Socialist parties and were partially in coalition governments with them.

The NEI had a fundamentally integration-friendly European position. However, there were significant differences, particularly on the subject of the finality of European cooperation: the British and Swiss parties both supported the idea of a Europe of the nations, whereas the majority of the other parties were united in their idea of a European federation.

The continuing developments in European integration soon made the organisational and political deficiencies of the NEI, whose contextual work was limited mainly to the annual conferences, apparent. The NEI regarded itself principally as a Christian-democratic “International” with European integration as an important – but in no way central – matter. And, therefore, the European Union of Christian Democrats was founded in 1965. The EUCD followed in the ideological tradition of the NEI but with the goal of being a more powerful organisation with a clearer (European) political profile. In contrast to the NEI that had been dominated by France, Germany and Italy were the main players in the EUCD.

Conflicts that had already been experienced in the NEI, and usually rose to the surface when dealing with European integration or cooperation with conservative parties, started to make themselves felt during the 1970s. The question of the goal of integration became virulent with the accession of the United Kingdom and Denmark, both reform countries with no (substantial) Christian-democratic traditions. Faced with the future expansion of the European Communities, should the EUCD, with its focus on the principles of the Christian-democratic tradition, remain ideologically cohesive but risk becoming an increasingly unimportant player? Or should an attempt be made to seek long-term cooperation with conservative and liberal parties to assure a dominating position on the European level? The first direct election to the European Parliament in 1979 gave the question of institutional party cooperation even more urgency.

A third line of conflict developed out of the progress of European integration and evolved between the parties in the EC member states and those not in the Community as a result of their different focus and the different possibilities for making an impact on the politics of the EC.

The foundation of the European People's Party

In 1976, the “European People's Party – Federation of Christian Democratic Parties of the European Community” was founded on the basis of the EUCD. Even the name of this new organisation was the result of a compromise that had to be found between the German union parties and the other members of the newly founded European People's Party (EPP). Once again, the CDU/CSU hoped to establish a broad collective movement of non-socialist powers through the union of Christian-democratic, Christian-social, conservative and right-liberal parties. It was also intended that the newly established EPP be in the position of being able to create majorities in an expanded EC; with an eye on future expansion, the circle of members did not have to be strictly tied to the EC membership of the country of origin.

However, the CDU/CSU was unable to find a majority among the other members for both questions. The parties from the BENELUX countries and Italy in particular feared that their Christian-democratic identity could be watered down. The European People's Party therefore remained restricted to the circle of Christian-democratic parties from the EC member states which, in contrast to the “Union of Social-democratic Parties in the EC”, already regarded itself as a party (on the European level).

The political consequence of the EPP's ideologically and regionally restricted construction was the foundation of the “European Democratic Union” (EDU) that took place at Klessheim Castle near Salzburg in 1978. This was principally run by the German union parties, as Klaus Welle, the former general secretary of the EPP and later the EPP-ED group, confirmed: “To understand the creation of the European Democratic Union in 1978 we have to know the background to the foundation of the EPP in 1976. In 1976 the EPP decided to say ‘no’ in two counts: ‘no’ to accepting like-minded parties outside the Christian Democrat tradition and ‘no’ to parties outside the Community. Two years later, the excluded parties joined the CDU/CSU to form

the EDU.”⁶ In contrast to the EPP, the EDU regarded itself not as a party but a meeting place and discussion platform for European centre-right parties that politically did not focus exclusively on matters of the European Community. Alexis Wintoniak, the former executive secretary of the EDU, described the basic ideological orientation in the following manner: “The 1978 Klessheim Declaration had a strong credo: democracy, liberty, the rule of law and social solidarity. The EDU defined itself as the main counterpart to socialism and communism. While in domestic policy issues the EDU stood for a social market economy, at the international level it had a clear zero-tolerance policy towards the communists.”⁷

This meant that, at the beginning of the 1980s, there were three Christian-democratic or centre-right-oriented European organisations: the EUCD, EPP and EDU. These had different functions and perspectives but, principally, were representative of the varied ideological roots of the different European People's Parties.

In the 1980s, the EPP lost its dominant position in the European Parliament: “In the 1980s, the Social Democrats increasingly established themselves as the strongest force in the European Parliament, managing to increase their number of seats from 112 to 180, giving a percentage increase from 27.6 percent to 34.8 percent. Meanwhile the EPP had to face a further relative decline, hitting rock bottom in 1989 with 121 seats and a percentage share of only 23 percent.”⁸

The expansions in 1981 and 1986 resulted in the EPP taking in five parties from Greece (1983) and Spain and Portugal (1986) that had no, or only insignificant, Christian-democratic roots but similar political programmes. Starting with the expansion to the south in the 1980s,

⁶ Welle Klaus, *The European People's Party – a political family reinvents itself*; in Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats in the European Parliament (eds.), (2001), *Our Vision of Europe*, Leuven-Apeldoorn: Garant, 252

⁷ Wintoniak Alexis, *Uniting the Centre-right of Europe: The Result of Historical Development and Political Leadership*; in *European View*, (2006), *Transnational Parties and European Democracy*, Vol. 3 (Spring 2006), 174; at http://thinkingeurope.eu/images/upload/_copy_3.pdf

⁸ Welle, (2001), 243

the dilemma between preserving the ideological and political cohesion within the party and the pragmatic necessity of increasing power was resolved with the opening of the EPP to other centre-right parties.

In the same measure to which the EPP increased in size as a result of the expansion of the EC and the Community showed itself to be the long-term core of European integration efforts, the EUCD lost its *raison d'être*. As a consequence, the EPP and EUCD secretariats merged in 1983.

Opening and expansion

The fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and the democratisation of the former East Bloc were the occurrences that had the greatest impact on Europe as a whole in the 1990s and changed also the face of the EPP. The path of integrating parties from outside the Christian-democratic tradition that had begun in the 1980s was continued. In this connection, particular mention must be made of the admission of the Spanish Partido Popular (PP), whose members had been part of the EPP group since 1989, in 1991. In 1993, Denmark's two conservative parties (Kristendemokraterne and Det Konservative Folkeparti) were admitted. The 1995 expansion increased the EPP by an additional four parties, of which only one – the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) – could be counted as being rooted in the Christian-democratic tradition. The acceptance of European parliamentarians from the British conservatives to the group in 1992 must be seen in connection with this opening.

Wilfried Martens, the president of the EPP, described this development on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the EPP: "Since 1989, the EPP has consistently pursued the occasionally controversial aim of integrating Conservative parties. The reasons for this are easily explained: Six-member Europe's landscape of political parties was no longer in tune with the realities of a Europe of twelve states or more. There is no significantly sized Christian Democrat party in many of the new candidate countries. If the EPP did not want to be sidelined, its only option was to cooperate with other parties of the same political leaning. The concept of a people's party, inherent to the EPP name, increasingly gained significance. It reflects the fact that there are different political traditions in Europe's different countries, which no European

party can afford to ignore."⁹ The EPP's change from an exclusive to integrative focus that had clearly taken place in the 1990s was accompanied by rapid growth: between 1976 and 1989 the number of parties in the EPP merely increased from 11 to 14, but today the organisation has 74 member parties. This was made possible with the amendments to the statutes at the Madrid Congress in 1995 that foresaw the admittance of parties from non-member states of the EU as associate members or observers.

Although, by admitting a wide range of new members after 1999, the EPP once again became the most powerful force in the European Parliament and was able to almost double its number of seats between 1989 and 1999, this policy of opening up and the resulting loss of ideological coherence were not undisputed. The basic programme of the EPP that was passed in Athens in 1992 and is still valid today was clearly in the Christian-democratic tradition; however, later congresses made significant shifts *vis-à-vis* the Christian-democratic policies anchored in that document.

After 1999, the differences within the group with the conservatives were taken into account with the establishment of an individual subgroup – the European Democrats – and the whole group was called the EPP-ED, the European People's Party – European Democrats, until 2009. The "European Democrats" were granted the right to vote against the majority line of the overall faction in institutional matters. As an *argumentum a contrario*, this solution ultimately made the political reconciliation of Christian-democratic and conservative positions in the 1990s apparent. The processes in Great Britain (when the British conservatives became more accessible following the end of Margaret Thatcher) and Italy (where a similar thing happened with Christian-democratic positions when Democrazia Cristiana was voted out of office) are exemplary of this opening.

The new scope of the EPP robbed the EDU of the basis for its legitimation. Correspondingly, starting in 1998, resolutions were introduced to integrate the EDU into the EPP and the process was completed in 2002.

⁹ Martens Wilfried, *Shaping Europe: 25 Years of the European People's Party*; in Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats in the European Parliament (eds.), (2001), *Our Vision of Europe*, Leuven-Apeldoorn: Garant, 234

As a result of the decisions in the European party statutes of 2004, and the subsequent adjustment to the legal form, the EPP also changed its name in 2006. Since then it has been known solely as the “European People’s Party”.

The victory in the 2004 and 2009 elections and the dominating position the EPP has had in European politics since then proved the policy of opening up to have been the right one and can be traced precisely back to this. Welle wrote on this subject: “The EPP-ED has become the strongest force not because its traditional member parties have become stronger or because it has found itself highly successful partners in the new member States, but because it has managed to bring together the civic forces of the European Union in a large people’s party.”¹⁰ Even though the former subgroup of European Democrats – consisting of the British Conservatives, the ODS, the Polish PiS and some small parties – formed an individual faction in the European Parliament in 2009, these findings have remained valid.

The long-term president of the EPP-ED group, and later president of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering, summarises the development of the EPP: “Over the years, the EPP and the EPP-ED-Group have undergone a transformation from a Christian family that was tailored to fit the ‘Europe of the Six’ into an open political family encompassing all of Europe and including moderate and lay parties. This transformation process clearly demonstrates that our key strength lies in our ability to adapt to social change and to new circumstances, whilst maintaining our core values and principles based on the Christian vision of humankind.”¹¹

Perspectives for a new decade

The EPP’s self-image has developed from that of a Christian-democratic European party to a centre-right collective party. The EPP follows the concept of a “union of values” and is aligned to the European heritage

¹⁰ Welle, (2001), 244

¹¹ Pöttering Hans-Gert, *The EPP and the EPP-ED Group: Success through Synergy*, European View, (2006), Transnational Parties and European Democracy, Vol. 3 (Spring 2006), 111

formed of elements originating in Judaism, Christianity, the Enlightenment and modern times. By opening itself, the party has assured its political dominance in Europe – however, the prophetic warning in the 1992 Athens Programme has not lost any of its importance in view of the clearly programmatic shift of emphasis for the development of the EPP: “If it rejects, forgets, neglects or dilutes its values, the European People’s Party will be no more than an instrument of power, without soul or future, while also forfeiting the universal and original nature of its message, which is based in a global apprehension of the irreducible complexity of every human being and of life in society.”¹² Two subjects will be used to depict the political development of the EPP in recent years and formulate questions on its future position.

The most severe economic crisis since 1945, and the challenges of a sustainable solution to this, will play just as important a role in European politics in the years ahead as the subject of the further development of the Union itself. What answers does the EPP have to these questions and which impulses can it expect from its ideological foundation?

Social market economy or free competition?

From the beginning, Christian-democratic inspired economic and social politics were located between the extremes of a collective form of Socialism and market-economy liberalism. The image of a free person, embedded in a solidarity system, who perceived work as self-realisation also left its mark on the Athens Programme. Socialist and nationalist, as well as neoliberal, positions were all rejected unambiguously. The neoliberal logic of the market ignores the social dimension of society. Elsewhere, the social aspects of the European integration project are recognised as being the essential question of the future per se: “Europe will have no meaning unless it is both an economic and a social Europe. At present there is an imbalance in this respect. The social deficit therefore needs to be made up and internal cohesion strengthened as the single market is completed and Economic and Monetary Union takes shape.”¹³

¹² European People’s Party, (1992), Basic Programme. Adopted by the IX EPP Congress, Athens, November 1992, no. 166; at http://www.epp.eu/dbimages/pdf/athene-BASIC_PROGRAM.pdf

¹³ EPP, (1992), no. 241

The subject of social justice that assumes prosperity and peace and the call for systems of collective solidarity in Europe based on this was also given due space. In keeping with the traditions of Catholic social ethics, the economy and social policies are regarded as being a single entity that presuppose and support each other with the goal of promoting common welfare.

However, in the following years, this position was successively neglected in favour of a conservative understanding of the market. In Toulouse (1997) the call for a welfare state with social trimmings was already clearly turned down and the role of the state reduced to that of providing a general framework. The concept of the “social market economy” was reinterpreted, with obvious neoliberal tendencies, under the title of a reform of the European Social Model: “The fundamental elements of the social market economy include the constituent principles of an open market with free competition, the freedom to make contracts and to own private property, along with a steady economic policy. In particular, the regulating principles of competition and distributive policies will control market forces and take care of social needs.”¹⁴

Even if later Congress documents – such as those from Berlin and Rome – once again placed more stress on the social dimension and anchoring the concept of “social market economy” in the Christian-social tradition, the EPP remained on a conservative course in its economic policies. In particular, the Action Programme 2004-2009, which the EPP introduced for the 2004 elections to the European Parliament, shows a clearly conservative-neoliberal economic policy characterised by the buzzwords of liberalisation, privatisation and flexibility. The role of the state is restricted to protecting competition – also in the areas of former public services. The change becomes clearest when setting the ratio between economic growth and social security. The Athens Programme stated quite clearly that economic growth was to serve the prosperity of all and social justice, but this has now been replaced by “social responsibility” being in the service of economic growth: “The EPP maintains that economic dynamism and adapting to the global market are compatible with social responsibility, because the latter is

¹⁴ European People's Party, (1997), “We Are Part of One World”. XII Congress of the European People's Party, Toulouse, November 1997, No. III/2; at http://www.epp.eu/dbimages/pdf/arccong_xii.pdf

a factor for social peace and political stability, without which there can be no sustainable economic progress.”¹⁵

It becomes apparent that the economic crisis also led to a reorientation in the EPP that manifested itself in the 2009 election programme. Here, “social market economy” is described as being the path to a sustainable economic system, and attention is drawn to the fact that the European integration project always had a specific social dimension: “The goals of great European achievements like the Single Market and our common single currency, the euro, were always the added value they would deliver to citizens by stimulating economic development and creating more employment in an increasingly globalising world.”¹⁶ In contrast to the 2004 election programme, that of 2009 is more restrained when dealing with questions of the economy and order and considerably more sceptical about free competition. However, the programme is also not able to develop new visions of how a European economic system could be constructed that would do more justice to the demands for increasing prosperity, social justice and ecological sustainability than the previous system.

Finis Europae: goals and borders

The creation of a federal Europe in which close economic and political integration would make militant confrontations no longer possible was the response made by the Christian-democratic founding fathers of European integration to the catastrophe of the Second World War. In spite of all the discontinuity in the period before 1945, the NEI, along with the EUCD, was fascinated by the pan-European ideas and approaches that led towards a “United States of Europe”. In contrast to the Social Democrats, the vision of political integration through economic cooperation had been one of the core concerns of European Christian Democracy since its political renaissance after 1945.

¹⁵ European People's Party, (2004), Action Programme 2004-2009. Adopted by the EPP Congress, Brussels, February 2004, lines 592-594; at http://www.epp.eu/dbimages/pdf/en0402_c_txt_actprog.pdf

¹⁶ European People's Party, (2009), “Strong for the People”. EPP Election Document 2009. Adopted by the EPP Congress, Warsaw, April 2009, 4; at http://www.epp.eu/dbimages/pdf/EN-ELECTION-DOC-FINAL_copy_2.pdf

In 1992, the year of the Maastricht Treaty, the EPP described the political union as the goal of the integration process in its basic policy statement: “In line with the commitment to Europe which the Christian Democrats have shown since the very beginning, the EPP calls for a gradual – but resolute – transformation of the European community into a genuine political union on a federal model.”¹⁷ Compared with earlier programmes, this formulation sounded considerably more restrained; this can be attributed to an increase in realism after more than 30 years of integration; in addition, the kind of federal model mentioned is not clearly defined.

The opening of the EPP and admission of what were principally bourgeois or conservative parties, the growing dissension between the member states concerning the future development of the Union, manifested in the post-Maastricht governmental conferences, and probably the EPP's close cooperation with conservative forces in the European Parliament have also led to a gradual reorientation of the party on the question of the finality of Europe.

The Berlin Congress did away with the customary understanding of a federal Europe and, drawing attention to the historically unprecedented model of the European Union, stated: “As Europe is a new form of political organisation, sole, ultimate, or universal responsibility will no longer exist at any level. Europe will not be a federation in the conventional sense, but a new form of federal system, of which economic and monetary union is the precursor. This unique form of political organisation will follow the objectives of federalism and the community method.”¹⁸

With the institutional shortcomings of the Union in mind, in Berlin, the EPP called for a constitutional treaty that should order the competences between the Union and its member states with the principle of subsidiarity in mind. It was precisely this notion of subsidiarity, with its roots in Catholic social ethics and which had formerly mainly been used by Christian Democrat politicians to justify European competences in economic and social policy, that became the battle cry of the supporters of an institutionally weakened Union to the advantage of

¹⁷ EPP, (1992), no. 201

¹⁸ EPP, (2001), no. 411

the member states.

The traditional scepticism that conservative parties have towards the delegation of national competences to the supranational level can be seen in the Action Programme 2004-2009 which provides an interesting new definition of the term “federalism”: “Contrary to what one often hears on the subject, true federalism involves uniting countries in pursuit of commonly defined objectives, but at the same time respecting the diversity of their cultures, traditions and languages, and allowing them the broadest possible autonomy in how they choose to achieve these objectives.”¹⁹

Has the EPP relinquished its political goal of a European federal state in favour of a union of states? The defeat of the constitutional treaty and the uncertainty about the future of the Lisbon Treaty that still continues after the 2009 elections to the European Parliament have restricted the scope for new visions of the future form of Europe. The 2009 electoral programme remains silent on this point to a large degree – the question of whether this is an indication of a new setting of priorities in the time of the economic crisis or can be interpreted as representing a wide-scale lack of unity between the member states must remain unanswered.

An ongoing programmatic process

Since its foundation in 1976, the European People's Party has demonstrated a high degree of adaptability to real-life political situations and an equally high integrative level. These talents have assured its dominant role in European politics but, at the same time, frequently stretched the internal coherence of the party to its limits. In Hans Gert Pöttering's opinion: “The diversity of traditions and the very short history to date, of some of the newly formed parties in the new member states inevitably caused tensions within both the Party and the Group. Here the process of agreeing to a common programmatic basis plays a key role in overcoming differences. ... Although the Basic Programme of Athens has by no means lost its validity, the EPP is nevertheless engaged in an ongoing programmatic process.”²⁰ This kind of broad pro-

¹⁹ EPP, (2004), 184-187

²⁰ Pöttering, (2006), 113

grammatic discussion will remain important for the Party – and here, above all, for the creation of new political visions and concepts – in the future.

Building on the foundations of its deep-rooted ideological breadth, it is able to fall back on a multitude of different intellectual and political traditions and make use of their impulses for a new form of politics. In this respect, the Catholic social ethic that has been continuously developed since *Rerum Novarum* provides a great number of approaches for dealing with questions of social and global justice that could be of importance in discussions on a new economic order after the crisis. In addition, the heritage and potential of the Catholic tradition, which is critical of the national state, could be beneficial in the discourse to be held on the finality of integration and the common understanding of federalism.

The economic crisis – and its consequences for the economic and social structure of Europe and the organisational possibilities of (national) politics that are unforeseeable today – has made the limits of politics dramatically apparent. The credibility of politics, and with it the future of European integration, will depend, to a large extent, on whether it is possible to provide new answers and, in this way, guarantee the European social and life model in global competition.

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How to Shape a Sustainable Economy – Economically, Socially and Ecologically

Klemens Riegler

Summary

“Every crisis is a gift from destiny to working people.” This is what the Austrian writer Stefan Zweig said so fittingly. I don’t want to go into the details of the crisis we are in at present. We all know the facts – more or less. We all know enough to know that things cannot continue as they are. Famine, climate and economic crises are obvious enough signals of the failure of our current economic and social system. Our system is not sustainable in any way: neither socially, nor ecologically, nor even economically. In a speech made following the outbreak of the financial and economic crisis, Alan Greenspan, head of the US Federal Reserve for many years, said that the whole structure of belief, on the basis of which he had made his decisions, had crumbled. These are very clear words from a man who, like few others on this planet, has played such an active role in the economy in recent years. They are also words which should give encouragement to all of us here especially. Those who have been warning for years that this economic system is unsustainable. Those who were ridiculed by many – above all, by economists – during the years of mainstream-market fundamentalism.

I therefore want to pose the question: how can we – or how must we – shape the economy so that it fulfils all three of the following goals at the same time, that is to say, the preservation of our ecosystem, cohesion and justice in our social fabric, and long-term economic added value? At the outbreak of the current economic crisis a critical economist basically surmised that a system regularly creating crises that can only be resolved by suspending the basic principles of its very system – the key word being the nationalisation of banks – cannot be the smartest solution. How very true. We therefore need the courage to really start thinking outside the box and to broach and tackle issues that were still

taboo a short time ago. And, we also need the trust that this necessary change is neither bad nor frightening, but doable, and will bring many positive developments with it.

What are the challenges of this change from the perspective of the eco-social market economy that is going to be renewed this year on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary? Let me mention some key words – without making any claims to completeness.

Key word “consumption of resources”

The consumption of natural resources has increased immensely due to worldwide population and economic growth. In 1980, almost 40 billion tonnes were taken from the global ecosystem. In 2002, this figure was almost 53 billion tonnes, which represents an increase of a third in 22 years.²¹ If the current trend continues, the extraction of resources could rise to 100 billion tonnes by 2030.²²

People in rich countries consume up to ten times more natural resources than those in poor ones. On average, North Americans use around 90 kilograms of resources per day and capita, Europeans around half of this, whereas in Africa, the daily per capita consumption is only around ten kilograms.

Key word “economic growth”

Many political speeches still imply that high economic growth is the basic requirement for further development. Exponents of the prevailing growth paradigms regard economic growth as one of the most important socio-economic and political goals. Growth increases prosperity,

²¹ Giljum, St., Behrens, A., Hinterberger, F., Lutz, Ch., Meyer, B. (2008). Modelling scenarios towards a sustainable use of natural resources in Europe. *Environmental Science & Policy* 11, pp. 204-216.

²² Giljum, S., Hinterberger, F., Bruckner, M., Burger, E., Frühmann, J., Lutter, S., Pirgmaier, E., Polzin, C., Waxwender H., Kernegger, L., Warhusrt, M. (2009). *Ohne Mass und Ziel? Über den Umgang mit den natürlichen Ressourcen der Erde*. Bericht.

increases employment and decreases unemployment; growth facilitates structural change and improvements in working conditions; growth resolves conflicts over distribution, etc. On the other hand, we all know that economic growth has dramatically worsened the resource and environment situation on our planet.

The standard response of “growth optimists” to this dilemma is the attainment of a decoupling of economic growth from its negative impacts on the environment. Even though impressive results in raising the productivity of resources could be achieved in the past, a total dematerialisation from economic growth is illusionary. An annual growth rate of two percent and the goal to reduce CO₂ emissions by 80 percent by 2050 – which the G20 countries have agreed to – mean that the resource productivity of fossil energy sources would have to increase by around 5 percent each year. In reality, productivity grew by 2.5 percent annually between 1965 and 1995 in all the OECD countries.²³ This means that the much demanded and much trumpeted absolute decoupling has not been achieved in spite of all the best efforts undertaken. Sustained growth is therefore an extremely improbable scenario in the long term. Ultimately, infinite material growth is just not possible in a finite world.

Key word “distribution justice”

Here, there are several parallel developments. On the one hand, the positive economic development of populous countries like China and India has reduced unequal distribution worldwide. However, the situation has not improved in the very poor regions of Africa, and in most countries, particularly in the Western industrialised nations, the income gap is becoming wider and wider. A World Bank comparative study of 100 countries illustrates that the world’s poorest 5 percent have lost 25 percent of their real incomes in recent years, whereas the world’s richest 5 percent have gained a further 12 percent. Worldwide, 2.7 billion people living in poverty have to share as much income as

²³ Breitenfellner, A. (2009): *Wachstum – Krise – Wandel. Überlegungen zur Nachhaltigkeit aus Anlass von Finanz-, Rohstoff- und Klimakrise*. In Hinterberger, F., Hutterer, H., Omann, I., Freytag, E. (eds.): *Welches Wachstum ist nachhaltig? Ein Argumentarium*. Mandelbaum

the 50,000 richest.²⁴

Joseph Stiglitz²⁵ regards the increase in income disparity since the beginning of the 1980s as a key structural reason for the current world economic crisis. As the propensity to consume is lower in wealthy households than in lower income groups, growing inequality has to lead to an immense weakening in demand. In fact, the poor income situation of low-income groups in the USA was compensated for by an enormous increase in private and public household debt, whereas redistribution in Europe has led to increased savings accompanied by the restrictive fiscal policy and low growth rate associated with this. The demand for credit in the USA and some other countries was met by the surplus savings of some European and other countries, likewise due to distribution. The lack of demand could be limited in this way at short notice, in the long-term, however, the problem increased – instability grew and erupted into the current crisis.

What does this incomplete ramble through the challenges for the eco-social market economy agenda mean?

Firstly: the most important thing for us to do is to change the direction of our economic activity. It is not the growth in Gross Domestic Product but the raising of living standards that has to take centre stage. While raising living standards means improving existential security, health, social cohesion, education and work, as well as the natural environment on the one hand, it also means improving individual well-being, something which is very subjective.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was never meant to be a measure of a nation's prosperity. It is a very limited indicator on which, among other things, the destruction of the environment and its repair has a positive impact, whereas avoiding environmental damage often has a negative influence. It is an indicator that does not reveal anything about the gap between rich and poor which is widening in most countries.

²⁴ Milanovic, B. (2005). *World Apart. Measuring International and Global Inequality*, Princeton University Press: Woodstock.

²⁵ Fitoussi, J.-P., Stiglitz, J. (2009), "The Ways Out of the Crisis and the Building of a More Cohesive World", OFCE Document de travail, 17, 2009.

Bringing the quality of life to the fore means that the announcement of the quarterly GDP forecasts should not be the measure of all things in a country, but whether the situation is improving for the people. The EU Commission's Beyond GDP project that is looking for new indicators for economic activity, as well as a commission in France chaired by Joseph Stiglitz that recently presented President Sarkozy with a report on new measurements for the economy, shows that we are on the right track in our approach.

Secondly: we must succeed in establishing cost transparency in our economic system. Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker said: "The price has to tell the truth", so that we closely limit our use of resources and CO₂ emissions. In our opinion, there are two possible approaches in the area of climate change at the moment: on the one hand, the further expansion of CO₂ emission trading for the purpose of climate justice and, on the other, a stronger "greening" of the tax systems in many countries. This means taxing energy and CO₂ emissions more ardently and therefore unburdening the factor labour. This was also validated by recent research in the EU that showed that a correctly implemented greening of the tax system is not only a positive thing for the environment but also for the economy and employment. For example, the ecological tax reform carried out in Germany resulted in around 250,000 extra jobs being created. Most of these were "green jobs" which we also need right now to rebuild our energy system and achieve the climate change objectives.

Thirdly: at the moment, the international community is still lagging behind in its development-policy promises. Instead of the 0.7 percent of GDP promised in development aid since the 1970s, a mere 0.3 percent was invested in 2008 – US \$120 billion in total.²⁶ On the other hand, developing countries are losing an estimated \$124 billion every year in lost income from offshore assets held in tax havens.²⁷ The loss of customs revenue due to free trade agreements and the re-introduction of export subsidies in the EU for agricultural commodities are exacerbating the situation. Therefore, it is an urgent necessity – particularly

²⁶ OECD (2009), "Development aid at its highest level ever in 2008";

http://www.oecd.org/document/35/0,3343,en_2649_34447_42458595_1_1_1_1,00.html

²⁷ Oxfam (2009); <http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2009-03-13/tax-haven-could-deliver-120bn-year-fight-poverty>.

in the present economic crisis – to increase development aid, put an end to tax havens and, after the conclusion of the Doha round, usher in a new round of negotiations in the WTO. However, this should be a development round that actually takes social and ecological factors into account as well.

Fourthly: There can be no doubt that the financial markets got out of control due to a too-high degree of liberalisation and deregulation. In the EU and at the G20 summit, a number of measures were agreed upon which partly reverse this development. Experts are, however, putting a big question mark over whether these measures are enough. The control and supervision of banks, as well as hedge funds, has to go much further. In our view, it would also be necessary to consider banning, or the compulsory registration of, certain financial products. It cannot, and must not, be possible that bets placed on bets push hundreds and thousands of people, above all in developing countries, further into poverty because these speculations excessively increase the price of their food. The financial market has to become a servant of the real economy again – and not a disconnected giant bubble in which only a few can benefit. An important element would be the introduction of a tax on financial transactions that would not only bring around 80 billion euros in revenue in the EU alone, but also lead to greater stability and more transparency on the financial markets.²⁸

And fifthly: if we take our analyses of the consumption of resources and economic growth seriously, we have to consider how the economy and society can operate without any – or with just a small amount of – economic growth. We ourselves are still only at the very beginning on this issue. It is clear, however, that we will have to ask ourselves this question, and the sooner we do this the more smoothly we can make the change that is in all likelihood necessary. Without any GDP growth, the question of distribution is raised again because where nothing new is added, what already exists must be more fairly distributed. With GDP growth, we have to think about new work models because our working life will need to be shortened to avoid unemployment. Without GDP growth, monetary and fiscal policy has to be devised anew, as zero GDP growth also means zero interest and zero net investments.

²⁸ Schulmeister, S., Schratzenstaller M., Picek, O. (2008); “A General Financial Transaction Tax – Motives, Revenues, Feasibility and Effects”

In his first speech to the UN assembly in September 2009, President Obama said: “Now is the time for all of us to take our share of responsibility for a global response to global challenges. If we are honest with ourselves, we need to admit that we are not living up to that responsibility.” I agree with him, he is absolutely right. Let us do more. Let us create an eco-social market economy.

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Trust as a Basic Political Value

Christian Sebastian Moser

Summary

In international surveys of various professions using the trust index,²⁹ politicians and – since the start of the economic crisis – managers of international concerns, regularly land in the last two places. These results should be a warning signal for politics. Democracies, parties and states can only function over the long term if the citizens have faith in the politicians they elect. That is the reason why, for a long time, there has been an intense debate in political science, political marketing and politics itself about how trust in the institutions as well as politics, can be increased.

Edgar Wangen applied the definition of marketing to politics and interpreted it in the following manner: “Political marketing is a strategic, instrumental concept of the parties, which orientates party functions towards the current and future requirements of the political spectrum and, thereby, in particular, towards the actual and potential wishes of the citizen, in order to achieve party goals and/or the individual political goals of politicians.”³⁰ Political marketing can be subdivided into political product policy, political price policy and political distribution policy. In 1965, the CDU was the first party in the German-speaking world to avail itself of the systematic use of political marketing. Academic discourse attempts, with the help of the term “political marketing”, to better understand modern political processes and, particu-

²⁹ Annually since 2003 the trust index of market-research institute GfK has recorded the degree of trust placed in members of certain occupations: jurists, journalists, members of the church, teachers, managers, medical professionals, members of the military, politicians, police officers and lawyers. Cf. http://www.gfk.com/imperia/md/content/presse/pd_trust_index_2007_dfin.pdf

³⁰ Wangen, Edgar: Polit-Marketing. Das Marketing Management der politischen Parteien. Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen, 1983, p. 23

larly, the behaviour of political organisations. A decrease in ideological differences, the increase in the unpredictability of the voters' behaviour and the lower attentiveness of the digital media society force those active in politics to pursue new paths when communicating with the electorate. In other words, the tools of political marketing are used to improve the understanding of the citizens' concerns. Naturally, this plays a decisive role in election campaign periods. A party has to act in a client-orientated manner towards the voters in order to survive – both politically and economically. This objective has two direct consequences for the parties:

- Parties are confronted with a limited number of political opponents.
- In a period of diminishing party ideologies, parties are increasingly offering the same service: competent government of the country.

The central questions in political marketing (political advertising, political PR) are:

- How can I reach the voter with my issues?
- How can I succeed in getting my party elected?
- Why was my party elected?

Two factors of political marketing

In order to provide answers to these questions, political marketing primarily relies on two groups of conditional factors. On the one hand, so-called personality factors, individual psychological properties, such as attitude, motives and values, deeply rooted in the personality, are considered. On the other, political marketing also concentrates on environmental factors fundamental to the surroundings in which the voter lives. These include the profession, income, education and membership in specific groups.³¹ Whereas earlier discussions in social science assumed a stronger influence of the social structure on political

³¹ Falter, Jürgen W. / Schumann, Siegfried / Winkler, Jürgen: Erklärungsmodelle von Wählerverhalten, in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B 37-38 1990, Bonn, 1990; Woyke, Wichard: *Stichwort: Wahlen. Wähler - Parteien - Wahlverfahren*. Leske+Budrich, Opladen, 1998.

behaviour – speaking of a “politicised social structure” – those which have taken place over the past two decades have increasingly asserted the notion of a serious loss of importance for socio-structural variables. It is no longer the feeling of belonging to a specific social group but, increasingly, individual considerations that play the decisive role.³²

Different procedures have been used to explain this development. Usually, the increase in individualisation in modern Western societies is quoted as the principal theory. One characteristic of the post-industrial, service-orientated society is the decreasing bonding of traditional social groups. The reasons for this – beginning in the heyday of Fordism – were the increase in the workers' purchasing power, the expansion of services provided by the welfare state, urbanisation and the trend towards higher education in many classes of society. In addition, changes in values, in particular as reported by Inglehart,³³ also played a role. The sixty-eighters' changes in values – particularly in the German-speaking world – led to a displacement of old, material values by new post-material ones such as environmental protection, equality and an increase in citizen participation. Meanwhile, post-Fordian production logic makes it possible to empirically observe a return to classical values (security, performance and materialism) and, for this reason, I speak about a second change in values or a change in the change in values. In any case, both the change in values and the second change in values have resulted in a lasting change in the connection between socio-structural characteristics and voting behaviour. Today, parties can no longer rely on a solid, socio-structurally defined voter stock. On the contrary, new constellations are formed from one election to the next.

³² Dalton, Russell J. / Beck Paul A. / Flanagan, Scott C. (eds.): *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Realignment or Dealignment?* Princeton University Press, Princeton 1984.; Brettschneider, Frank / van Deth, Jan / Roller, Edeltraud: *Europäische Integration in der öffentlichen Meinung*. leske + budrich, Opladen 2002; Pappi, Franz Urban: *Die politisierte Sozialstruktur heute: Historische Reminiszenz oder aktuelles Erklärungspotential?* in Brettschneider, Frank / van Deth, Jan / Roller, Edeltraud: *Europäische Integration in der öffentlichen Meinung*. leske + budrich, Opladen, 2002.

³³ Inglehart, Ronald: *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1977; Inglehart, Ronald: *Modernization and Postmodernization. Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, 1997.

Diminishing party bonding

Since the 1960s, there has been a decrease in party bonding in all West European countries. In my comments, I will deal specifically with Austrian developments after 1945. Between the mid-1970s and 1999, the portion of persons with a strong connection to a party was halved and today amounts to only 16 percent. In addition, the number of party members decreased from 23 percent in 1969 to 16 percent in 2001.³⁴

Along with these changes, there has been a – in some cases dramatic – decrease in the organisational mobilisation and campaign capabilities of the parties. It is possible to differentiate between three phases in the erosion of party bonding in Austria:

The first phase lasted from the late 1960s to the end of the 1970s and led to a structural weakening of traditional party loyalty (de-alignment).³⁵

The de-alignment theory is based on the long-term erosion of traditional party bonding and the dissolution of the traditional milieu of the large parties. The fragmentation of society, the increase in floating voters and the erosion in traditional patterns and determinants have resulted in a change in voting behaviour. Fritz Plasser and Peter Ulram give the developing socio-economic changes (the decrease in the agricultural ratio, the increase in regional and professional mobility, industrialisation and the suburbanisation of formerly rural regions), as well as the modernisation of production structures (decrease in the number of industrial employees, decrease in retail trade and small businesses, the increase in the service and public sectors, etc.), as reasons for this new voting behaviour. This first phase is described as a gradual de-alignment limited to voters with a weak party identification and had the character of a secularisation process (a “Westernisation” of Austrian democracy). In Austria, the phase of affective de-alignment began at the end of the 1970s. An increase in general party weariness and, at the same time, the beginning of elite criticism, in the form of emotional “anti-political” reflexes and resentments, could be observed up to the middle of the 1980s. Political-organisational bonds were loosened. It was only possible to integrate the upcoming voter generation

³⁴ Schoen, Harald: *Wählerwandel und Wechselwahl: eine vergleichende Untersuchung*. Westdeutscher Verlag. Wiesbaden, 2003, p. 26

³⁵ Plasser, Fritz / Ulram, Peter A.: *Das österreichische Politikverständnis. Von der Konsens zur Konfliktkultur?* facultas.wuv Universitätsverlag, Vienna, 2003. pp. 84; 88

into the traditional party environment to a minor degree. A series of political scandals (weapons exports to countries at war, Hainburg, the wine scandal, Lucona affair, Vienna General Hospital scandal, etc.) stirred up dissatisfaction with the political system: a new line of conflict, built on ecological cleavage and gender cleavage, was formed that finally led to the founding of a new party, The Greens, and its election to parliament, for the first time in 1986.

In the third phase, there was a change in political culture moving in the direction of protest voting. At this time, de-alignment also took hold of the core groups, segments of the loyal voters of the two major parties, the Austrian Social Democrats (SPÖ) and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP). The SPÖ suffered massive losses in working-class strongholds to the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and, between 1986 and 1994, party identification decreased by 16 percentage points (from 60 to 44 percent). Two factors were responsible for this dynamism: firstly, the repeat of the grand coalition in 1986 – dubbed the oversized coalition in the media – stimulated oppositional reflexes as both parties were accused of being indistinguishable. Secondly, this period saw the beginning of the strategic activities of the FPÖ under Jörg Haider. Haider transformed latent protest positions into manifest resentments and changed Austria's political culture. Haider exploited politically charged topics such as migration and crime (one claim from this period: Vienna must not become Chicago) and developed the post-modern political style of strategic affect management. The results of this third phase of de-alignment were not only the more rapid erosion of party bonding but also a significantly weakened stratum of loyal voters. Between 1979 and 1994, the number of floating voters almost tripled, and the number of non-voters more than doubled. In the same period, the combined voter potential of the SPÖ and ÖVP sank from 85 percent to slightly over 50 percent.

New challenges for political marketing

A second decisive change in political marketing followed the changes in the structure of the electorate. Since the 1970s, methods used for advertising consumer products have also been used in political advertising. However, placing political communication on the same level as commercial communication is problematic. Whereas commercial

advertising promotes goods and services, political advertising is a means of putting ideologies, interests and issues into practice. Political communication aims at promoting political goals and ideas, has aims in the cultural, social and value fields, and propagates – in accordance with the individual party programs – differing ideologies on the way of life. The difference between these two disciplines is clear – and maybe this is precisely why one likes to overlook it: we can buy and possess products promoted through commercial advertising. On the other hand, politics is not a consumer product, even if advertising experts want to make us believe it is. From this statement, one can see that it is necessary to be careful when transferring the methods and strategies of consumer advertising, one-to-one, to politics. Identification, commitment, recognition, remembering and, especially, changes in behaviour have to be evaluated differently in the area of political communication. At best, knowledge gained in the field of public-interest communications is applicable when dealing with our problems: factors that are critical, and difficult to fulfil, in the extremely reactive field of political communication. However, it must be stated that there are, indeed, crossover points between product and political advertising. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the individualist has become used to regarding everything that makes up his experienced world as an attribute of his solitary existence. This applies to people, products, trademarks and strategies for living just as it does to political parties. Their problem is that they no longer find their aesthetically and argumentatively clear core and target groups. Once again, a kaleidoscope comes into play, an array of all possibilities and variations, appealing to the greatest possible number of individual concepts. This inflation of possibilities leads to a loss in the significance of a political party and its representatives. The image has changed: “one like me, one for all” has become “one like all”.

According to the definition of the American Marketing Association (AMA), developed in 1968, both product advertising and classical marketing are in a state of crisis. In the AMA definition, marketing is the planning process for the conception, price policy, promotion and distribution of products and services, in order to create exchange processes which fulfil individual and organisational goals. Products flop, innovation cycles become shorter, the opinion pollsters fail in their forecasts on product acceptance and election results (Vienna election 2005, German Bundestag election 2005, Austrian National Assembly

election 2002, etc.). According to Stephen Brown,³⁶ this can be traced back to the false and outdated classification categories used in market and opinion polling. Progress in the area of marketing is hindered by the false assumptions that a) students represent consumers, b) the laboratory represents the real world, c) statistical significance confers real significance, d) correlation equates to causation and e) mentioning limitations makes them go away.

A flexible concept of society

Cultural studies have reacted to the crisis of social science's classical investigation categories (age, gender, purchasing power, education, place of residence, etc.) and developed the more flexible concept of noncommittal voting societies, the so-called neo-tribes. This model assumes that fast-moving, short-lived interest and voting societies have replaced rigid categories such as origin and ethnicity. On the one hand, these societies are determined by their interest categories and affinity and, on the other, by spatial proximity (in reality, in the neighbourhood; virtually, in cyberspace). Celia Lury has provided a good definition: “Neo-tribes are marked by their fluidity: they are locally condensed and dispersed, periodically assembled and scattered. They are momentary condensations in the flux of everyday consumer life; however, while they are fragile, ephemeral and unstable, they command intense emotional or affectual involvement from their fickle members.”³⁷

Trust as a category in political marketing

Transferred to politics, this could mean that one does not have to be a formal member in order to be a party supporter. The important fact is to generate the affective involvement – the commitment – of the voter. In addition, it must be borne in mind that politics, especially in a phase of value conservatism in society as a whole, is not really in the position of being able to afford novelty. Quite the opposite, it would be counter-productive. The familiar cannot master newly emerging,

³⁶ Brown, Stephen: *Postmodern Marketing*. International Thomson Business Press, London 1995. p. 50

³⁷ Lury, Celia: *Consuming Cultures*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1996. p. 251

threatening situations. On the other hand, novelty is a constant value in advertising. It is seen as a motive for purchasing, an image transfer, an aesthetic twist, or it simply activates the fun of shopping. The Janus-faced mixture of old and new creates huge problems for politics: the new unsettles but, on the other hand, this is what the citizen demands. This usually leads to a rigid setting made up of old values and structures and new phrases and faces. As Günther Flott stated so lucidly, this can have the following, lethal result: “The people elect – in all parties – images. ... Parties appear to be interchangeable, voters are baffled and lose faith.”³⁸

It is a fact that, since the 1990s, parties, parliament and government in Austria have achieved miserable trust ratings. In 1994, the following showed the ranking of trust in Austrian institutions: in first place, the federal president (in Austria, elected almost exclusively for ceremonial activities), followed by the police, the courts, public administrative offices, the army, the churches, the trade unions, parliament, government, newspapers and television and, far behind, the last place went to the parties. Eleven years later, the parties are still near the bottom of the trust index – however, now only second to last. As a result of the discussion on globalisation, Austrians now trust multinational companies least. The lack of authenticity is what makes parties so little trustworthy. In his, well worth reading, resignation interview in the *taz* daily newspaper, the German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer stated: “I was one of the last German rock’n’roll politicians still performing live. What we see now, however, is the advent of a generation of playback politicians.”³⁹ In spite of stone-throwing in his youth, and his unconventional appearance as a politician, Joschka Fischer was Germany’s most popular politician for a long period. Even more important than popularity is the fact that the Germans believed and trusted him.

Based on this observation, I would like to introduce my theory and put it on the table: “trust” is a key category in political marketing. Trust stands at the very beginning of any political commitment. The German sociologist Niklas Luhmann stole the word “trust” from everyday lan-

³⁸ Flott, Günther: Wie befragt man Rechtsextremisten. Anmerkungen zum journalistischen Umgang mit Verfassungsfeinden. In Frankfurter Hefte 3/2005 Neue Verlags-Gesellschaft der Frankfurter Hefte, Berlin, 2005, p. 20)

³⁹ *taz*, 5 September 2005

guage and cultivated it for the social-science debate.⁴⁰ According to Luhmann, trust is necessary to reduce the complexity of human life. One needs trust for the reductionism of a future of, more or less, uncertain complexity. To use Luhmann’s words: trust is a form of security.

Trust as a basic value of the EPP

A broad understanding of security, including inner and external security, as well as that concerning the workplace and contractual agreements, has always been one of the core basic values of the European People’s Party. However, trust and security can only be achieved and maintained in the present. Neither an uncertain future nor the past are capable of inspiring a sense of security. Even what once was is not immune from the possibility of the future discovery of another past. Therefore, if a party wants to gain the trust of the voter, it must start with the future horizon of the relevant current present. A person who intends to establish trust in politics must attempt to have a clear picture of the future.

A person who promotes trust must have a close relationship to the voters and the world they live in. Familiarity with an organisation is a prerequisite for trust or mistrust. In other words: trust is a requirement for any sort of party involvement. To become involved with a certain ideology, one must, first of all, believe in it to be able to follow the organisation and its representatives. Luhmann goes even further. For him, a theory of time is a prerequisite for a theory of trust. In other words, in a familiar world, the past dominates the present and future. However, if the voter knows less and less about the history, content and ideology of the individual parties, it becomes obvious that he will have less trust.

Trust as the basis of political commitment

This is another reason for my argument that, from the very beginning of any form of commitment, there must be trust in an organisation.

⁴⁰ Luhmann, Niklas: *Vertrauen. Ein Mechanismus der Reduktion sozialer Komplexität.* UTB, Stuttgart, 2000.

First of all, I must trust the party; only then can I identify with it, vote for it and/or become involved in it. Commitment as organisational bonding is a measure of the extent to which citizens feel involved with a party or its individual representatives.⁴¹ Commitment to an organisation usually remains comparatively stable, whereas identification with a party depends greatly on the context. In the literature on organisational psychology, commitment is subdivided into three components:

Affective commitment means an emotional bonding with an organisation. Persons who feel a strong affective commitment to another person feel that they are part of a family (organisation). One feels that one belongs to the organisation and wants to continue belonging. Persons with an affective commitment want to be part of an organisation.

Normative commitment means that a person feels bonded to an organisation through moral-ethical beliefs. Persons with a normative commitment are part of an organisation because they believe that they should be part of that organisation.

The third sub-form is one of a commitment based on continuity. Here, one understands a bond to an organisation based on the costs connected with leaving that organisation (e.g. change of location, loss of social connections, etc.). Persons with a continuity-based commitment are primarily engaged in the activities of an organisation because they have to be. The main goal of political parties is to have the highest possible percentage of their voters made up of loyal voters. Loyal voters are multipliers of a party who feel a strong connection to the party beyond election day. They promote their party in conversations with their friends. For this reason, the motto for election activities is: rally the faithful!

A party is most likely to attract floating voters if it is able to produce a normative commitment using appropriate topics and messages during an election campaign. Persons having a normative commitment will not necessarily share or support the whole range of the party's ideology, but reach their decisions based on a subjective assessment of their interests. And, trust stands at the very beginning of any political relationship.

⁴¹ van Dick, Rolf: Commitment und Identifikation mit Organisationen. Hogrefe, Göttingen 2004, pp. 2-4

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The Economy and Social Affairs as a Symbiotic Whole – Social Philosophy as the Basis for Social and Economic Policy

Werner Fasslabend

Summary

Today, it has become popular to create an artificial separation between the social and economic spheres that are now described as adversaries. The social philosophy of the Christian churches offers itself as a corrective to the esoteric salvation ideologies of the new social movements and this also – and especially – for non-believers. On a micro-level, it provides a sound, non-dogmatic foundation for solving pressing everyday problems and shows a third path between the antipodes of capitalism and socialism. Social philosophy means thinking of these supposed antitheses as a single entity. With its humble anthropology, social philosophy understands the finiteness and weaknesses of mankind, and its guidelines provide orientation for a dignified, not purely materially assured, life.

According to the Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean Claude Juncker, social policy will determine the success or failure of the European Union: “Workers must be given their place in the European Union. Europe is not just the Europe of finance ministers and bankers, the Europe of bureaucrats and foreign ministers. Europe must also be a Europe of the people who feel at home on this continent because a form of social policy has been implemented that is compatible with their goals and wishes for life.” Here, Juncker gives – in nuce – a precise summary of a paradigm shift in the discourse on the social state. Since the 1990s, there have been cross-border changes in social policies that are often substantiated with ideas such as personal responsibility, participatory justice and generation fairness. Social policy has to be based on values that theoretically legitimate them and which can be resorted to in transitional periods. Christian social philosophy provides this kind of theoretical, but not teleological, foundation for social policies. Social

philosophy does not consider itself a doctrine of deliverance, with an inner-worldly claim to salvation, but creates its foundations based on an idea of humanity and an anthropology that describes – and takes seriously – the inferior creature that is man (Gehlen) in its entirety. However, social policies, in particular, require a theoretical foundation; without this, they run the risk of being abused for populist activities that cannot be financed. The current extreme interest in social questions does not necessarily indicate an especially highly developed feeling for fairness on the part of the actors involved; primarily, the politicians involved tend to show themselves as “left, because it’s easy”. The inference of the editorial in the newspaper *Die Zeit* was that the debate on minimum wages was not an indication that voters had become more social, but quite simply that the electorate wanted more money and fewer challenges. Those appearing today as advocates of social questions all too often mix “altruism, bigotry and vested interests”. Social is seen as a codeword for a policy that “demands less from the individual and gives him more”.⁴² But, over the long term, popular politics are not always the most social. The bottom line is still: there is no such thing as a free lunch. And this is the sore point in the current socio-political debates. “In this country, not wanting now means one thing above all: reducing politics to social aid; social politics would be saying too much. Bismarck’s social policies, which gave birth to today’s, had the goal of keeping the workers satisfied and, in this way, making it easier for the Chancellor’s politics to be successful. In a certain manner, it was a division between those who – in Denis de Rougemont’s words – ask “What will happen to us?” and those who ask “What can we do?” The question about what will happen to us is one of the decadence Bismarck wanted to convince the labour force of while demonstrating his own will to power. Let us show some tact and not follow up on our suspicion of how great a model the social policies of the 1930s and 1940s were for those of today. In any case, the former amorality should actually be a warning to the contemporary Social Democrat leaders to transfigure their desire for social aid as if there were no other ambitions behind it.” Alois Mock believes that this misunderstood pragmatism – coupled with a lack of extra-materialist convictions and an absence of a positive image of mankind – results in a contextual arbitrariness and, even worse, political disorientation: “I would go so far as to claim that it is only the Christian Democratic parties that make politics according to

⁴² Ulrich, Bernd: Links, weil’s bequem ist, *Die Zeit* 02/2008, p. 1

a social model. Today, who represents a single one of the eight to ten principles that led to the founding of the Socialist parties? They only win elections when they hide Socialism.”⁴³

The new social questions cannot be satisfactorily answered using the traditional instruments of post-war social politics. All too often, social politics is content with dealing with the support of those who have fallen out of the employment process. A new lower class – described in feature articles with a mixture of disgust and distanced dismay – has developed and painfully shown that, in the long run, the logic of passive transfer payments is anything but socially compatible, releases people from their responsibility, and stirs up feelings of discontent that all too often lead to violence, child abuse and other forms of social degeneration. Reducing social politics to bought inner security is simply not enough. Traditional social politics’ self-contentedness, with its abstract gestures of solidarity, forgets to demand the necessary contribution of each individual person towards the common good. It is now necessary to develop a “narrative of the social state” (Meyer) that minimizes the conflict of interests between the individual and the welfare of all, and between capital and labour, for the advantage of the community as a whole. Studied behavioural patterns, popular bugbears and tried and true bogeymen need to be reconsidered: for example, it is not social that the middle classes in Austria have to pay close to 42 percent of the total taxes on salaries and income. It is also not social that Austrian societal mobility is so shockingly limited. It is not social – and even hostile to performance – that property is incomparably less taxed than labour. Taxation on increases in financial assets and private property would make it possible to provide tax relief on work and here, first and foremost, on small and medium incomes. And finally, it is generally not social when individual interests are regarded as being more important than public ones.

Therefore, social politics is once again in need of a theoretical superstructure if it intends to be more than the cynical equation of social policy with the payment of money to satisfy short-term consumer impulses, and to help people in the long-term development of their personality as a whole.

⁴³ Mock, Alois: in *Academia*, June 2004, p. 8

Following the collapse of real-life Socialism, the only remaining political ideologies are those with a Christian code of social ethics, social democracy⁴⁴ and liberal democracy, and each of these places different weight on the social question. While, in the liberal discourse, the social question is frequently only regarded as a spin-off of the market economy, Christian social ethics and social democracy consider the social question as a central concept in dealing with society and all its contradictions holistically. Social democracy argues materialistically and immanently, whereas Christian social ethics also include non-materialist and transcendental values. Such basic principles cannot be categorically established by parties or in the constitution. The expert on constitutional law Böckenförde realised this in his dictum that “the free, secularized state lives from assumptions that it itself cannot guarantee”.⁴⁵ Common values are capable of being recognised by society as a whole but, in a pluralistic society, these values can only be established by the individual. Democratic politics cannot provide supreme and absolute truths; political parties are satisfied with second-to-best justifications and leave it up to the individual citizen and the primacy of his convictions to rationalise his own decisions. The citizen can find ordered, absolute grounds for social homogeneity by turning to the major world religions and classical philosophical ethics. In addition to the Catholic social ethical code and Protestant moral values, Islam (e.g. with the Zakat) and Judaism have also developed complex rules for socially compatible forms of coexistence.

Basic principles of Christian social ethics

Catholic social ethics are founded on specific philosophical convictions and premises and, therefore, lay claim to being acceptable to all – this means to non-Christians, atheists and members of other religious denominations as well. In contrast, Protestant social ethics also present their theological foundation with the question of “What should I do?” at the core of their considerations. The Protestant social ethic does without any guiding principles and provides the individual with no ready-made instructions for action. Rather, it recalls the essence of the Christian message and encourages the individual to participate

⁴⁴ Cf. Meyer, Thomas: *Theorie der sozialen Demokratie*, Wiesbaden 2005

⁴⁵ Böckenförde, Ernst-Wolfgang: *Staat, Gesellschaft, Freiheit*, p. 60

actively in secular developments. The Theological Declaration of Barmen of 1934 can be regarded as a guideline and introduction to the fundamental aspects of Protestant ethics.

In addition to the primacy of the conscience, the Catholic Church has also developed a form of social ethics providing guidelines for human activities. Under the term of “Christian social ethics”, one understands Church and papal writings on socially relevant topics and questions. Pope Leo XIII published the first treatise entitled *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 with the conflict between capital and labour, as well as the exploitation of the worker, as its subject. This was followed by numerous social encyclicals⁴⁶ and Pope John Paul II published *Centesimus annus* to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Church’s social teachings. The lasting principles of Catholic social ethics were established and have developed over these 100 years. The basic postulates form “the true and real pivot”⁴⁷ of social ethics and lay claim to being able to explain social reality in its entirety; they maintain and claim to have a “general and fundamental” character and consider themselves a philosophical system founded on both the sources of the Bible and the findings of social ethics. The Catholic social ethic is a philosophically logically arguing guidance system that explicitly aims at appealing to and representing non-Catholics and members of other religious bodies with its principles and axioms. In contrast to the penultimate arguments of politics and representational groups, the four basic principles claim – a priori – to have a moral significance for everyone and, secondly, for each citizen because they “refer to the final, direction giving, fundamentals of social life. ... In their entirety, the principles create those fundamental formulations of reality that appeal to and invite each conscience to act with and for everybody in liberty and a complete sharing of responsibility.”⁴⁸ This universal claim to validity also includes the reciprocal demand made on the moral responsibility of the individual to actively live and obey these principles in order to conduct himself in accordance with the divine creative assignment. This sometimes sounds strange and incomprehensible in our secular, enlightened society, but it becomes clear through the dictum of each individual being created in the image of God: if I consider my fellow man – regardless of whether

⁴⁶ Cf. *Kompendium der Soziallehre der Kirche*, p. 82 ff.

⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 131

⁴⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 132

he is a believer or not – as being created in the image of God, I will treat him with more respect than if I define him as an “upstart ape” or “an as yet undetermined animal” (Nietzsche). As with Kant’s categorical imperative and human rights, which also lay claim to universal validity but have to make do without any transcendental or immortal promises, social ethics provide guidelines and instructions for socially compatible cohabitation. However, in contrast to other Catholic teachings, the Church’s social ethic formulates no dogmas, but wishes to offer concrete help in concrete situations through these principles.

The four basic principles of Catholic social ethics

The concept of the personality is interpreted more broadly than that of the individual and forms the basis of this social philosophy. Each person is unique and created as an individual: each person is a unity of body and soul. As the image of God, men and women are invested with the same dignity and are equal, but not identical, in their talents and capabilities. The individual person is not limited to his or her individuality, but each person is a social being. The nature of the human being manifests itself first of all in its sociality and sense of community. However, human societies are not uniform, but pluralist. The principle of the common good follows on the principle of personality to ensure that the development of the personality is not restricted to egotism, but serves the welfare of all. Making the common good of society reality is the responsibility of each and every one; everyone must help to the greatest extent of his or her capabilities. In addition to the citizens, the state is also responsible for the creation and preservation of common welfare. In contrast to historical materialism, Catholic social philosophy defines the common good neither exclusively historically nor exclusively materialistically, but follows a transcendental goal. This prevents it from being reduced to simple socio-economic figures. Ultimately, man does not live from bread alone, and the so-called prosperity decline in moral values is a sure indication that human poverty must not only be thought of and discussed from the economic aspect.

The third basic principle of subsidiarity (from the Latin word *subsidium* = subsidy, support) places one’s own responsibility before state activities. That which the individual citizen can independently create, produce and administer in associations, the family, the neigh-

bourhood, the community and the region should not be delegated to an anonymous governmental administrative machine. A sense of responsibility is created through spatial proximity, individual concern and personal activities and not through anonymity and rhetorically abstract gestures. Subsidiarity aims at protecting original, natural, social forms of expression; local characteristics and conditions; and their political and legal promotion and support. This is the source of the citizen’s motto of helping people help themselves: “Just as that which the individual person is capable of performing on his own initiative, and through his own labours, should not be taken away from him and handed over to society, it is also an injustice – and at the same time serious damage and a disturbance to the just order – to transfer that which small-scale and lower-level organisations have achieved and performed to higher authorities; because it is an essential aspect and the nature of each social activity to support the members of the social body and never destroy or consume them.”⁴⁹

For the administration, this means anti-centralism and that higher-level bodies (for example, the federal government) “assume a position of providing help – that is, support, encouragement and development”⁵⁰ – to those subordinate to them. The state must help the individual make the most of his potential. Citizen involvement and participation in the process of political volition are the cornerstones of subsidiarity. To credibly represent this principle, societies must provide attractive possibilities for underprivileged persons and migrants to make progress; a society organised according to the principle of subsidiarity must be socially permeable and make mobility within it possible. The fourth principle – that of solidarity – expresses the reciprocal dependence of individuals and groups (peoples, social strata, institutions); there is a causal connection between actions of solidarity and the common good. Solidarity in the Christian sense is more active than the social-democratic notion that defines it passively and in an abstract-delegatory manner as the right of the individual to be able to rely on receiving help from others (state aid, the mutually supportive community) in the case of need. The Christian idea of solidarity is much broader: on the one hand, it is a social principle, and on the other, a moral virtue.

⁴⁹ Pius XI, Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*: AAS 23 (1931)

⁵⁰ Cf. *Kompendium der Soziallehre der Kirche*, p. 147

The economy must serve mankind

As a unity, the four principles aim at providing the individual and his concrete actions with general benchmarks for structuring and shaping social life. The economy is an essential sphere of this; since the boom of the neo-classical economy and its axioms, one has often heard of the “primacy of the economy” over society. In contrast to this, social ethics considers the economy merely as one component of human society. This philosophy develops the general classifications of worldly goods from the principle of the common good through which the economy is linked with moral values and norms. Here, the right to private property – this has never been considered absolute in the Christian tradition – forms a decisive feature of a democratic and social economic policy. Social ethics demand that economic policy make the possession of property available to all people equally. Each person has the right to acquire and increase assets: in this way, social ethics played a guiding role in placing property in the hands of the worker. Long before the idea of rewarding the staff with shares was imported from the USA and became common in the German-speaking world, the social market economy had already developed and implemented a vision of a “people of property owners”. In spite of the integrative strength of many socio-economic landmarks, the mantra of an assumed neoliberalism has existed since the beginning of the Second Republic.⁵¹ These false accusations that return cyclically can best be refuted by drawing attention to the reformist and open character of Christian social ethics. This philosophy regards the capitalist system positively but recognizes the greed and fallibility of the market players. In its activities, social ethics therefore formulate a systematic inner-capitalist work of improvement. This includes that the divergent interests of capital and the workforce must be balanced, and that a sustainable economic policy must create the necessary ordered framework for this. Strict anti-trust laws and a decisive privatisation policy are required to take a vigorous stance against market inflexibility, the formation of cartels, price agreements and the de-facto creation of monopolies. The social market economy means making participation in free competition possible for everybody through education that is available to all. The state must use the appropriate control mechanisms to combat individual sectors of the

⁵¹ Cf. the “neoliberalism conflict” of the early 1960s, where the standpoints and arguments of the NGOs and ATTAC were almost identical.

population being treated preferentially and the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few – as was formerly the case with the nobility. Treating the economy socially is, of necessity, always a participative economic order that transfers the varied interests of the citizens into more than the sum of its individual parts: everyone has the right to strive for happiness and to develop his or her personality optimally for the benefit of the community.

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Solidarity in a Changing Welfare State – Goods and Ends: How to Improve the Welfare State from a Christian-Democratic Perspective

Jan Jacob van Dijk

Summary

The present welfare state is one of the most important instruments for guaranteeing cohesion in a society. One of the most basic principles for this cohesion is solidarity; this also applies to Dutch society. But what is solidarity? What are the characteristics of solidarity? And has solidarity limits?

“Vous êtes fou. C’est la fin de la solidarité,” French Communists claimed as a reaction to new French traffic legislation: the introduction of this new legislation forbade the French car drivers to drink more than one glass of wine. Only rich people can take a cab back to work, the French Communists complained. Ordinary working people cannot afford it and have to stop drinking during their lunch. They concluded that, due to the new traffic legislation, the solidarity between rich people and the labour force would not be maintained. And that meant the end of solidarity. As one can see, solidarity is used and misused in the current political debates, but it is still valid.

The term “solidarity” is often used in the media, in trade-union circles, in political debates. Everybody has their own interpretation that best suits his interests, but nobody asks what it really means. The consequence is that this notion will eventually become meaningless and without value. To prevent this, we have to discuss what solidarity means, and how we are going to use this notion, with each other – according to the following five questions:

- What is solidarity?
- Why is solidarity so important in Christian-social philosophy and also within Christian-democratic parties?
- Whom should my solidarity affect?
- To what extent might someone expect solidarity? Are there any limits to solidarity?
- Who should realise solidarity within a society?

What is solidarity?

The word solidarity is not old; it has only been around since the mid-nineteenth century. In ancient history this word was never used, and also in Christian circles, nobody was familiar with it. Fraternity or brotherhood was more common and meant nearly the same. Members of the brotherhood who were in trouble were supported by the community. This was common practice in the early Christian communities, as well as the medieval guilds. Karl Marx was the first to use the term “solidarity” in a political context. Marx used it in the same way as, for example, the Freemasons had: it meant only solidarity amongst the workers, only within the same class. It was used as an exclusive notion: everybody except the people in the same class was excluded. For that reason, solidarity was closely connected to the class struggle for a long time. As a consequence of this close relationship, Christian social circles such as churches, Christian trade unions and the forerunners of the Christian-democratic parties avoided the notion. They preferred charity, which had a different connotation. Only after the Aggiornamento and the Second Vatican Council did the Roman Catholic Church start using solidarity, but in a completely different way. They gave a new interpretation to it, namely an inclusive one. Solidarity had to be seen as the duty to provide support for everybody who was in need. Pope John XXIII referred to the Third World when he talked about solidarity.

Solidarity might be seen as the awareness that people belong to each other within some kind of community and are ready to accept the consequences of this. If they have to suffer for it, they are ready to accept it. This is one of the definitions the dictionaries give us.

There are different ways to organise solidarity. The first distinction might be made between reciprocal and unilateral solidarity. In the

first case, one can count on the solidarity of another person. The most familiar example is assurance. Unilateral means that I will do something for somebody else without expecting anything in return; this should be normal between friends or within a family. Another distinction is between solidarity in the short and in the long run. Increasing all the social-assistance benefits by ten percent could be seen as an act of solidarity, but in the long run, it might cause a lot of economic problems, so great that the government would have to reverse this decision.

The third distinction is between voluntary solidarity and obligatory solidarity. The latter refers to paying our taxes and social-security premiums; whether we like it or not, we have to pay. Voluntary means that I can choose the organisation I would like to transfer money to. My statement is: obligatory solidarity is crowding out voluntary solidarity.

Why is solidarity so important?

Solidarity plays an important role in both Social Democrat and Christian Democrat political philosophies. It is one of the guiding principles of both political movements. Why is it so important for the Christian Democrats? One might say that responsibility and solidarity are the two guiding principles in Christian-democratic philosophy. This is a result of the way Christians consider the human being.

The first modern sociologists, such as Max Weber and Émile Durkheim, considered solidarity indispensable for modern society. Modern societies were more fragmented than earlier ones. To preserve the character of a society, people should care for each other. The course of action was to use the principle of solidarity: taking care of others in a society to maintain cohesion within a community.

Apart from this sociological point of view, we might distinguish a more normative point of view or, strictly speaking, a political point of view. We can recognize some developments in Christian social philosophy at the end of the nineteenth century when the Roman Catholic Church connected solidarity to social justice. Social justice could be achieved via a redistribution of material goods to help the poor and provide them with a decent life. But the Belgian theologian Johan Verstraeten interpreted social justice in a different way. All citizens were obliged to

contribute to the general welfare of the community, to create the *bonum commune*. The community has the duty to create the opportunities for each citizen to participate in society, for example by a redistribution of means and goods. That form of redistribution might be seen as an act of solidarity. In this interpretation, the community plays an important role and the Christian social thinkers could easily distinguish themselves from the liberals.

However, after the Second World War, developments within the Roman Catholic Church had some consequences for the interpretation of solidarity. According to the newest insights, the human individual should play a more important role. It is not only the obligation of a community to maintain cohesion in society. The individual should also accept this personal responsibility. Only in a relationship can an individual realise his final destination: to live with – and live for – others. Only in this interdependence can an individual realise the meaning of his life.

The Dutch philosopher Henk Woldring, who specialised in the philosophical backgrounds of Christian Democracy, gave the following description of solidarity: a person who needs some help in achieving a task is allowed to ask for it. If somebody asks us for some help in order to accomplish something important, we are obliged to give him that support. And, as a community, we have to enable persons in need to receive the support necessary for meeting their obligations. Therefore, performing acts of solidarity is not only a community obligation but also a personal responsibility. My interpretation is rather close to Woldring's. For me, solidarity means that, as individuals and as a community, we have the responsibility to organise our society in such a way that everybody can participate as a respected human being, keeping in mind that not everybody has the same talents.

With whom do we have to express our solidarity?

The price support mechanism is one of the most-used instruments in the common agricultural policy of the European Union. This means that all farmers are guaranteed a certain price for their crops. In the 1960s, this instrument was used for many agricultural products, but in the 1980s and 1990s, its importance was reduced and was only crucial for sugar. The current commissioner for agriculture, Mariann Fischer

Boel, was not happy with this instrument. It was too expensive and, using the argument of solidarity for the Third World, she proposed a cut of one-third in the guaranteed prices. According to the farmers, this meant that it would be impossible to continue cultivating sugar beets in the near future, as this would cost more than it would yield. Out of solidarity with the farmers in the Third World, it might seem a good choice, but it meant the policy of solidarity with the European farmers and the employees in the sugar industry could not be maintained. And, bearing in mind that Latin American sugar is produced on farms owned by holders of large estates, our choice becomes even more complicated. A policy of solidarity with one group means that I have decided to end my policy of solidarity with others.

The conclusion is that, although the question of “who should benefit from our solidarity” seems easy at first sight, the answer is more difficult than expected. Solidarity means making a choice.

Are there limits to our duty to express our solidarity?

When we have to defend the notion that expressing our solidarity is not without limits, we are frequently confronted with the fact that this is not in conformity with the message of the Gospels and that is why we try to avoid this question. But my feeling is that we should not do this and take an offensive approach instead – there is enough reason for it.

If we take two parables from the Gospels, we learn that each individual has the responsibility to avoid asking for an expression of solidarity from another person. People have to use their talents and should be asked to prepare themselves for any risks that might overcome them. The first is the parable of the ten virgins. Five of them had taken some extra oil with them, five had not. When the bridegroom arrived, the foolish virgins asked the wise ones to share their oil with them. The wise ones refused, explaining to the others that they might not have enough for themselves. So there is a limit to solidarity.

However, another parable points to the obligation of using your gifts, no matter how tiny. In the parable of the talents, a man leaves his home to go on a long journey and divides his property among his servants. One is given five talents, the second two, and the third only one. After

a long period, he returned and asked the servants what they had done with their talents. The person who had received five talents had gained another five and was praised by his master. The same happened with the servant who had received two talents. The last one returned his single talent, stating that he had feared losing it and had buried it in the ground. His master became furious and answered that if he had invested his money in a bank, he would have at least received some interest. His only talent was taken away from him and given to the servant with five.

The conclusion of these parables might be that there will always be limits to what people may demand from us. Everybody has the duty to prepare himself for the risks he might run. And a person who does not accept responsibility for preparing himself for these kinds of situations might get a negative answer when he asks for an expression of solidarity. Therefore, when political parties or adversaries point out that setting limits to solidarity is not compatible with the Christian Gospel, you might refer to these parables. But where are the limits? That depends on the situation. The only thing I would like to explain to you is that you have to answer this question for yourself before using the notion of solidarity.

Who is responsible for solidarity in society?

Several players might assume responsibility for solidarity in society: individuals, the civil society or public authorities. In this respect, Christian social philosophy has a different point of view than that of the liberals and Social Democrats. Christian social philosophers are attached to the idea of responsibility. Since *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, the Roman Catholic Church has used the notion of “subsidiarity” to express that not everything should be left to the public authorities, as the Social Democrats would like. But neither is it the responsibility of the individual or the market, as the liberals state.

This is not the so-called third way, developed after the Social Democrats and Liberals had expressed their method for solving all the problems in society. This principle of subsidiarity stems from neo-Thomistic philosophy. Within society, many associations have been established to help serve individuals to come as close as possible to the capacities of God.

Everybody in these voluntary associations can learn from the other members. That is why these associations play an important role in the functioning of a society. They assume many responsibilities and could also play a crucial role in respect to solidarity. Therefore, in contrast to the Liberals and the Social Democrats, responsibility for the realisation of a cohesive society with the right implementation of solidarity should not be transferred to the public authorities. The civil society and individuals also have a crucial role to play. This division of responsibilities and tasks has been shaped in the Western welfare states.

Typology of welfare states

In the early 1990s, a discussion about the European social model started in the European Union. The employers challenged the employees and trade unions to explain to them what the European social model was. And, if they could not give a concrete answer, a European social policy was superfluous. Trade unionists spent a lot of time explaining that, although there might be some differences, European societies have many common characteristics that are difficult to present in a concrete way.

The Danish sociologist Gøsta Esping-Andersen helped the employers. He was the first person to put an end to the myth that there was a single European social model. From his perspective, three social models had to be distinguished: Anglo-Saxon, corporatist and Social-Democratic. His publication at the beginning of the 1990s marked the start of a major discussion between sociologists and other scientists. There were two important types of criticism. Most scientists considered the continent typology too rough and too differentiated. The social-economic institutions in Greece could not be compared with those in the Netherlands or Germany. A distinction had to be made. Andre Sapir was the first to present a new typology with four types: Anglo-Saxon, corporatist, South-European and Social-Democratic. Most scientists could agree with this new typology, but my criticism is that it only applies for the fifteen old member states of the EU, not the new ones from Eastern Europe. Perhaps it is still too tricky to describe a new type for these new societies; to use an understatement, they have not all settled down yet.

The most important criticism concerned the explanation of these differences. What are the reasons for these differences in the development of welfare state models? One of the aspects that did not get the attention it deserved was the role of religion. It is peculiar that all countries that belong to the Social-Democratic type have a Lutheran population. In the Anglo-Saxon type, Calvinists play a crucial role. In the continental type, the Roman Catholic Church is the major religion. This might not be a coincidence. Could this be an explanation for these differences?

According to Sigrun Kahl and Philip Manow, it is. Their analysis goes back to the Middle Ages. At that time, only poor people worked to earn money; work and poverty presupposed each other. The poverty of the majority of the population offered the rich the opportunity to perform works of charity: giving money to the poor gave them the possibility of remitting for the sins they might have committed. Charity was a kind of free ticket to heaven.

The Reformation, started by Martin Luther, changed this completely. For Martin Luther, charity was not the free way to heaven; only a sincere faith in God could achieve this. He also had a different perspective of work. From his point of view, work could be seen as a service to God, and the negative status of work disappeared within Lutheran circles. After the Council of Trent, the status of work also increased for the Catholic Church, but it was still not seen as positively as by the Lutherans. At the end of the sixteenth century, John Calvin introduced his perspective. His esteem for work was schizophrenic. He regarded working hard as the duty of everybody and that a person who had become wealthy had been rewarded by God for his labours. However, a person who became poor should be punished by having to work hard. Poverty was equated with laziness and as a punishment of God.

With the start of the industrial revolution – first in the United Kingdom and later on the continent – work became more important as the source of an income for living. But the society changed as a result of these developments. Relationships became more strained; most workers had to live with the risk of becoming unemployed or being unable to work due to physical ailments or old age. That was when the question of who should take care of these people arose. Were the individuals to blame for their situation, or was it the responsibility of the employer or public authorities to care for them?

In the Lutheran-dominated states, it was rather clear that the public authorities should play the main role. This had to do with their division into two realms. According to Luther, the secular world had to be governed by rules established by the public authorities. The Gospels and Bible were only important for the period after this secular life, in heaven. For that reason, they had no difficulties in transferring the major part of the responsibility of providing to the public authorities.

That was not the case with the Roman Catholics. Individuals should take care of relief for the poor; it should not be taken over by the local authorities. It was seen as a responsibility of the Christian communities and should arise from compassion instead of being forced by legislation from the state. Due to the serious disputes between the Catholic Church and the secular states – for example, in France, where a certain part of church property was nationalised after the French Revolution, the state was denied an important role in providing social assistance in Catholic-dominated countries.

The situation in the Netherlands: the origins of the Dutch welfare state

The Netherlands was one of the last West European countries where the industrial revolution took place. Industrial development did not begin until around 1870, and then it completely changed Dutch society. Until that point, the economy had been dominated by agriculture and financial services. The character of society was patriarchal and stable. People lived and worked in the same place. Industrial developments led to a change in this pattern. Workers had to go to factories, and society was dominated by uncertainty about the future. Industrial plants were located in the big cities or newly built towns, which led to urbanisation. These workers needed housing, which was not available, and they needed physical health care, which was not available either. Although education was provided by public authorities, most children could not attend schools or their parents chose Christian, instead of public, schools. Due to the liberal domination of politics, the public authorities did not feel any responsibility for providing these services. Their only task was to secure a safe living environment and create the conditions for physical infrastructure.

Churches or related institutions – and not the public authorities who were still prisoners of their own liberal philosophy – filled this gap. They founded hospitals, schools, provided cheap housing for the workers and, in this way, the care people needed. The Calvinists in the Netherlands, led by Abraham Kuyper, considered the poverty of the majority of Dutch workers the greatest social problem of the time. It was also their responsibility to do something about it, but not in an easy way. Abraham Kuyper's analysis was that the architecture of society was not in equilibrium. The power of the employers was too great and that of the workers too small. The division of responsibilities had to change. That could solve the problem for the future, not only for the short term, but certainly over a longer period. For that reason, he promoted the foundation of Christian trade unions and employers associations, the creation of Christian schools, hospitals, associations providing housing for workers, etc.

The Calvinist reaction resembled the Catholic one, which was based on the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. Pope Leo XIII also considered the poverty of the workers one of the most important problems of the nineteenth century. As a solution to that problem, the foundation of trade unions and employers associations was needed to restore the equilibrium in society.

In the Netherlands, the civil society played an important role in providing all of these welfare institutions. It was organised along religious lines: Social Democrat, Catholic and Protestant trade unions were established. The same applied for schools, newspapers, the broadcasting organisation, sports associations, hospitals, building societies and political parties. The Dutch society might be described as being polarised, but it functioned in a coherent way. However, the great depression in the 1930s caused tension in the civil society, and more support was needed than it was able to provide. For example: trade unions started organising unemployment assurance. This system was based on the fact that every worker was unemployed for some months due to seasonal circumstances. This system functioned rather well under normal conditions, but in times of mass unemployment, the trade unions could not maintain it and had to ask for governmental support. At that moment, the system went bankrupt.

After the Second World War, the old systems were re-established.

Although politicians would have liked to avoid the pre-war situation, their capacities were limited due to the destruction of the means of production, caused by the war. Their top priority was to restore the Dutch economy as soon as possible, and the civil society immediately took up the tasks it had had before the war. Their influence increased considerably, and most politicians were happy with it.

In the beginning of the 1960s, the economy was booming in the Netherlands. Prosperity was growing and the financial situation of the local and national governments had also improved. Financial prospects had become even better. Local authorities were so happy with the services provided by these voluntary associations that they offered them subsidies to continue their work, and they, in turn, were happy with this financial support. It gave them the opportunity to improve the quality of their services, which meant hiring professionals. At the end of the decade, most voluntary associations were receiving money from public authorities. Until then, these associations had received the subsidies without any limits. But some politicians wondered whether the money was being spent in the right way and asked for reports. The third step was that local authorities were only willing to grant financial support when these organisations did as they were told. The civil society gradually became dependent on the government and lost its autonomy. As a consequence, nowadays, most people in the Netherlands are not aware of the fact that most services are still provided by private organisations and associations, although they rely on governmental support. Most Dutch politicians prefer maintaining that impression and would like to increase their political influence on these associations. The Liberals, some populist parties and some Social Democrats regard decisions based on parliamentary democratic rules as having a higher value than measures taken by associations close to the citizens and the persons in need of the care provided by them. There is only one way of democracy and that is parliamentary democracy. Democracy based on voluntary associations is of a lesser value. Corporatism is rejected by these political parties. But is it possible to have well-founded answers to the challenges facing the welfare state without these civic societies? Is it possible to reform the welfare state only by public authorities and by majority voting in the Dutch parliament? My answer is no.

Challenges facing the Dutch welfare state

One of the most important Dutch institutions advising the government is the Scientific Council on Governmental Policy. Two years ago, this body published an important survey entitled “The Welfare State Reconsidered”.

According to the Council, four functions of the welfare state have to be distinguished. The first one is assurance. In the welfare state, social-security arrangements are seen as the core, with the provision of income as the crucial function. The second function might seem equally as important. This is the caring function via health assurance, health care and hospitals. The emphasis of most of the welfare states in West Europe today is on these two functions. But there are two other functions which should play a much more important role in the near future than they do now. These are described as the elevating and the connecting functions. Education has been important since the Industrial Revolution, especially if one wanted to climb up the social ladder. Its importance is now increasing due to the knowledge-based economy and the rapid developments in the information society. The welfare state has to provide good education so as to enable everybody to keep up with these changes. If all these three functions are executed in the right way, we will ultimately come to the fourth function: the creation of cohesion between the groups in the welfare state.

The last function is the ultimate goal of the welfare state: cohesion within society. In its analysis, the Council described three possible tensions between groups in Dutch society. The first is between rich and poor. Due to the fact that, after Iceland and Denmark, income distribution in the Netherlands is one of the most egalitarian in the world, the Council considers this source of tension very small. There is currently a certain amount of discussion about the incomes of some managers in multinational companies, but this is not the subject of much debate.

The second potential tension might play a more important role: young versus old. The Dutch pension system is an example for a lot of other EU countries. Even the European Commission has admitted that the Dutch system might be the best in the light of an ageing population. In contrast, the child allowances are the lowest in the EU; many young parents complain about the childcare facilities and their cost, and the

possibilities for getting a normal job are far more difficult for young employees than older ones. Some reforms have to take place or this potential tension might cause real problems for the Dutch welfare state.

The most important tension will probably be the original population versus the non-Western ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities have a far weaker position on the labour market than the original population. It is more difficult for them to find a job, and in periods of recession and increasing unemployment, they are the first to be fired. This is partly due to discrimination, but a lack of soft skills could also be a cause of their weaker position on the labour market. Education is an important instrument for closing the gap between the original population and the ethnic minorities, but more has to be done. The big challenges for the future welfare state will be to deliver suitable answers to these problems.

I would like to add a fifth function to the four already mentioned. It concerns the preventive or anticipating function. Solidarity means risk sharing. Some risks might be avoided or reduced. For example, functional diseases might be avoided by better working conditions, health and safety regulations. The risk of becoming unemployed might be reduced by keeping up with the newest developments in the sector one is working in. Employability is a famous word in this respect. Until now, this function has not been mentioned, and I think it is an important one which should not be forgotten. It is important from a Christian-social perspective, because it will not erase the individuals' responsibility, which is one of the characteristics of Christian social philosophy.

The government might be made responsible for finding the answers to these challenges and, of course, this institution has to play an important role. But, more actors in the welfare state should face up to their responsibility. Trade unions and employers have to focus more on life-long learning than wage increases in collective-bargaining agreements. The biggest threat to economic growth is a shortage of workers although we still have a big reservoir, among ethnic minorities, for example. New agreements between employers and trade unions have to reduce the obstacles that prevent them from making progress in the companies they work for. Perhaps workers councils could play an important role. But the ethnic minorities themselves also have to participate actively in this deal, not only in connection with knowledge-driven education, but

also through better development of soft skills. They should not only rely on the governmental institutions, but also play their role in society.

This brings me to the final group: the civil society. One of my biggest criticisms on the report of the Scientific Council is that, from their point of view, the government is the only institution capable of solving all the problems. We have seen that one of the biggest shortcomings of the ethnic minorities is the underdevelopment of their soft skills and, therefore, civil society should take up this challenge. Soft skills are related to misunderstanding signals in communications. Within voluntary organisations, most people are able to interpret the signals others are sending. People have learned to understand how an association has to be governed. It has taught them how a society, a company or a department has to be run. The American sociologist Hilary Putnam has given this process a name: social capital. Without a certain level of social capital, a society will die out. That is the reason for promoting greater involvement from the ethnic minorities. The civil society has to change its attitude towards these groups as they are underrepresented in these organisations.

Concluding remarks

Most Western welfare states are facing serious challenges. Due to technological developments, globalisation and a more heterogeneous population, our transformed societies need different answers than they did 20 years ago. But the guiding principles remain the same: solidarity and responsibility have to play an important role in the reformed welfare states. The interpretation of these principles will be different compared with the past. The main task is to find the interpretation most appropriate for every society to confront the new challenges best. Christian social philosophy has some constructive answers for these challenges – perhaps the most constructive.

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What Does Security Really Mean?

Christian Kasper

Summary

Security is a hook in the news, a mark of quality in advertising and a political demand in election campaigns. Personal, ecological, economic and social insecurity all stir up the desire for security in all spheres of life. However, there has been a long development from the original notion of protection of life and limb to today's of a more differentiated and omnipresent security; at the beginning of the twenty-first century, this has still not been fulfilled.

Agence France Presse announces: “The EU wants more prosperity and security for the Palestinians.” “More security on Eschweilerstrasse” is the *Aachener Zeitung's* demand. The online magazine *testticker.de* noted “European users’ sinking trust in internet security”, and the Austrian *Kurier* newspaper reported on “more security through double findings”. According to the news search machine Paperball, there were more than ten headlines on the subject of “security” in German print media alone in a mere two days. We are confronted with “security” day after day. But what is hidden behind this catchword? Is the “security” the EU is pressing for the same thing that should be increased on Eschweilerstrasse? Can double testing counteract the European citizen’s sinking trust? In short: “what is security?”

“Without concerns”

Of course, one is tempted to argue that, in these cases, we are talking about different kinds of security. Here, double testing is intended to protect the patient from misdiagnoses; there, those living along a country road from the dangers of through traffic. And, while *testticker.de* warns of the dangers of data security, the EU does what it can for the international protection and social, political and economic rights of a

minority group.

As different as all these examples are, they are all descriptions made by actors who have feelings of insecurity resulting from various risks and dangers. These can be targeted and intentional (as in the case of the Palestinians and the internet) or unintentional, caused by human error, they can affect a single person or many. The condition of security is always accompanied by protection against danger and the curbing and minimisation of risks. This is also indicated in the etymology of the word “security”: it comes from the Latin *se curus*: without concern. In English, there is a differentiation between the condition of being protected from danger (safety: *salvitas*) and the activities involved in being protected (security).

From the idea to the institution

Even before the formation of modern, liberal, constitutional states, security was a central constitutive element in the formation of the polity. However, only the democratic constitutional state of modern times expanded the understanding of security to a guarantee for the individual. On the one hand, the idea of a monopoly of power and the inner sovereignty of the state was relevant in this process. On the other, the development of the constitutional state, determined by the execution of power by law, which cannot act arbitrarily, played a decisive role. “The idea that caring for protection, peace and security is a special function and responsibility of the polity, and a characteristic of government, can be traced back to ancient days. It has been effective to various degrees, and in different forms, at all times in the history of states and governments, making security one of their oldest primary, permanent responsibilities.”⁵² The development from the idea of a “state security guarantee”, as expressed in the American Constitution of 1787 or the *Declaration on the Rights of Man* in 1789, to its implementation can be traced in three stages.

⁵² Möstl, Markus: Die Staatliche Garantie für öffentliche Sicherheit und Ordnung. Sicherheitsgewährleistungen im Verfassungsstaat, im Bundesstaat und in der Europäischen Union. Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2002, p. 5

Security in all its splendour

The mediaeval estates system was characterised by a fiduciary relationship between the peasants and their lords: the peasant provided his services and, as compensation, the lord of the manor provided “a protective shield”. This loyalty and the guaranteed security were restricted to the peasants and lords. “Public security”, in the sense of a territorial or socially defined entity, was unknown. The first attempts to assure the security of a large community were undertaken with the Landfriedensbewegung (General Peace Movement). Today, the statutory offence of “breaching the peace” still reminds one of the origins of public security.

This development received decisive impulses from the models of the political philosophers Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes’ basic assumption was that something like a “natural sense of community” did not exist. On the contrary, he described the human condition as a “bellum omnium contra omnes”; a “war of all against all”. This permanent, ongoing struggle resulted in latent insecurity for the individual. A minimum amount of organisation and the profession of loyalty to a superior authority – the state – could protect the individual from chaos and insecurity. Here, the will of many individuals achieved a common goal: the creation of security. This assurance of security was not only aimed at perils that threatened the community, its territory or sovereignty from outside, but also danger from within that, in the struggle for power, restricted personal freedom. A certain amount of individual sovereignty was given over to the state in exchange for the security of the community. “This authority, given by one and all, leads to such great power and control that all gladly bow their heads towards peace and can be easily persuaded to unite against the foreign enemy.”⁵³ Therefore, security is inherent in the idea of the state.

In his description of the function of security in the state, Hobbes makes a differentiation that still characterises the idea: the difference between external security – security from risks and the danger of attack by foreign states – and inner security – security from others in the community. Hobbes’ connection to liberty made his idea of security

⁵³ Hobbes, Thomas: Leviathan. Erster und zweiter Teil. Philipp Reclam Jun.; Stuttgart, 1998, p. 155

exemplary for the following centuries. Security and liberty are both basic human needs that the state should attempt to guarantee. There are no limits to human activities in the natural state of coexistence. This also means that one's actions do not take into account those of others and, in this way, limit their freedom. This is where the fundamental problem of "the war of all against all" lies. Uncontrolled human activities restrict those of others and are therefore not the same as absolute freedom. Only by restricting power and sovereignty can the security that makes it possible for the individual to develop his potential freely be created. In this sense, freedom and security are not adversaries but go hand in hand. The state guarantees both rights.⁵⁴

This principle was further refined by John Locke. In his work *Two Treatises of Government*, Locke also corroborated the protection of life, liberty and property as the genuine *raison d'être* for uniting to form a citizens' society. In keeping with Hobbes' and Locke's ideas, security became a political demand for the first time in the American and French Revolutions. In the preamble to the American Constitution of 1787, security plays a constitutive role for the state. "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."⁵⁵ The preservation of security is also written into the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* ("Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen", one of the fundamental texts on which French democracy is based) as a central element of statehood. "The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression."⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Cf. Hobbes (1998) pp. 187-199

⁵⁵ Cf. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Constitution.html>

⁵⁶ Original: "Le but de toute association politique est la conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'homme. Ces droits sont la liberté, la propriété, la sûreté et la résistance à l'oppression." Cf. <http://www.textes.justice.gouv.fr/index.php?rubrique=10086&ssrubrique=10087&article=10116>

The liberal conception of security

Parallel with the development of governmental sovereignty, the emergence of liberalism saw the birth of a development that attempted to tendentially restrict the competences and activities of the state. Its concentration of authority was accepted, but received an additional facet in the liberal constitutional state, where the preservation of individual liberties vis-à-vis the polity was stressed. Compared to the security of life and limb, the value of self-determination increased in importance. This development was a reaction to the repressive police state that considered the task of guaranteeing security a justification for limiting individual freedom. Consequently, liberalism goes even further by regarding the guarantee of security as the only legitimate purpose of the state *per se*.

The goals of the welfare state were not recognised on the grounds that they limited personal freedom. The liberal constitutional state also introduced the appropriate police and security legislation. The security of the community is the irrefutable duty of the state, but with the intention of safeguarding freedom, it also applies to the internal security forces of the state – the police.

Security as a basic right

The third step in this evolution can be characterised with the development of the basic rights of the citizen. The demand underlying the first stage was the security of the community through the governmental sovereign. In the second phase, the liberal constitutional state elevated the idea of individual freedom to the same level as the community's security. The outstanding achievement of today's modern constitutional state is the amalgamation of these two features: the "perfection of the state's guarantee of security with the aspect of assuring freedom". The right of each and every individual citizen to security and freedom is laid down in the catalogue of basic rights. In the liberal constitutional state, security is formulated negatively and, for the people, passively: the state has to assure the security of the community. Consequently, freedom is also defined in the same manner. In keeping with this, security and freedom are also stylised as a pair of adversaries in the state's basic conception: should the state assure more security by increasing the

police force or more freedom by reducing safety measures? However, with the proclamation of security and freedom as citizens' rights, these two values were formulated as being positive, proactive and – above all – belonging together. The citizen has a right to security and freedom; the state must do justice to both values.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the implementation of the concept of a constitutional guarantee for security can be seen in the conservation and perfecting of the constitutional state's security guarantee. The notion of equating the police with governmental control and administration was dissolved with the separation of powers. Limiting the functions of the police force to law enforcement and criminal police activities and "de-policing" the administration of the peace have made the re-establishment of basic liberal rights in the modern constitutional state possible.

Security in the twenty-first century

The development from the liberal constitutional state to the democratic and social state arose from a genuine necessity to act. The state's security tasks have also changed massively in the last 200 years. Technological risks and new forms of criminality (such as terrorism and organised crime) were unknown to both sovereign monopolistic and liberal states. The new challenges have made simply reacting to danger obsolete. The state now sees this as a reason for taking precautions against – and preventing – risks. A sustainable complement to the democratic state is the further development into a social state. For the state, security – as a right of the individual – means providing this as a service. In the social state, no limits are set to guaranteeing the citizen's right to freedom from bodily harm; on the contrary, security – in the sense of the welfare state – is complemented by the component of "social security". In addition to the protection of property and life, guaranteeing social, economic and ecological security has become one of the obligations of the state. But, even this is not the final stage in the development of the state's security responsibilities. Dangers and risks are permanently changing. The paradigms on which the functions of guaranteeing security were based in the twentieth century must be questioned.

In an international context, the Cold War was undoubtedly the archi-

tect of the security structures in Europe. The Warsaw Pact, NATO and a tight network of contracts and treaties were the immediate reaction to the necessary security policies of the Cold War. There was a clear-cut system of determent and counter-determent ranging from nuclear armaments to the smallest military unit. Each threat was responded to by a counter-threat. "Mutually assured destruction" – a term that describes being able to eradicate the opponent at any time – assured the balance of power. Basically, this system perverted security: the system of mutual destruction was only assured by the guaranteed, constant threat of insecurity.

A new security architecture

The massive bilateral threat collapsed with the fall of Communism. However, contrary to naïve hopes, this was not replaced by a system of collective, international security. Instead of two blocs threatening each other, we were confronted with an impenetrable maze of dangers from small countries, regional conflicts and decaying states – insecurities that had existed in international relationships before 1989 but were concealed by the dominating conflicts between the two blocs. This change in the area of international security coincided with a structural reorganisation of the international system: the process of globalisation. Initially, "globalisation" only meant the increase in the number of private, economic, social, cultural and political networks going beyond national borders. Globalisation was made possible by the rapid developments taking place in the field of communication and information technology. The process has had an enormous effect: in today's linked financial markets, the stability of the dollar has an effect on the purchasing power of people in South Africa; in the integrated economic and production markets, strikes by textile workers in Bangladesh have consequences for people selling sporting articles in Germany. Regional events have an international impact. And, in this respect, international security is no exception: in our globalised world, local conflicts and states in decline are no longer risks restricted to their immediate area. Regional disputes and religious, social and ethical tension always lead to expulsion and a mass exodus. This creates an incredible challenge for neighbouring "stable" nations in the fields of migration, humanitarian aid and asylum policies. Regional conflicts over mineral or energy resources can have an immediate effect on third-party states and their

energy balance. Conflicts over claims to power, political systems or institutions cause friendly – and hostile – states to intervene or set an example for other states with a comparable political structure. It is a similar case with ecological, economic and social risks: local – or even company – crises have an immediate effect on the global financial world. The results of non-sustainable environmental activities (clearing the rain forests, high CO₂ emissions, etc.) can be felt everywhere.

Terrorism is still another additional dimension of threat. After the end of the Cold War, 11 September marked an additional turning point. The unpredictability and asymmetry of the acts of violence are two characteristics of terrorism that evade the state's understanding of guaranteeing security through preventative measures. These features annul the inherent laws of military and police protection as previously known: seeing that neither the magnitude nor the location of the threat through terrorism can be foreseen, the "classical" instruments of the state for guaranteeing security (military, police, criminal law) are hardly capable of reducing this risk efficiently. The intensity of the new form of peril created by terrorism has shaken the strict separation of the state's responsibility for internal and external security. Terrorism, as well as trafficking in drugs and people, prostitution and gambling, tax evasion and other offences typical of organised crime, are all planned and carried out across national borders. "In the modern world, it is no longer possible to sustain the strict separation between inner and exterior security. It finds itself in a stage of far-reaching upheaval: States and their responsibilities, as we have understood them since the development of the model of the sovereign national state, are changing their character..."⁵⁷ In this case, measures taken by national states in the areas of criminal policy, protection from violence, justice and domestic policies are simply inadequate.

Europeanisation and privatisation

The merging of the agendas of domestic and foreign policy has created pressure on the state to adapt its security measures to meet these challenges. In Europe, an attempt has been made to achieve

⁵⁷ Glaeßner, Gert-Joachim / Lorenz, Astrid (eds.): *Europäisierung der inneren Sicherheit*. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften. Wiesbaden, 2005, p. 8

this under the buzzword of "Europeanisation of security politics". The security responsibilities of traditional domestic affairs, such as justice practices, the prevention of violence and anti-crime policies, will remain intact through this process of Europeanisation, as will the classic agendas of foreign policy (security and defence policy, alliance policy). The aim of "Europeanised domestic policy", as anchored in the third column of the Maastricht Treaty, the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Schengen Agreement and Europol, is to come to grips with the international security challenges resulting from terrorism and organised crime. One result of this "Europeanisation of security policies" is the change in the Schengen border. In December 2007, the Schengen frontier with non-EU countries was moved from Austria to the Polish, Slovak, Slovenian and Hungarian borders (besides those of the Baltic states with Belarus and Russia). The citizens reacted sensitively to this alteration in their security environment and now feel vulnerable. Therefore, one of politics' main assignments must be to prepare citizens for such changes and take their fears and feelings of insecurity seriously.

The economisation of security is another response to the individual's growing feelings of insecurity. Citizens are increasingly using private security services to protect their life and property. In the USA and Europe, security services are among the most rapidly growing sectors. The process of the "privatisation" of security has resulted in a strained relationship between the state and private actors: where are the limits of state – and where of private – activities? There is also evidence of the "privatisation" of security on the international level (for example, when dealing with foreign security in Afghanistan and Iraq). One of the major challenges facing the twentieth century will lie in differentiating between the functions of official and private security actors and finding a form of regulated coexistence for the citizen's benefit.

Freedom and security

The pressure created by permanent insecurity threatens to stylise freedom and security as adversaries. One demand that has been made with increasing frequency in recent times is that it is necessary to limit individual freedom in order to guarantee more security. The libertarian state that guarantees personal freedom is presented as an opposing model to the "strong state" and vice versa. However, this overlooks the

fact that security and freedom are not state services but, in the democratic constitutional state, fundamental individual rights. Freedom without security is the Hobbesian natural state, the war of all against all. Security without freedom is the absolutistic sovereign state that ignores a central element: security and freedom presuppose each other.

The risks and dangers for the individual are becoming increasingly unclear. In the twenty-first century, social, ecological and economic security will be at least as important as political and military security. The borders between domestic, foreign and European security will become increasingly blurred. And, for the individual, this means the personal feeling of insecurity will increase while faith in the state's guaranteeing security decreases. Today, we are confronted with dangers that were unheard of twenty – or even ten – years ago (data theft, phishing, etc.). Terror, organised crime and the influx of migrants will increase personal feelings of insecurity. These dangers and risks will not replace the old ones of everyday criminality, dangers on the road, ecological and economic, social and health risks, but add to them. Individual insecurity will increase and, with it, the need for security.

This means that security (military, political, social, ecological, economic) must be handled with more diversification and, at the same time, on a broader scale (both at home and abroad). The state will have to compete with private security services inside the country, and with the European Union and international community beyond its borders, with regard to its pre-eminent role in guaranteeing security. In the twenty-first century, security will be a central value that must go beyond ideological borders when manifesting itself in the political debate. "The constitutional state must also fulfil its protection duties in a changed reality, it must not resign itself and withdraw, but actively confront the new developments – the dissolving of the differences between national and external security and the development of the information society."⁵⁸

In order to react to the insecurity of the individual, security has become an increasingly rewarding catchword in political confrontations. No discussion, no election campaign manages without statements on "more security", "increased protection" and "reduced insecurity". As impor-

⁵⁸ Schäuble, Wolfgang: Dein Staat, dein Freund, dein Helfer, Die Zeit, 15 Nov. 2007, no. 47

tant as these demands are in a world full of risks, they reduce security to a one-dimensional value: protection of the community. However, this results in the individual feeling exactly the opposite. Insecurity is increased when freedom is limited. Security has experienced a great deal in the development of the state and become a fundamental right of each and every citizen of a democratic constitutional state. The task facing the state in the twenty-first century will be to recognize security, in all its dimensions, as a central value of society and as a fundamental right of everyone – and to preserve it. Because, when all is said and done, there is no difference between increasing security on Eschweil-erstrasse, in the internet, through double findings or in Palestine. The goal is always to create a form of *se cura*, "without concerns", for the community and individual.

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The School of Rome and the School of the Future – Bridging the Gap

Ludwig Fladerer

Summary

Today, one feels somewhat uneasy when dealing with the question of the successful school: faced with the trumpet blowing of a permanently growing swarm of experts, it has become difficult to orientate oneself – and one often has the strange feeling that one does not always want to. The siren song surrounding the scientific objectivity that claims to be able to tell us where we should land is much too shrill.

The clarion call today is that inflexible structures should be shattered and we should finally get down to action on the reform that will be the mother of all reforms. There is only one problem: a lot has been said about truth in the humanities and social sciences and, since Paul Feyerabend, we are aware that “truth is what the style of thinking says is the truth”.⁵⁹ Where does all the pushy assuredness that single parents, “professional” pedagogues – and even the minister – have when dealing with school matters come from? After two thousand years of development in European culture, shouldn't it be clear that, although we might grasp what is probable, we will never understand the truth, that we see the world in the way that our own historical condition lets us see it? But how can we really progress and put the subjective existential orientation on the right track? Those experts who brandish their studies with such self-confidence claim to be able to see the future, but they are only positioned on a tiny point in their present. A person who only sees the present and future does not comprehend that, as a perfect, the given is always the result of something earlier, that being realistic assumes a feeling of sensitivity for the past. Pedagogy's lack of history can be confronted by a statement by Eckard Lefèvre, who writes: “... The

⁵⁹ P. Feyerabend, *Wissenschaft als Kunst*, Frankfurt am Main, 1984, p. 77.

present is the permanent transition from the future to the past.... As soon as [the individual] attempts to make programmatic statements about the future, he will be forced to develop perspectives for the future based on his experience in the past.”⁶⁰ Here, we are not discussing an antiquarian restoration but the possibility of updating what already exists and, demonstrably, continues to have an impact.

The school of Rome

The Jesuit college, with its curriculum that has been successful throughout the centuries and on all continents, could be such a point of reference. But it is itself a further development, in the Christian sphere, of the grammar and rhetoric schools of antiquity. This Roman school, the earliest ancestor of European education, through its radical otherness could make a contribution to a productive disturbance and will be at the core of our investigation. But where should we begin?!

After the Roman Empire had developed into the sole determining power on three continents, the masters of the universe became involved in military, cultural, religious and foreign politics, and even took care of basic social needs; however, a school policy, founded on law, capable of intervening in the contents and organisation of education, did not exist. The teachers were masters (*magistri*), independent businessmen and, therefore, only responsible for the prosperity of their firm. Governmental guidelines to evaluate performance were just as lacking as written documentation. The culture of ancient times was free of certificates and diplomas – this applied to the pupil in an elementary school just as it did to surgeons. A person’s qualifications were important, not comparable grades. The dirigiste principles of our time that attempt to domesticate the academically trained – and therefore, *de lege*, highly qualified – teachers like wild animals and confine them in a corset of pedagogical and administrative regulations would have been met with an utter lack of understanding. The school, as a self-regulating system, reacted to the demands of the market, in concrete terms, to the paying parents. The funds from the emperor flowed only rarely and, when they did, went to the prestigious professorships in the major

⁶⁰ E. Lefèvre, in W. Kullmann / E. Lefèvre (eds.), *Die Zukunft der Antike. Zwei Vorträge*, Freiburg – Würzburg 1983, p. 27

cities. Beginning with Vespasian’s reign, renowned teachers were exempted from taxes or, less frequently, had their salaries paid directly by the emperor who sometimes provided educational facilities – and this, to put it more precisely, chiefly in Rome, Athens and Constantinople. All of this did not change the fact that the parents were also obliged to pay tuition fees appropriate to the market value of the teacher. In the second century AD, the number of tax-exempt teachers in small towns amounted to six (three grammarians and three rhetoricians) and in the few metropolises as many as ten – schools were, therefore, a rare commodity. The reason for the state’s restraint lay in Rome’s deep-rooted aversion to an expensive bureaucracy, but especially in the state’s lack of interest in the basic responsibilities of every school: alphabetisation, assimilation and social advancement. Precisely because these services provided by the school were universally recognised as having a high value, one was confident that this esteem would also be reflected in the investment those who wanted to participate in this prestige were prepared to make.

No immigrants, no recently colonised provincial inhabitants in Africa, Spain or Gaul were offered free Latin lessons for the greater glory of Romanisation. On the contrary, it was expected that the new subjects would take their first steps in school out of their own personal interest.

The cornerstones of classical education

But what was taught there and what was neglected? The three-column system of *ludus – grammaticus – rhetor* provides a first approach: in the elementary classes, one learned reading, writing and arithmetic, and the school of the *grammaticus* imparted a precise understanding of the correct language based on painstaking study of the classical writers Terrence, Cicero and Virgil. Training in rhetoric – as the pinnacle and final stage – marked the end of schooling and the beginning of proving oneself in the real world. Although the interest in primary school is immediately apparent, the high reputation of grammar school is hardly comprehensible at first glance. There was never any talk about renewing its material. Neither parents nor those involved in business, officials or despotic emperors intervened to regulate the stock of knowledge that had been sanctioned by tradition. Christianity did not develop a

programme to replace the heathen school authors with Christian ones either. Later, Christian intellectuals sat on the same school benches as their heathen colleagues and studied the same literature. We discover a society that was always oriented on practicality favoured precisely that form of education that resolutely chased any kind of relevance to the present and usability away from the teacher's desk: history, technology, mathematics and the natural sciences never succeeded in becoming academic subjects. There was talk of the *septem artes liberales* – grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music – but, in practice, the higher forms of mathematics had the same relevance to schooling as the study of counterpoint has today. Training for the higher professions of doctor, geometer, architect or jurist simply did not take place in the schools.

School education versus professional training

The case with rhetoric was similar. The definition “advocate education” is insufficient. Instead of law, which was left to the specialist, one studied the art of constructing thoughts and the practical competence of persuasive oratory. The method used was to practice using old models that bore no relationship to the reality of one's life: the future governors and advisors to the emperors considered defence strategies for Medea or re-enacted the Catalina case – and they were as far from both as the Thirty Years' War. However, form itself is always content: by putting themselves into the position of persons from other times and other locations, the future bearers of responsibility practiced a change of perspective and, at least, had the opportunity of escaping cultural and other egocentricities. Rhetoric carried out in this manner, which cannot be mentioned in the same breath as the embarrassing weekend seminars of today, imparted a specific mindset. The high school of Rome unswervingly propagated the awareness of the possibilities of human communication. Some aspects seem disconcerting, and many distress the person who takes the past seriously, and with that in mind, attempts to find a way out of the dreadful condition of education one notes in so many places. Do we really want to discuss excluding large sections of society from the education process? Does the enthusiastically swung cane of the Roman *magistri* offer any perspectives for the future? Should we really risk thinking about doing without mathematics and the natural sciences in the third millennium? However, the

major factors that unite us with the school of antiquity are different and must be translated for today, developing from their indisputable performance. Unquestionably, acculturation in the vertical and horizontal sense must be accounted among its most impressive successes. In contrast to our institutions, the Roman school lived from an unbroken relationship with tradition and the classical age. One felt that one was part of a continuum that was effective in creating an identity. The school provided the position from where one could achieve a cool-headed overview. Any kind of nationalism was superfluous. The old stories of the foundation of Rome, the heroes of former times, who had all left their traces on the topography of Rome, were not taught just for literature-theoretical fun. The poets – Virgil above all others – were authorities for centuries, from Germania to Africa. We discover the horizontal perspective in the Roman's attentiveness to Greek intellectuality. This all leads to what we now describe as Western civilisation. This is not least because the Roman school had been successful in harmonising two originally disparate cultures. Each slight change in the curriculum towards the usability of education would have, per se, undermined the authority of the auctores and, in this way, removed the referential system in which a highly divergent society could identify itself. The Roman school was so useful to society because it taught things that were so eminently useless.

There cannot only be no genius without passion, but also no good school. This passion was reflected in the care paid to language, in the devotion to the word that the elementary schools taught the pupils to write, before the *grammaticus* attempted to make them aware of its logic and beauty, until finally the rhetor imparted just how essential it was for life in the society. Linguistic aesthetics and ethics were the Siamese twins for the successful development of the personality. On the other hand, how impoverished must a society appear that treats literature with such arbitrariness as stipulated in our current curriculum for German: “[Literary education in the schools] should provide the pupils with the greatest possible receptive, analytical, productive and creative approach to aesthetic texts in all media formats and from various cultures.”⁶¹ Everyone learns a little bit of something and – if possible – in any old way.

⁶¹ German curriculum, at http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/13891/lp_beruf_deutsch.pdf

Three theses on the current educational debate

I now close with three theses:

- 1) In the sense of the transcendence of the school, politics devoted entirely to current affairs should obviously be removed completely from the curricula to make way for the unbroken values that have set productive effects free for generations. The same applies to any form of school autonomy that is restricted to regionalism. The world of education is not made up of confined cabins, but of the airy buildings of Europe's thinkers and artists. We are all dwarves, standing on the shoulders of giants. None of the "new" subjects oriented on current trends are necessary to impart these ideas.
- 2) However, freeing schools from the restrictions of current laws should also be reflected in the relationship between the teachers and parents and students who can be expected to take full responsibility for their actions. This could make it possible for today's student, a creature that needs to be permanently motivated and even given therapy, to develop into a person who succumbs to knowledge of his own accord and intends to raise the veil of the enigmatic. If he says "no" to higher education, this must also be respected. In the sense of the principle of competence instead of grades, structures should be considered to enable practical knowledge to be transmitted alongside the school.
- 3) As an efficient weapon against the currently galloping "loss of language" of an entire generation, the secondary school should take its role as the guardian angel of language more seriously than before. This should take place through greater attention being placed on classical literature – the arch could absolutely be spanned from Homer to Ransmayr. If we combine all of this with the notion of humanism, we would end up with a quite respectable programme.

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Do You Want Total Education?

Rahim Taghizadegan

Summary

Today, when we deal with education, education policy and educational systems, we usually reduce the concept to the dimension of academic training. However, formal “training” is actually only a small part of what “education” is really about: it is nothing less than the process of developing a personality. This is one of the tasks our education system has to confront.

Education is a concept fraught with meaning, and it is necessary, first of all, to provide an adequate definition: education describes a process, a formation, oriented at a certain image. Today’s dominating view of man leads to a concept of education that essentially describes a formation process one has suffered through. On the other hand, a view of man that sees the potential of each person developing into a unique personality offers the confidence that does more than simply tolerate unequal development and foregoes standardised moulding.

This means that the word “education” can have completely different meanings: instead of being the formation suffered, it can also describe an active development. Education is no longer something that has happened to us, but the process of our becoming a personality. This is what we want to understand as the real meaning of education; this approach is the only one to have its roots in a realistic view of man and not in a distorted image or ideal.

We know that man is capable of greatness in small things; he is also an imperfect, weak being who makes mistakes, but has the capability of learning. Man as a learning being, an exceptional phenomenon, able to improve himself, gives the notion of education its real meaning. Any material can be formed, but only man can improve himself.

The goals of education and culture

In order to answer the question about the right form, about what education really is, it is necessary to first of all question of its aim. What distinguishes an educated person from one who is unknowledgeable? It seems clear that the educated person does not merely distinguish himself by what he has learned and that, of course, an uneducated, proletarian erudition also exists. Education cannot only be measured in learning, but also in its essence. Even Ovid recognised that “*ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes emollit mores*”, that the appropriation of knowledge through education was not an end in itself, but was intended to make us more complete, more rounded. In Ovid’s words our “*customs make us gentler*”. But why do we need customs? So that we can treat each other in a cultivated manner. And why do we want to have relationships with others? Because as human beings we have to depend on the community, on trade, on debates and welfare. Is education a synonym for refinement? That too!

Do you want total education?

Utopian thinking considers it necessary for man to have absolute control over his destiny. But how should this happen? Man himself has to be changed for this purpose. Seeing that utopians lack the patience to leave changes, let alone improvements, up to personal reason, their intention is to breed a new human being through control over institutions and then by their modification.

“Education” was a central instrument in these endeavours from the outset. On the one hand, we are dealing with a very great, exceedingly powerful notion that radiates universality. On the other hand, there were already “educational” institutions when the engineers of society set off on their march towards progress on the way to utopia. Of course, these were “medieval” and inefficient, but they offered an outstanding precedent for the educational factories of the future that intended to help “education” become a common good. Man-made institutions can be formed arbitrarily, and they can be invested with all of those properties missing in real people. And that is why great promises were connected with the institutions. In the eighteenth century, the world-famous French philosopher of the Enlightenment Denis Diderot was

the first to come out in favour of schools being used to change society. The first promise was that the new responsible man would come into being as soon as everybody could read and write. The utopians’ favourite instrument – and, at the same time, their institutionalised idol – the state initially erected isolated buildings as “schools for the people”. Numerous wars and the decentralisation of several centuries were necessary to gradually create a comprehensive system that could be described as a “curriculum economy”. The promised paradise failed to materialise as readers did not always read the right things. However, the practical side of the promise did not transpire either. We have irritating figures from Great Britain, which was a trailblazer in this area, which show that the level of functional alphabetisation was higher in the nineteenth century *before* the postulation of compulsory education than it is today, after centuries of forced schooling.

When the elementary schools did not lead to the New Jerusalem, the quantitative logic of the modern age felt that the dose of “education” was still much too low. Reading, writing and arithmetic were then considered insufficient to give rise to the new human being, and compulsory education was expanded backwards and forwards. Gradually, all children were to be included and not a single one passed over. The buildings had to be more modern and larger, the equipment more expensive. The time spent at school, as well as that spent on intolerable homework, increased. More and more subjects had to be taught and more and more detailed guidelines adhered to. When this proved insufficient, the teachers came under scrutiny: could it be that they were not sufficiently educated?! This led to the standardisation and centralisation of teacher training. But still, the teaching efforts were inadequate – and this is clearly a fact. This trend has continued until today: new promises are made at ever shorter intervals. Because when all children are pushed into all-day schools, we will finally be able to harvest the fruits of “education”. And, of course, when all teachers are academics. And all children graduate from secondary school. And when each child is individually supported. And then when the latest “educational” methods are finally introduced everywhere (which, as soon as they have been introduced everywhere, immediately become outdated). And then when everyone can go to university and end up with an academic title. Not to forget when the financial means for the next, brand-new, revolutionary “education” technology are made available. When each and every child has his or her laptop and internet access. When the education

budget is doubled! Tripled! Quadrupled! Then, when we have created *total education*, salvation will come upon the new human being. And the old human being is completely to blame that this has not happened so far. First, the students were the scapegoats – lazy good-for-nothings that needed more discipline. Then the parents, irresponsible proles, who should have their children taken away from them at the first opportunity. And finally the teachers, who do everything wrong – no matter what they do. They are too strict or too lenient, too demanding or too lazy, too academic or not educated enough. However, the biggest scapegoats are always those who are sceptical of total education. Without them, it would be much easier and much more dramatic to implement these “great ideas”. That is why “education” is always forced to take ideological countermeasures and legitimise itself. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, the guiding intellectual lights behind the Fabians – a socialist-imperialist intellectual movement that has had a great impact – spoke quite openly about this: “We should continue with our inoculations and inject every class, every person, who comes under our influence with the exact dose of collectivism that they are capable of assimilating. And we should continue to improve and perfect the state machinery that comes into our hands.”⁶² They believed in the *inevitable development of an official administrative class in the modern state*. “Education” was intended to produce up-and-coming societal engineers.

Criticism of education

Admittedly, the expansion of “education” led to resistance, and this resistance played a major part in the formation of the institutions. The initial, practical resistance by the parents and children was followed by a slower, theoretical form. This first made itself felt among those on the left of the political spectrum (at a time when they were still liberal) and has dominated the criticism of education up to this day. Their criticism of the institutions has remained of fundamental importance. Criticism of education from the right set in at a later date and was in reaction to the transformation of the institutions from the left. Both sides are

⁶² Fremantle, Anne: *This little band of prophets: The British Fabians*. New York (1960) p. 102. Following citation: p. 105, Peters, Tom: *Jenseits der Hierarchien, Liberation Management*. Düsseldorf (1993)

correct, but are still way off the mark. Finally, the merger of the two semi-perceptive positions in the present “new centre” did not lead to two fully seeing eyes: the two semi-blind sides became completely blind. This is because since the very beginning, the project of “total education” has been accompanied by a devastating misunderstanding that must be described as a lie because it is of such benefit to the proponents who operate with it.

Educating to freedom

As is so often the case, here we are confronted with a confusion of various interpretations of a single concept. Education stands, firstly, for the process of evolution into man or the development of the personality. This process inevitably begins with the individual person, and is his own responsibility. It is an internal process and cannot be arbitrarily steered from outside. Formal “education” only makes a minor contribution to this. The major “teacher” of this education is one’s own life. This is where learning takes place. The best school of responsibility is accepting responsibility. Being bombarded with other people’s experiences, fragments of knowledge, instructions and recipes does not really play much of a role. When the length, frequency and vehemence of these bombardments increase – especially if they take place in remote institutions – they become a sure means for thoroughly torpedoing this form of education and making it completely impossible.

But education has a second meaning that those who criticise schooling are rarely aware of. In addition to the universal process of personality development, education is also a particular plan for life in a specific tradition; in English, this is known as *the great tradition*. It has to do with the old tradition of the scholars, a specific calling. The equivalent of what was once the trade guild was the *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*, the totality of the scholars. The old universities were somewhat like guilds; their buildings were a practical form that followed at a later date. The scholars founded schools because they needed *scholé* – leisure. The school or academy is that peaceful place in a grove (*akademos*) far from the activities of everyday life, without stress and troubles. Thomas Molnar sees these schools as cultural sanctuaries: “The same as religion, culture also needs places of retreat, open to all, but exclusive through the attitude of natural respect that humans bring to

those that are of a higher standing than they themselves.”⁶³

The scholar's life was an individual plan held by a small class that did without wealth and fame and, as a rule, led an ascetic, monastic life. Nobody would have ever thought of being envious of this group's lifestyle. Any person with the necessary peace of mind was at liberty to join it.

In their blind materialism, the engineers of society saw – and still see – only the material expressions of this tradition and misinterpret the buildings, titles and procedures as the machines of “education”. The idea suggesting itself behind this notion: one can accelerate the “education” of the old person into the new person by driving the largest number of people possible through these kinds of educational machines for the longest time possible. What was once the design for living of a few has been overstretched to become a promise and obligation for all. It comes as no surprise that resistance to the ascetic forms of the scholarly tradition soon set in that are often mistaken for the universal formation of man.

The utopians used the same strategy in economic life: there, they are known as Communists. They wanted to force people to live in an enormous secular monastery. What, on a small scale, is the most precious and important institution of the Occident becomes hell on earth on a large scale. The fact that people die of hunger and not of stupidity has made production Communism obsolete, but educational Communism is still considered the only path to progress worth following. In the context of compulsion and collectivism, the asceticism of learning and teaching increasingly appeared to be an intolerable condition. Over time, it became necessary to demolish the inside of the institutions to make room for all people. This led to the tradition of education being hollowed out from within. In order to reduce the understandable opposition, the engineers of society attempted to gradually adapt the institutions of “education” to the outer world. If televisions and the internet existed in the outside world, attempts were made to make the “education” prison more agreeable through the introduction of these mass media. This hollowed-out “education” was increasingly forced to adopt the duties of the outside world. Today, it is expected to perform

⁶³ Molnar, Thomas: *Die Zukunft der Bildung*. Düsseldorf (1971) p. 90; getabstract.com

the function of the parents: to educate, integrate, sensitise and socialise children and make them healthier, more tolerant, more ecologically minded, better at sport, able to deal with all the topics of daily politics; acquaint them with the zeitgeist, gender teaching and “anti” racial anthropology; enable them to come to grips with the past, and much, much more.

Houses of stupidity

A book with the title *Die Bildungslüge* (“The Educational Lie”) of all things is particularly illustrative of this approach. In it, Werner Fuld accuses the “educational” system of teaching too much specialised knowledge and too little understanding. This is a popular theory, but it is nonsense. Resistance to the ascetic relics of learning by heart set in at an early stage. The result was that children had to learn fewer set things, but did learn more and more things without motivation, by heart. In former times, the average pupil who had struggled through school ultimately ended up knowing a few things from memory – the odd poem for example. When liberated of its purpose, the school initially united ascetic discipline with a universal scope. The more the school resembles the outside world, the more the final remaining difference becomes apparent: the artificial, forced separation. As soon as sheets are merely filled out and taxonomies are no longer boned up on in biology lessons, it will become incomprehensible and unbearable to be imprisoned in the classroom. The spitefulness, contempt and disgust with which today's pupils talk about their “teachers” is unprecedented. It is not surprising: the compulsorily assigned “buddy” who decides over one's future without being able to provide any orientation or knowledge, but only points to the giant information bordello the internet – because he or she has no orientation either – is also quite clearly an intolerable absurdity.

The reaction that understandably has set in has led to the “education system” becoming a project of constant reforms. Each step to make “education” more bearable actually makes the claim more absurd. The end result is an all-embracing therapeutic facility in which each student has a personal psychologist to care for him. In a school that no longer demands anything from the pupils, but only provides support – not with parental love, but within the framework of a forced institution –

and demands no discipline from them, students will have to be pacified with medication. This is not a science-fiction fantasy; it is already reality in the USA – the country that is the great pioneer of progressive “education”. Because it seems wrong to simply dish up things to the forced students, “freedom” was increased inside the schools. Now the students can choose their own subjects, the contents of the course are instructed in competing classes. What could be a wonderful thing in the context of personal, inner education has paradoxical consequences in the framework of misconceived institutionalised “education”.

“Education” is increasingly becoming confused with training, that introduction to the concrete necessities of reality which can actually be learned nowhere else than in – and from – reality. The “practitioners” and “pragmatists” produced are quite simply incapable of thinking theoretically, of perception.

Thomas Molnar provides support for my evaluation: “Any institution that no longer performs the specific role for which it was created will be just as confused as an individual who has lost his identity. Our American society turns towards the school whenever it discovers a new hobby-horse or hands a short-lived mission over to it. In this way, the school will never be able to fulfil its traditional role in peace because it seems as though it will have to adapt to each novelty and carry out its experiments according to the results of the latest brainstorm.”⁶⁴

The public schools in the USA are not going to the dogs and becoming places of violence lacking any sense due to – but, paradoxically, because of – the pedagogical efforts being undertaken. And this is turning them into a self-fulfilling prophecy: they really do prepare students for the “reality” that they themselves create. While the average member of the group in need of therapy in the USA displays a shockingly low level of education, one can also discover excellence. There are still many possibilities away from the dominating institutions in this country; attending school is not yet enforced by the police. Without striving for excellence, the “tradition of education” as learning will not survive; on the other hand, a dictate of excellence in “education” in the sense of the universal

⁶⁴ Molnar, Thomas: *Die Zukunft der Bildung*. Düsseldorf (1971) p. 141; *Stufen* (4 May 1941), in Hesse, Hermann: *Sämtliche Gedichte in einem Band*. Frankfurt am Main (1995)

formation of the person is both merciless and hostile to children. The false understanding of freedom that we are faced with when dealing with centralised “education” is that of freedom as the absolute power and control of people over their destiny without the component of personal responsibility. This leads to utopian impatience, to the terrible anxiety that somewhere, some imperfect child of imperfect parents will receive an imperfect “education” and that heaven on earth will have to wait until everyone – without exception – has been captured and perfected. However, accepted determinism is a dangerous illusion. Many people who have had a difficult childhood full of privation later enjoy fulfilled, wonderful existences. In contrast, coming from a good, sheltered background without any flaws does not protect one from being unsuccessful in life; quite the contrary, it can even aid this.

Let us keep Goethe’s warning in mind that utopianism will lead us into a global clinic. The linguistic honesty with which we describe the institutionalisation and mass provision in the “health system” is unfortunately missing in the “education system”. Analogous to this, we should really be speaking about “houses of stupidity” instead of schools. And the utopian project will only really be completed when we have all become well-behaved, completely cared-for, fed, entertained inmates of a worldwide hospital and home for the stupid.

Utopian impatience can sometimes be found in the families made insecure through the omnipresent reproaches and promises. Some parents live in great anxiety that they will do something wrong and their children will turn out to be failures. Unfortunately, this panic-stricken control frenzy is the best recipe for neurotic problem children. Here we have the essence of the education lie: the lie of the absolute controllability and feasibility of human affairs. The sensible antidote to this insanity is the leisurely exhortation “don’t panic!”

The teacher: guidelines for responsibility

Neither control nor panic make people free. We have education in the sense of forming ourselves in our own hands. This is where the heart of the teacher’s mission lies: education leading to freedom. This means nothing else than the good teacher endeavouring to make himself redundant. This is his mission and function and, therefore, his *raison*

d'être, just as a good doctor's goal is health and he therefore strives for his own dispensability.

Showing the path to freedom means providing guidelines for responsibility. The teacher cannot "vaccinate" the student with responsibility, nor can he give him a dose of it; he must teach him to answer to himself. The teacher does not give answers, he teaches answering – to the questions life and the world pose.

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Sustainability: The Quick Buck Destroys Long-Term Prosperity

Christian Sebastian Moser

Summary

The term is not even twenty years old, and was only proclaimed a global model at the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, but the notion of sustainable development has made breathtakingly triumphant progress in economic and socio-political debates. Sustainability as the most recent principle in Christian social ethics can only be put into operation politically if subsidiarity is considered an organisational principle of sustainable development; if not, it is in danger of fizzling out as an ineffective moral appeal trumpeted out loud in political sermons.

It makes no difference whether budgets are being rescued in the national economy, public-sector shares reduced, CO₂ emissions halved, or limits set on global fishing – at present, it usually occurs in the name of sustainable development. But what is understood under this oft-quoted concept? Is sustainability only a fashionable term with a low half-life period, or does this also contain long-term potential for post-modern, Western societies? Are the utopian expectations of salvation of a secularised consumer society of long-in-the-tooth post-materialists with profane longings for redemption and the meaning of life hidden behind this unwieldy word, or is the triumphant progress of sustainable development the first empirical proof of a re-theologisation of our society?

In an attempt to comprehend the idea of sustainable development in all its manifold dimensions, it is a good idea to take a closer look at the etymological origins of the German word for sustainability: *Nachhaltigkeit*. In 1713, the nobleman Hans Carl von Carlowitz⁶⁵ intro-

⁶⁵ Grober, Ulrich: Die Erfinder der Nachhaltigkeit, http://www.zeit.de/1999/48/Der_Erfinder_der_Nachhaltigkeit?page=all

duced the term in his book *Sylvicultura Oeconomica* – the first work on forestry science. Carlowitz had become aware of the contemporary problem of a lack of wood due to over-forestry and wanted to establish the continuous use of the forest as a means for achieving sustainable cultivation and, thus, an increase in prosperity. Carlowitz's findings from his observations of nature and German forestry are evidence of the utilitarian origin of the word and make it clear that sustainability is inconceivable without an economic foundation. Carlowitz considered it important to make continuous use of the forests in order to achieve maximum returns without destroying their substance.

The word stems from the area of forestry and, as the German forest has always had a prominent place in poetry and mythology, is extremely well suited for developing a political metaphor. It seems that the SPD politician Volker Hauff also felt this in 1987 when he recast this concept to satisfy the demands of politics. He defined sustainable development as being achieved if present demands were satisfied without the risk that future generations would be unable to fulfil theirs. Although unable to foresee it, Hauff brought about a political paradigm shift away from the one-dimensionality of the ecology movement of the 1970s to a holistic perspective, a paradigm shift because the new concept made it possible to overcome the regressive totality of ecologism. In the 1980s, the green movement – with its moral convictions and oft-used scenarios predicting the end of the world – held sway over the debate in both the pre-political and public spheres, but today the topic of ecology has been replaced by more universal discussions on sustainability that unite economic, social, political and ecological aspects.

Finally, in 1992, the international community of nations drew up a model for sustainable development at the UN Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro that was to be implemented in a programme of action for the twentyfirst century – the so-called Agenda 21.⁶⁶

This led to the political cards being reshuffled: the Austrian People's Party was the first in the country to recognise the chance being offered

⁶⁶ Cf. Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit (BMU) (ed.): Konferenz der Vereinten Nationen für Umwelt und Entwicklung im Juni 1992 in Rio de Janeiro – Dokumente, Bonn, 1992.

to take a solo position in dealing with the matter. In the Vienna Programme of 1995, it made sustainability a new fundamental political value that continued with the success story of the ecological market economy under Josef Riegler.

The preservation of creation as a political assignment

Liberated from idealistic delusion and eschatological exaggeration, the concept of sustainability is exceptionally well suited to be the ecological development of Christian social ethics. Those who find the term “sustainability” too artificial and difficult to grasp should consider the theological term “preservation of creation” as a synonym. In Genesis 2:15 “... the Lord God took man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.” In addition to the assignment to cultivate, preservation is a central factor of creation. In contrast to one-sided, back-to-nature romanticism in the tradition of Rousseau and the ecology movement, the Christian notion of being responsible for creation does not play man off against nature; mankind forms an inseparable whole with all forms of animal and vegetable life. Here, nature is never over-glorified; on the contrary, it only receives its *raison d'être* through the history of mankind. In Heidigger's words, where the past always implies a future, the Christian term preservation of creation means accepting equal responsibility for the past, present and future.

Marcus Vogt has clearly traced the stages of the argument of how and why the notion of sustainability can meaningfully complement the Christian social ethic:⁶⁷

- The comprehensive and integrative approach of the concept of sustainability coincides with major aspects of the Christian belief in creation.
- Confronted with the complex problems facing the world today, the belief in creation needs to be linked with such a supporting concept to be able to achieve ethical and political creative power under the conditions, and with the decision-taking problems, of a modern society.

⁶⁷ Cf. Vogt, Markus: Nachhaltigkeit – Ein neues Sozialprinzip christlicher Ethik, p. 28

- Their tradition enables the Christian churches to make a major contribution to the ethical, theological and practical consolidation of this model.

Sustainability is a new social principle that complements the three principles of the Catholic social ethic of personality, solidarity and subsidiarity. As an ethological ethic, sustainability should not be regarded as a special form, as this would lead to its being pushed to the sidelines of the relevant argumentation. The principle of sustainability achieves its independence precisely not from its isolation from the other Christian ethical concepts but, on the contrary, by regarding the relationship between man and nature as a problem area.⁶⁸

All those “blood and soil” and ecological ideologists who, with their exclusive claims to salvation, cultivate a post-materialistic yuppie moral that completely ignores the needs and everyday reality of a major portion of the population should take to heart that when protecting a tree or setting particulate matter, limits are more important than creating work and prosperity for the population; when an artificial dichotomy is established between man and nature, sustainability no longer serves to benefit mankind, but is only a tool for personal self-realisation fantasies, camouflaged as serving the general public, of those who all too gladly monitor the public discussion as a kind of intellectual police force.

Sustainability should not be seen as a salvation substratum for those searching for meaning in life, but an ethical instruction for action, a “should” principle to help the individual to think and live in moderation, while taking the well-being of future generations into consideration. The Christian and Puritan ideals of asceticism, thrift and humility can be reinterpreted in this way – for non-believers also – to achieve the goal of ecological, sustainable correctness, virtually an ecological conscience and superego. Here, however, one must always be aware of the danger of the over-glorification and idealisation of nature. The tastelessness the radical organisation PETA displayed when it breached a taboo and equated the Holocaust with the slaughter of animals in one of its campaigns shows just how thin the line between ecological conscience and hubris can be.

⁶⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 28f.

In the 1970s, the Christian Democrat party programme planner Heinrich Drimmel called what is now known as sustainability a conservative principle. In his publications *Realpolitik verlangt Grundsätze* (“Realpolitik Requires Principles”) and *Gegenwartsprobleme in christlicher Sicht* (“A Christian View of Contemporary Problems”), he wrote that no form of politics would be able to create a “heaven on earth”.⁶⁹ Sustainable development promises no absolute solutions; it should not lead to a “museum of noble values”, but formulate answers to the persistent challenges created by the changeability of life. Sustainability, in the Christian-democratic interpretation, lays no claim to totality, but rather (distribution) fairness for the mass-democratic consumer society “that, here, veers towards licentiousness and, there, manipulation through the anonymous forces of a modern society”. Paraphrasing Drimmel, one can maintain that in no way should sustainability be a rhetorically abstract means of moral over-glorification of single-issue positions, connected with interests, but a concrete call for all the citizens and politicians of our world to become active.

Basic premises

To prevent sustainability becoming an empty neologism, Grunwald and Kogler⁷⁰ suggest using the term only when certain conditions that take the double responsibility for the present and future into account are satisfied. This includes dealing with the questions of the resources we must leave to coming generations so that they will have the same opportunities for life as the present one. Responsibility for the future implies the necessity of preventing damage rather than repairing any done. On the other hand, the premise of responsibility for those living today is reactive – it implies the political commission to do away with existing injustice and structural inequality. The authors describe generation justice and gender equality as political instruments to guarantee fair distribution. Sustainability means taking equal responsibility for both today and tomorrow.

⁶⁹ Cf. Mertens, Christian: Heinrich Drimmel. *Wider den herrschenden Zeitgeist*, in Burkert-Dottolo, Günther / Moser, Christian (eds.): *Stichwortgeber für die Politik*. Section I, Vienna, 2006, p. 131f.

⁷⁰ Grunwald, Armin / Kopfmüller, Jürgen: *Nachhaltigkeit, Eine Einführung*, Frankfurt/New York, 2006

In order to make the abstract term operational through indicators and certain target values, Grunwald and Kogler recommend using it only when the following conditions are satisfied:

- The attributes of sustainable, less sustainable or non-sustainable should only be applied, without any further elaboration, to the overall global development.
- Regions, social areas, political fields, branches, technological lines or innovations can contribute to sustainable development, but are themselves neither sustainable nor non-sustainable.
- In order to prevent misunderstandings and over-interpretation, it is often appropriate to make comparative statements on aspects of sustainability.⁷¹

Single-column versus multi-column concept

Various sustainability conceptions are discussed with these limitations in mind. In the so-called single-column concepts,⁷² the ecological aspect is given priority and man takes only second place as a system factor. Emphasising the limits to ecological maximum loads has a key role in this concept.⁷³ However, it is scientifically dishonest to determine absolute maximum loads, and these prognoses often drift off into blatant alarmism and also position ecology as opposing man.

The theoreticians of the multi-column concept⁷⁴ have developed a more discriminating approach. They stress the necessity of treating the individual dimensions of sustainable development equally. The connection between economic, ecological and social aspects – in the narrower sense politico-institutional questions – is seen as a “magical triangle”. In this case, the economy seeks solutions for the optimal, conscientious use of natural resources along with the key to distribution justice. An additional question is whether sustainable development is compatible

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 36

⁷² Ibid., p. 41ff.

⁷³ Cf. The first of these kinds of texts: Club of Rome, *Die Grenzen des Wachstums* 1972, as well as the new genre of films in the first years of this millennium such as *Darwin's Nightmare*, *We Feed the World*, etc.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 47ff.

with unrestricted quantitative economic growth or whether a switch to qualitative, or even zero, growth would be more desirable for society. In the meantime, the demands for zero growth made by the green movement have shown themselves to be a fatal mistake. Without three percent economic growth, no new jobs are created; this leads to the erosion of the social-security systems whose financing is based on employment. The social state is threatened with implosion; the concept of zero growth reveals itself as a serious burden for the coming generations and wilfully violates the commandment of social sustainability. The primary goal of sustainable development is actually to preserve and improve social peace. This includes finding acceptable solutions for the problems of distribution between regions, between social strata and between the sexes.

This conviction is also shared by the supporters of the so-called integrative sustainability concepts. In the integrative approach,⁷⁵ the constitutive elements of sustainable development are translated into general goals. The most important are:

- Guaranteeing human existence,
- The preservation of the social productive potential, and
- The conservation of society's possibilities to develop and take action.

It is amazing that, in the relative short span of time since 1992, a countless number of sustainability studies have been produced. However, the majority of these replace striving for objectivity and honesty with moralising, tendentious forms of argumentation. Many of the studies are not only characterised by their pessimistic tenor and tendency toward overblown depictions of impending gloom, but also their methodological shortcomings: these epistles of desires and warnings have concretisation deficits and reduce complex relationships to biological categories. Responsible citizens become remote-controlled populations, natural-scientific evolution replaces the history of cultural science, active life is reduced to the question of survival – and all of this usually delivered with an air of infallibility.

The two basic models for describing sustainability – the IPAT equation

⁷⁵ Cf. Vogt, Markus: *Nachhaltigkeit – Ein neues Sozialprinzip christlicher Ethik*, p. 28

and the footprint model – also follow this leaning towards a technocratic and static description of the circumstances.⁷⁶ The IPAT equation was developed for demography and states: Impact (environmental pollution) = Population (density) x Affluence (consumption level) x Technology (environmental pollution from production). According to Kaufmann, this equation is invested with a disastrous market-technology bias: the North is considered in the perspective of progress; the South biologically. The population of Southern countries are no longer the “noble, undemanding savages” of yore but are moving into the slums of the urban metropolises such as Lagos, are clearing jungles and over-fishing lakes. This fearful subtext of European authors is always conjured up when limits to growth – as with the buzzword “peak oil” – are proclaimed as a warning signal.

The non-governmental organisation WWF has popularised the footprint formula. The ecological footprint “converts the use of resources into the area of the land and sea that is necessary to produce the corresponding amount of food and absorb the refuse. These kinds of calculations have the intention of establishing a level of comparison for just consumption and the fulfilment of needs.”⁷⁷ According to this interpretation, sustainability means self-limitation. Capitalism should be “made tipsy” through the consumption of mineral water to make it possible for the post-material socialised person to console his secularised conscience. Countless ecological platforms with the goal of rescuing the world have been in existence since the 1970s. The newest subgroup calls itself LOHAS (lifestyle of health and sustainability) and wants to save the planet through conscious consumption. This new kind of green lifestyle, which is currently en vogue and taking over the market, combines the needs of sustainability and indulgence, ethics and consumption that were previously considered to be conflicting and mutually exclusive. However, this lifestyle, which takes contradictions into consideration and wants conscious consumption, remains marked by its moral hedonism with a feel-good factor but without any long-term prospects. It is certain that the world needs much more than bio-diesel and hybrid motors if it is to recover.

⁷⁶ Cf. Kaufmann, Stefan: *Nachhaltigkeit*, in Bröckling, Ulrich, et al. (eds.): *Glossar der Gegenwart*, Frankfurt am Main, 2004, p. 177ff.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 178f.

On the micro-level, sustainability is seen as a form of voluntary self-control; but transferred to the macro-level, it is transfigured into a basic principle of overriding importance, a kind of magic box that provides the right contents for any political field to justify itself. “For example, speaking for future generations, the state cuts back its expenditures, invests research funds in genetics and biotechnology, takes measures to reduce the time spent studying or increase that spent working. Sustainability makes itself heard everywhere as a clarion call for reforms, where breaking points or structural deficits become apparent – whether in the fields of finance, education, health, pensions or the social system as a whole.”⁷⁸ Sustainability as a machine for achieving all wishes and the argumentative final trump card will lose its mid- or long-term emancipatory potential if the concept becomes lost in contextual arbitrariness, becomes worn out in the abstract, and if it does not remain concrete.

The interaction between various social actors is therefore necessary for the implementation of sustainability in real politics. Sustainability is only possible if enterprises, consumers and the civil society all participate actively to the same extent. Sustainability is not appropriate for all areas of politics. And this is why the Brundtland Commission decided that sustainability analyses should be restricted to fundamental human needs such as eating, drinking and living, as well as the basic provision of these goods.

Here, attention must be paid to guaranteeing distribution fairness and equal opportunity. The most important areas of action for the concept of sustainable development are the political fields of energy, water, nutrition, agriculture, housing and construction, mobility and labour.

Ten theses

In their introduction, Grundwald and Kopfmüller formulated ten theses that, in their view, were necessary to integrate sustainable development into the long-term process of legislation. As a first thesis, they demand the verifiability of the foundation of the model based on concrete indicators such as generation fairness. A comprehensive diagnosis of sustainability requires the systematic monitoring of many political

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 180

sub-systems. They name an integrative approach, the formulation of millennium goals, the search for “intelligent control mechanisms”, the necessity of innovation, the model of global governance, disarmament and the prevention of conflicts, the reform of the social-security systems, as well as a reform of taxation and duties, and increased funding of education and research as additional cornerstones.

If the concept of sustainable development hopes to be more than just a rhetorical trick, and claim credibility and authority in the common interest for itself, it must be freed of its contextual arbitrariness and deduced as one of the principles of Christian social ethics.

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When Talking about Moderation. The Relationship between State and Church, Politics and Religion

Christian Mertens / Thomas Köhler

Summary

Even if the Kingdom of Heaven cannot be found on this earth, we all have the mission to (at least) attempt to make the best of this life. Because “Love thy neighbour as thyself!” is a summons to form the interpersonal community (polity) here and now. The interactions between – material – religion and politics and – formal – the church and the state have been the subject of much discussion for centuries. The arch of concepts reaches from the theocracy and philocracy of antiquity, through the church state and state church of the Middle Ages, to the laicism and secularity of modern times.

Concepts

Today's European-style state has a series of development processes in the fields of politics and administration, society and economy, as well as in education and culture with secularity, the separation of the state and the church, but not necessarily of politics and religion, as one of the most substantial characteristics to thank for its development. The word has its roots in the Latin *saeculum*, which originally meant century or age, and later came into use to denote the “temporal world” and, in this way, the earthly in contrast to the eternal, the hereafter. The secularity of the state therefore implies that its goals and responsibilities are exclusively worldly and not founded in the other realm. As an institution created by man for man, it concentrates on its worldly functions of order and formation; this is its *raison d'être* and also sets limits to its activities. The same applies to the state's secular legislation, that it neither assumes a religious legitimation nor intends to implement divine commandments, but restricts itself to the regulation of the issues of this world.

The secular state is the product of secularisation. The first meaning of this term is the formal legislative process of removing the worldly power from religious institutions such as happened with the dissolution of the Papal States in 1870 and the – more recent – second refers to the historical process of the separation of the state and the church that principally dealt with the removal and emancipation of worldly affairs from religious institutions and norms. In the twentieth century, the term of secularisation also became a battle cry to describe “banning religion from the history of modern times”.⁷⁹ Others, including Hannah Arendt, warned against flogging the phenomenon of secularisation to death. This really means nothing more than the separation of the church and the state, something that in no way leads to religion disappearing.

Historical development

The mediaeval state was characterised by the unity-creating order principle of the *corpus christianum* that was based on the interaction between the *sacerdotium* (papacy) and *imperium* (imperial rule). The fragmentation of Christianity and the development of modern states in the early modern age introduced the reciprocal autonomy of the state and the church. The separation of the state and the church experienced a strong, idealistic impulse in the eighteenth century with the Enlightenment and French Revolution. Major segments of intellectual life were removed from the Christian sphere of reference; religious freedom and individual freedom of confession (freedom of religion and conscience) became increasingly important and manifested themselves in the confession-neutral state that, under the influence of political liberalism, further developed into the religion-neutral state. In some countries, this separation process was occasionally accompanied by great tension and political repression – particularly against the Catholic Church (*Kulturkampf*). Today, the relationship between the state and churches and religious communities is regulated by laws founded on the principle of one of the elemental human rights, the freedom of worship.

Formally, the following fundamental models differentiate between the

⁷⁹ Haring, Sabine: Verheißung und Erlösung. Religion und ihre weltlichen Ersatzbildungen in Politik und Wissenschaft, Vienna, 2008, p. 27.

relationship between the state and institutionalised religion:

- Papal State: the political order is formed and controlled by the religious (theocracy, “State of God”);
- State church: the church is integrated into and controlled by the political order (caesaropapism);
- Sovereign state church: inner independence of the church, though the church is subjected to wide-ranging limitations and rights of intervention and control by the state;
- Coordination system: the church and state regard each other as equal partners and reciprocally recognize their independence and autonomy; common ground is regulated by joint action (secular system); and
- Separation system: complete separation between the state and church spheres (laicist system).

In Austria, freedom of worship and freedom of conscience are both codified in Article 14 of the constitution. According to this law, each citizen has the right to belong to a church or religious community of his or her choosing and practice its rites. One is also at liberty to belong to no religion. Several privileges are associated with the recognition as a religious community (a separate law is required in each case; Islam was recognised in 1912 and Judaism in 1890), such as the possibility of giving religious instruction in the schools, the right to establish confessional private schools and the independent organisation and administration of internal affairs. There are 13 recognised religions in Austria today.

Religious-ideological neutrality

In free democracies, secularity stands in a specific context for the “religious-ideological neutrality of the state”. This respect for the freedom of man means that it is fundamentally forbidden to identify with a specific religious or ideological confession at the expense of believers in others. Constitutional law speaks about the “principle of respectful non-identification”. The state accepts the responsibility for freedom in questions of religious profession (freedom of worship) and religious practice (freedom to exercise a religion). It commits itself to guarantee religious freedom in the constitution and to protect religions from

undesirable interference by the state (non-intervention).

However, non-identification is not connected with indifferent neutralism, value neutrality or pushing aside religion as being a “purely private” matter. Religious freedom is in no way limited to guaranteeing the individual the freedom to practice his personal belief, but also guarantees public religious life – including the political public sphere. As actors in the modern civil society, religious communities have the right to become involved in the political debate such as those taking place in Austria on the questions of policies on granting asylum, social politics and labour laws. The separation of the state and institutionalised religion in no way implies the exclusion of religion or religiously motivated contributions from the public political discourse of the civil society. This would amount to a restriction of politico-legal freedom: “A general separation of religion and politics, enforced by the state, cannot exist in a free polity.”⁸⁰

Consistent with this, the state does not demand that the religious communities withdraw into the private sphere, but that they recognize pluralism. This includes the acceptance of the secular legal system as the institutional prerequisite for the equal coexistence of people of different creeds and concepts of life. It also demand that state norms (laws) have priority over the norms of religious law (such as in the case of matrimonial and family law).

In contrast to continental Europe, the coexistence of a great number of Christian confessions led to the separation of the state and institutionalised religion taking place at a much earlier time in the USA. The founding fathers of the union, inspired by the ideals of the Enlightenment, took the view that the moral basis of the state was not founded on divine revelation but on natural law. Any governmental interference into religious matters would be detrimental to both the religion and the state. The first amendment to the Constitution (1791) forbade the introduction of a state religion and guaranteed sweeping freedom of worship. Precisely the basis of this separation made it possible for an active public life to develop that can be recognised in the symbols and national identity (God's own country) to the present day.

⁸⁰ Bielefeldt, Heiner: *Muslime im säkularen Rechtsstaat. Integrationschancen durch Religionsfreiheit*, Bielefeld, 2003, p. 41.

Laicism

The term laicism developed in France (*laïcisme*) in the nineteenth century and had a belligerent, anti-clerical flavour. It described the absolute separation of the state and the church, with the church being driven back into the private sphere completely and the rejection of it having any public influence. Laicism reached its peak in France in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when political liberalism and the Catholic Church confronted each other in a massive cultural battle. Among the most far-reaching measures were school laws that banned any church activities (*école laïque*), association legislation that placed religious organisations under special state supervision, and the separation law of 1905 that reduced the Catholic Church to the status of a cultural institution. It is clear that the separation of the church and state was interpreted in an aggressive, anti-clerical manner.

France has defined itself as a *république laïque* since 1945. In this system, the freedom to participate in public within the frame of the civil society is removed from the principle of religious-ideological neutrality. In laicism, the state is led into taking an ideological standpoint against the religious positions that play a role in society. This can be seen in France's ban on wearing visible religious symbols (headscarves, kippa, crosses, habits of religious orders) in schools and universities.

Turkey cultivates a laicist model also. When the Republic replaced the Ottoman Empire, the founder of the state, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, introduced radical measures to oust Islam from public life. Since 1937, the constitution expressly commits the state to laicism. In the form of the Presidium for Religious Affairs (Diyanet), the state has extensive control over religious life, going as far as drawing up the texts for sermons in mosques. Until recently, it was expressly forbidden to wear headscarves in public buildings, schools and universities. Other religious communities are subject to even stricter regulations.

It is interesting that the term laicism has asserted itself in the Latin countries of Europe and America, whereas in the Germanic and Anglo-American world secularity is more common. In Italy, one of the centres of the Catholic Church, the constitution describes the state as *laico*. However, the parties (with the exception of those on the far left) do all

they can to avoid the term laicist, and *secularità* is making its way into the language of art and science step by step – and slowly into politics.

Political religion and civil religion

The term “political religion”, introduced by the German-American philosopher and political scientist Erich (Eric) Voegelin in 1938, describes the modern ideological movements of the 1930s such as Communism, National Socialism and Fascism as quasi-religious phenomena. This model develops out of a much-expanded concept of the religious and explains the ways totalitarian systems function with the aid of religious categories and terms. In periods of insecurity and disorientation especially, political ideologies take on the contents and functions of traditional religions as a kind of worldly ersatz institution. The belief in salvation in the world to come is replaced by liberation in this life that is searched for in categories such as class or race. The “promise of salvation” that justifies absolute authority in the execution of power is based on a quasi-religious ideology. Further elements are the re-interpretation of the leader as a Messiah-like figure and the special role played by quasi-religious rituals and celebrations (the staging of the Reich’s Nuremberg party conference and the dedication ceremony for young people in the German Democratic Republic). Other theoreticians prefer the term “secular religion” (*religion séculière*) or – in consideration of the open opposition of totalitarian regimes to traditional religious communities – anti-religion.

Today, there are also manifestations of “secularised expectations of salvation”⁸¹ (Konrad Paul Liessmann). Here, we only intend to make a brief allusion to the belief in technology (scientism), hedonism (the egoistic cult of fun and pleasure) and the abstract belief in the future.

In contrast to these, civil religion is interpreted as the ingredients of religious culture that are integrated into the political system and contribute to the support of the democratic community. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the first to use the term *religion civile* to describe an obligatory civil “profession of faith” for the recompense of justice or

⁸¹ Liessmann, Konrad Paul: Zukunft kommt! Über säkularisierte Heilserwartungen und ihre Enttäuschungen, Vienna, 2007.

injustice or the sanctity of the social contract and laws. In the 1960s, the sociologist Robert N. Bellah from the USA re-introduced the expression to describe the specifically religious aspects of American society. In addition to the institutionalised churches and religious communities, he located a general form of religiosity outside of these. The use of the name of God in speeches and symbols of the state (such as the phrase “In God we trust” on dollar banknotes) are examples of this civil religion.

The German philosopher Hermann Lübbe defines religion as “the totality of those aspects of religious culture that are de-facto or even formally-institutionally integrated into the political system that unite the citizen, independent of their confessional affiliation, in their religious existence to the polity and legitimise this polity, as well as its institutions and representatives, as being ultimately religious; that means as being worthy of recognition for religious reasons”⁸² Without any civil-religious horizon, the demands of a political moral system remain arbitrary. While totalitarian states are “self-sufficient in their political legitimation”,⁸³ the secular state needs institutions that are capable of stimulating a sense of responsibility, imparting values and creating a sense of consciousness. In this regard, civil religion is independent of churches and religious communities. It does refer to an ideal horizon in front of which political activities take place, but still upholds the institutional differentiation between religion and politics.

The German constitutional law expert Wolfgang Böckenförde formulated the fundamental problem of secularised states in the dilemma that has become known under his name: “The free, secularized state lives from conditions that it cannot guarantee itself. That is the great hazardous enterprise that it has entered into in the name of freedom. On the one hand, it can only exist as a free state when the freedom it grants its citizens regulates itself from within, from the moral substance of the individual and homogeneity of the society.”⁸⁴

⁸² Lübbe, Hermann: Staat und Zivilreligion. Ein Aspekt politischer Legitimität, Wolfenbüttel n.d., p. 20.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 26.

⁸⁴ Böckenförde Dilemma, cited after www.wikipedia.org (12 February 2008).

Politics from religious inspiration – Christian democracy?⁸⁵

The secular state that developed after 1789 confronted Christians with the challenge of participating in politics. In a certain way, the *prêtres constitutionnels* of the French Revolution who spoke of Jesus Christ as the first democrat must be regarded as representing an early form of democracy inspired by Christianity. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Félicité Lamennais, a French priest and philosopher, developed a wide-ranging, theologically based Christian theory of democracy in which he created a connection between Christianity and the philosophy of the Enlightenment. Influenced by Rousseau, he stood up for democracy, the republican state form, freedom of worship and the press, as well as the separation of the state and church. The term *démocratie chrétienne* appeared, and there was a group of the same name in the French parliament (although, they were not acknowledged by the official church).⁸⁶

At the latest, in the wake of the Revolution of 1848 and the social upheaval as a result of industrialisation, “Christian democracy” assumed a clearly political dimension with the goal of a just social order. The large number of Catholic societies and associations that were available as a political run-up provided an organisational starting point. In contrast to the social and economic orders with an individualistic (liberalist) or collectivistic (Marxist) view of man, the programmatic concepts were influenced by the papal social encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) as well as Protestant social ethics and European moral theologians and social philosophers. These were based on a view of man that, as the creation of God, was invested with inviolable dignity, diversity, equality and fallibility leading to the fundamental values of freedom, responsibility, sustainability, solidarity, subsidiarity and justice.

A critical difference of today’s Christian-democratic parties is that – in contrast to the political Catholicism of the period between the two world wars – they do not engage in any confessional (with a strong

⁸⁵ Space limitations prevent a detailed depiction of the historical development of Christian-democratic parties. See the literature list in the appendix for more information.

⁸⁶ Cf. the unconventional work by Hans Maier, *Revolution und Kirche. Zur Frühgeschichte der Christlichen Demokratie*, Freiburg/Basel/Vienna, 1988.

organisational tie with the church) or clerical (with a strong dependence on the church in matters of content) politics but, as secular parties, they understand religion as the ethical-religious impulse behind their political activities. The question of how all this is compatible with the impetus of enlightenment of the sovereignty of the people, under which all power emanates from the people, was answered by the Democrazia Cristiana in 1945 – as always, dazzling in theory but frequently corrupt in theory – with the words that all power continued to come from God, but that the people were His plenipotentiaries.

In Great Britain and the USA, Christian democracy never became a label for a political party because this was taken for granted in an environment characterised by the puritan ideal of democracy. In the Anglo-Saxon countries, religion and politics developed in a kind of symbiosis; that is also why they did not experience the phenomenon of a cultural dispute (*Kulturkampf*). One was most likely to find persons devoted to Christian democracy in the camp of the Labour Party.

Secularity and Islam – Islamic democracy?

The secular state developed in Europe and North America. Theoreticians such as Samuel Huntington (*The Clash of Civilizations*) therefore conclude that secularity is exclusively part of the cultural heritage of “Western” civilisation and cannot be realised in other cultural contexts. They draw attention to the unity of religion and the state on the foundation of the Sharia (the law set by God) in this regard.

However, such broad generalisations overlook the fact that Muslim have many different approaches to the Sharia. Only a minority of radical Islamists sees it as being, in principle, an alternative to the secular state and justice. For many, its ethical content is the important aspect. Many Islamic theoreticians feel that democracy and Islam are compatible by rejecting the concept of God having unique sovereignty over the state, pointing out that God’s will is not immediately tangible and its revelation can therefore be interpreted in more than one way. This means that no interpretation can be made binding using political instruments of power. Others attempt to prove that the pluralist, secular state lies in the consequence of central testimonies of the Koran itself.

An additional aspect is the misunderstanding – widespread in Muslim circles and naturally also promoted by Western atheists and radical Islamists – that the secular state is founded on an anti-religious view of the world and value neutrality. The chance for “Islamic democratic” parties developing lies in overcoming reciprocal misunderstandings and receptive theories on the compatibility of Islam and the secular constitutional state. The ruling party in Turkey, the AKP (Justice and Development Party), could serve as one example of this possibility, as it refers to values inspired by religion, but not to Islamist principles. These kinds of parties would be the logical partners of European and Latin American Christian democrats.

Secularity in a multi-religious society

One of the greatest challenges that secular states in Central and Western Europe have faced since the 1990s is the increasing presence of Islam. Headscarves being worn at school or at work, the construction of impressive mosques (minaret debate), or the call of the muezzin have led to conflicts that have frequently been carried out with a great deal of emotion. The religious-ideological neutrality of the state also grants immigrants the right, based on the freedom of man, to profess their faith in public, and to organise their life in keeping with their religion, both as individuals and in the company of others. This rules out interventionist politics similar to those we find in Turkey, for example.

Of course, those who decide to leave a religious community or change to another (converts) or actually do not observe the supposedly religious concepts of “virtue” and “honour” must also have a right to the same freedom. State action is then necessary and legitimate where deviating behaviour is accompanied by repression, and naturally where secular laws are broken (e.g. arranged marriages). The realisation of religious freedom in a multi-religious society is a complex assignment that requires caution and, above all, continuous dialogue.

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Section II: Portraits of Selected Countries

France: The New Self-Awareness – France's New Order through Sarkozy

Christian Sebastian Moser / Christian Kasper

Summary

France's cultural and political image of itself has always been different from that of the rest of Europe. Nationalism was a matter of good form in France, and is often regarded as being charmingly patriotic and rarely exaggeratedly chauvinistic. This image of France changed under François Mitterand. Instead of being self-assured, confident and proud, France was increasingly perceived as eccentric, solitary and arrogant. Nicolas Sarkozy is on the right track to correct this image and to open France towards Europe without having French self-awareness suffer.

The Neo-Gaullist collective movement Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) has long left behind the model of Gaullism that considered national sovereignty, based on centralism including state intervention in the economy, unimpeachable. The RPR formally merged with other centre-right parties to create a new conservative party – the Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (UMP). In 2002, the Union's leading candidate, Jacques Chirac, was elected French President with an overwhelming 82 percent of the vote. The UMP still follows politics with the creed of a "certaine idée de la France" that de Gaulle was committed to. This "certaine idée", which the party strategists intentionally keep vague, is borne on a wave of universalism under the banner of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* going beyond the national. In real politics, this conservative union of parties has been successful in entering into those fields that were formerly regarded as being "typically left". In his term in office, Chirac pursued politics that decentralised the power of the state – something that represented a tremendous upheaval in traditionally centralist France. In this way, the principle of subsidiarity – thinking in small entities – also left its mark on the conservatives. A second specific feature of this new conserva-

tive party union was an increase in the strategies for integrating immigrants of the second, third and fourth generations with the goal of guaranteeing that they could participate better and more successfully in French life. Here, the French conservatives carried out a long-overdue shift in policy: the violent juveniles in the Parisian satellite towns, the so-called *banlieues*, made it obvious that previous integration attempts had failed. It was now intended to correct these undesirable trends with special programmes to promote integration. In order to understand the often-stormy development of the conservative parties – compared with those in other European countries – it is important to be clear about some of the typical characteristics of the French party system.

The bewildering French party landscape

More than any other European country, France's politicians have a formative influence on the nation. Charles de Gaulle, Georges Pompidou, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, François Mitterand, Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy: all of them are honourable politicians and well known far beyond the borders of France and Europe. Parties, on the other hand, play a minor role. The RPR, UDF and MoDem are known in France, but most Europeans have little idea of what these abbreviations stand for. Consequently, the major "guidelines" in French politics are set by persons more than by parties or party programmes. This is also reflected in France's party political scene, which is characterised by perpetual splitting and instability. The social scientist Colette Ysmal⁸⁷ describes this as a "traditional weakness" and explains that, in comparison with those in other European countries, the political system in France always lacked a reliable party basis and, as a result, there were generally fewer classical political debates. In particular in the 1990s, there was an even greater decrease in the political involvement of the French population. For a long period, only the Parti Communiste Français – with its local and rural groups throughout the country and, consequently, its ability to take action – could be described as being the one traditional party. However, it has been possible to observe an increasing personalisation, especially in the case of the office of president, as well as the continu-

⁸⁷ Cf. Ysmal, Colette: L'éclatement du système des partis politiques und les principaux partis politiques, in Cordellier, Serge / Lau, Élisabeth (eds.): L'état de la France, Un panorama unique et complet de la France 2000-2001, Paris, 2000

ously increasing mediatisation of the leading political actors since the 1990s. Colette Ysmal also criticises that politicians are becoming more and more controlled by the results of opinion polls. This has resulted in an essential function of the parties – that of shaping public opinion – becoming less important. In their struggle for power, the French parties are steadily becoming the parties of the representatives and less discussion forums and solution-seeking groups with common aims. These developments have led to two things: crumbling and instability. Alliances, party mergers and electoral unions alternate with splits and new foundations.

The post-war years – reorganisation of the party landscape

During the war, General Charles de Gaulle worked against the Vichy Regime as a comrade-in-arms of the "Résistance". He was the leader of the Free France movement. In October 1945, after the end of the Second World War, France's new government, recognised by the allied forces, took up office under de Gaulle. It was composed mainly of resistance fighters and socialists. This led to the proclamation of the Fourth Republic, which was characterised by a strong legislative body. For example, the parliament elected the president; the prime minister needed the National Assembly's approval in many important matters: nomination of ministers, passing the government programme, etc. De Gaulle failed with the constitutional National Assembly because he was neither sufficiently supported by the left majority nor by the "old" parties from the centre and right. Disappointed, de Gaulle resigned from office in 1953.

Several parties were founded after this. The political forces were divided between the right, left and centrists, but the differences were not always clear. In 1947, the Rassemblement du Peuple Français (RPF) was established as a non-partisan movement, but was dissolved as early as in 1952. The Algerian crisis broke out in November 1954; this led to war and manoeuvred France into an existential crisis. France's enormously expensive operations in Algeria, as well as the transfer of the theatre of war to France (with attacks by the Algerian National Liberation Front and attempts to assassinate de Gaulle), were partly responsible for the collapse of the Fourth Republic. In 1958, Charles de Gaulle once again returned to politics at the request of the National Assembly.

He saw himself as a kind of “saviour of the nation” when he proclaimed the Fifth Republic with a new constitution for France that is still in existence today.

Following the victory of the left in 1981, the neo-Gaullist right (Jacques Chirac’s *Rassemblement pour la République* – RPR – and the never non-neo-Gaullist right (the *Union pour la Démocratie Française* of Valéry Giscard d’Estaing and Jean Lecanuet)) gradually approached each other. On 17 November 2002, a new union of centre-right parties (with the exception of the UDF) that had developed out of the previous electoral group, *Union pour une Majorité Présidentielle*, was founded under the name of *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (UMP) at a solemn inauguration ceremony. The Gaullists no longer had their own party, but had become part of a union. The re-establishment of state authority and an increase in the power of the presidential office were among the priorities of the UMP. The Gaullists formed the majority of the UMP but had to share influence with other ex-parties from the right. In his foundation speech, Alain Juppé – who had been named chairman of the party – stated that the fractures between the Christian Democrats, Gaullists and Liberals had now been patched up.⁸⁸ In the following elections, the UMP actually performed well, and as the party of President Chirac and strongest conservative force, it maintained its position in the contemporary political landscape of France.

The character of “Gaullism”

Inseparably linked to the political personality of Charles de Gaulle,⁸⁹ Gaullism is seen as a political line of thought based on the General’s practical execution of his office and fundamental political ideas and, as such, is difficult to define. The political scientist Cointet makes an attempt to describe some of the specific characteristics of Gaullism. Gaullism is based on mass consumption and the strengthening of authoritative structures and is focussed on economic and social progress. On the other hand, Gaullism does not incorporate the clas-

⁸⁸ Cf. Bertrand, Xavier / Bussereau, Dominique / Darcos, Xavier / Donnedieu de Vabres, Renaud / Guedj, Nicole / Jacob, Christian / Woerth, Eric, 2004: *Des courants d’accord, des idées d’abord*, Le Monde, Paris, 17 June 2004.

⁸⁹ Cf. <http://gaullisme.free.fr/DroiteGauche.htm> dated 29 November 2004

sic attributes of right politics, but stands for anti-capitalism and anti-Marxism as well as independence from the USA. It understands itself as a third path with a strong socio-political competence. Therefore, positioning it on the right must be regarded as tendentious. The Gaullists do not consider themselves right-wing and claim a central position located neither to the left nor to the right.

New Gaullism under Sarkozy

On 6 May 2007, after the second ballot for the presidency, a new type of politician stepped into the limelight in the person of Nicolas Sarkozy. He began his political career as local councillor and mayor (Sarkozy was mayor of Neuilly-sur-Seine on the outskirts of Paris between 1983 and 2002). Following that, Sarkozy acted as budget minister in the Balladur government from March 1993 to May 1995 in addition to being the government’s spokesman. From 7 May 2002 to 30 May 2004, he was in office as minister of the interior in Jean-Pierre Raffarin’s government. In this period, he gained the reputation of being a law-and-order politician who acted resolutely against criminality.

In March 2004, Sarkozy was named “super minister” for the economy, finance and industry, and in this manner took on the responsibility for the economic reforms planned for France. One of his achievements during this period was the takeover of the German-French pharmaceutical enterprise Aventis Sanofi-Synthélabo, but following pressure from President Jacques Chirac, he was forced to relinquish the office of “super minister” at the end of November 2004. However, Sarkozy was already able to celebrate a comeback when he was named minister of the interior in Dominique de Villepin’s government in June 2005. Sarkozy was elected president of the republic in a second ballot in May 2007; he defeated the Socialists’ candidate Ségolène Royal in the runoff with a vote of 53.06 percent.

A new political style

One unusual aspect of Sarkozy’s political style is its dynamism. He was hardly in office when he reorganised the country’s migration, economic and European policies. As a former colonial power, France still has good

contacts with Africa, and in the past decades there has been a flood of immigration from that continent to France. In order to come to grips with this problem, Sarkozy organised a plan against illegal immigration. Border controls, as well as residency regulations, were tightened; the battle against racketeering organisations intensified. According to Sarkozy, the economic crisis has now made it "... the absolute priority to find a job for those people in France who are without work".⁹⁰ Pressure from the French labour market as a result of the global economic crisis made it necessary to tighten migration regulations.

Since the beginning of the economic crisis, Sarkozy has been pushing for a common European economic administration: "We have a central bank, we have a single currency, but no economic administration worthy of the name."⁹¹ Sarkozy also recommended that the EU countries participate in European corporations in the matter of state funds, as the low share prices of many French companies had made them liable for hostile takeovers from foreign investors. If Europe does not react now, one day the citizens will "wake up and discover that European companies belong to non-European capitals". The European governments should assure that, in future, "ships, planes and cars are still built in Europe".⁹² However, Sarkozy's objective is not simply subsidies for the suffering automobile industry and state participation in important branches of the economy, he is also arguing for a new orientation of the European Central Bank (ECB). In addition, Sarkozy passed a comprehensive packet of legislation for the labour market that, among other things, annulled the 35-hour week that had previously been in force. Formally, limiting work to 35 hours a week remains legal in France, but companies were expressly given the right to negotiate differing working hours with their personnel.

Sarkozy also announced a new tax to finance the effects of the economic crisis. In order for French households and industry to permanently reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, the government will impose a climate tax amounting to 17 euros/metric ton of carbon-dioxide emission starting in 2010. This means that heating oil and diesel will become 4.5 cents more expensive per litre. It is intended that the new

tax be "balanced" elsewhere: through a reduction in the income tax and a "green cheque" for those households that pay no income tax. Sarkozy stresses that this will not lead to an overall increase in taxation. This new tax will not be levied on electricity because, in France, most of this form of energy is produced in nuclear power stations that produce little carbon dioxide (CO₂). The climate tax has the goal of having the French "permanently adjusting" and will find means and ways for them not to be excessively punished. With this levy on CO₂, France hopes to come close to its goal of reducing its emissions of greenhouse gases that damage the environment by a quarter, compared with the basis of the year 1990, by 2050.

Sarkozy also makes you sit up and pay attention in the area of religion. Under Sarkozy, France – which has had a strict separation between the state and religion since 1905 and has banned all religious symbols from the official sphere – is experiencing a gentle upgrading of the religions. Sarkozy has developed the concept of a positive laicism that he described in detail during a visit to Rome in December 2008 and on a trip to Arab countries in January 2009. Sarkozy noted that France's roots were essentially Christian and that "God is in the thoughts and hearts of everyone". The principle of laicism therefore leads to respect for all religious convictions and not conflict between the religions. Respecting religious feelings is a component of France's republican pact and as much a part of the national identity as the esteem for the heritage of the Enlightenment. As president of France, which is characterised by the principle of the separation of church and state, he is not allowed to state a preference for any particular belief. Rather, he must respect all religious convictions and guarantee that everyone can believe – or not – as he sees fit and live his or her faith in dignity. With this novel interpretation, Sarkozy defined religion not as a danger to the state but as a virtue. And, according to Sarkozy, faith means hope, and it is in the interest of the Republic that the greatest possible number of men and women hope. A purely laicist, materialistic or liberal moral, without any spiritual foundation, is in danger of running out of steam. It is only the abuse of religious feelings for political purposes that is dangerous and leads to fanaticism and barbarism, not religion itself. The peaceful freedom of worship is a decisive factor in assuring a state's peace and harmony.

⁹⁰ Cited after http://www.migration-info.de/mub_artikel.php?Id=090409

⁹¹ Cited after <http://jungle-world.com/artikel/2008/44/27751.html>

⁹² Cited after <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,585514,00.html>

France's European policies

In his European policies, Sarkozy has also shown how successfully a cautious repositioning of French politics can be implemented. Although the country was one of the founding fathers of the EU, France always took an extremely sceptical position towards the European idea. The European Community profited considerably from the personal initiative of French politicians such as Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet, but the concept of transferring national decisions to a supranational level was regarded with mistrust. The development of the European Defence Community can be seen as paradigmatic for the French position: the concept of a European army, with the participation of German, Belgian, Dutch, Luxembourgian, Italian and French troops, was developed on the initiative of the French Prime Minister René Pleven. The German troops were to have been completely absorbed by the European Defence Community, and Germany would have foregone an army of its own. However, this concept's failure was ultimately brought about by the French National Assembly. Under the influence of the increase in French self-awareness, which was to have an influence on French politics in the coming decades in the form of "Gaullism", the National Assembly rejected the plan (even though the German Parliament had already ratified it, in this way agreeing to the dissolution of its independent armed forces).

François Mitterrand's guiding principle of "as much integration as necessary, as much sovereignty of the individual states as possible" characterised France's European policies for years. The country's attitude towards Europe hardly changed under Jacques Chirac, who, in general, did not have many ideas about how to deal with the concept of Europe. "I was never a militant pro-European, I am a Euro-pragmatist; I realise that Europe is unavoidable, but I am not going to theorize about Europe." Chirac subordinated his European policies to internal requirements. This increased the gap between the EU and France during his last years in office: for mainly inner-party and other political reasons, it was planned that the treaty on a constitution for Europe not be ratified by the Parliament as originally planned, but through a plebiscite. The outcome of the referendum is known: the "non" to the European constitution not only brought the European integration process to a halt, but also the relationship between the EU and France. Finally, the rejection of the European constitution treaty led to a deep rupture

between those in favour of it and those against it in France. Therefore, Sarkozy was confronted with an incredibly difficult situation when he took up office in 2007: he had the narrow rejection of the constitution treaty at the French referendum behind him that had led to a standstill in French-European relationships. And, in front of him, the EU presidency in 2008 as well as elections for the European Parliament.

In a speech, Sarkozy described himself as a "European in the heart, mind and convictions".⁹³ Under Sarkozy, the UMP developed a model for France's European policies that followed the President's self-image to a large extent: extensive agreement, but always observing any weaknesses and undesirable trends; an emotional solidarity with Europe, but always with a critical reflection particularly when dealing with France's position in Europe. For example, the necessity of Europe for France and the French economy was never questioned. Sarkozy rules out a reversion to a fragmented "Europe of national states". This fundamental backing, however, does not exclude criticism in specific political areas such as Turkey's accession or the constitutional treaty. Sarkozy is a vehement critic of the de-politicisation of the EU and the prime importance of the economy and has drawn attention to the contradiction of "giving Europe a constitution, at the same time dissolving its identity and coherence by incessantly increasing the number of its member states".⁹⁴ However, the interests of the French citizen are always at the core of UMP's new European policy under Sarkozy. The president vehemently stands up against simply negating the result of the French vote. "In Europe, we cannot continue as we did before the 'non'. The European elite cannot keep European politics from the public on the grounds that it is too important to be handed over to the average citizen. We cannot tell France that it made a mistake and does not understand anything, that the EU is too complicated, or that it did not understand the problem."⁹⁵

⁹³ Sarkozy, Nicolas; cited after Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet, Gisela: Frankreich: zurück in Europa, aber mit welchem Kurs?, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte (APuZ 38/2007)*, http://www.bpb.de/publikationen/WC5ARX,4,0,Frankreich:_zurpercentFCck_in_Europa_aber_mit_welchem_Kurs.html

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Sarkozy, Nicolas: Bekenntnisse. Frankreich, Europa und die Welt im 21. Jahrhundert. C. Bertelsmann, Munich, 2007 p. 253

Sarkozy's stance on the constitution treaty is paradigmatic for his European politics, maybe even for the "new Gaullism" he proclaims. But he would not be "Monsieur 1000 Volts" if he just left it at criticism. Instead, he presented an alternative for liberating Europe from its lethargy and saving the constitutional contract – without ignoring the French position. He developed a simplified contract – the *traité simplifié* – that is leaner and limited to a few central points. It hardly comes as a surprise that the bureaucrats in Brussels had a hard time with the new notion and therefore turned down the *traité simplifié*.

Gaullism à la Sarkozy

The symbol of "Gaullism à la Sarkozy" is therefore the combination of the enthusiasm and existing mistrust to form a homogenous image of Europe that is coherent for France above all: a clear profession of loyalty to Europe that does not attempt to smooth-talk the deficiencies and contradictions in the EU, but still has French national interests at the core. The French population's perception of this new orientation is shown by the impressive results for the election to the European Parliament. Sarkozy's UMP was victorious in the June 2009 elections and, with an 11.36 percent increase in votes and a total of 28 percent, is clearly the French party with the most mandates in the European Parliament. In comparison, the Socialists received only 16.8 percent of the vote. This impressive result is the latest stage on France's path back to Europe.

Sarkozy's Europe are, not least, also the symbol and expression of "new Gaullism": problem-oriented, self-assured, pragmatic and, above all, representing all the French. "Gaullism collects the French from all social strata in the name of love of their country and pride in being French. Gaullism ultimately stands for a specific view of man: Gaullism is the belief that, in every person, a star is shining and a secret dream, a hope, is waiting to become reality."⁹⁶ "New Gaullism" is therefore a model for the reconciliation of national pride and enthusiasm for Europe. Often seen as adversaries, Sarkozy shows that, as a fervent European, it is in no way necessary to deny one's French heritage. The citizens become

⁹⁶ Sarkozy, Nicolas: Bekenntnisse. Frankreich, Europa und die Welt im 21. Jahrhundert. C. Bertelsmann, Munich, 2007 p. 273

active and full of enthusiasm for Europe when they recognize that their (national-state) interests are being represented. Maybe that is the reason that the path Sarkozy has taken could be an example for other states to follow in order win back the friends of Europe.

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Italy: Democrazia Cristiana Eterna? Italian democracy since 1945 in the interplay of the never-changing

Thomas Köhler / Christian Mertens

Summary

It makes no difference whether one is dealing with the so-called First or Second Republic – Italy will always remain Italy. Since 1945 – and going beyond 1990 – not only the influential politicians, but also the majority of the population, have seen nothing wrong with the spiral of decadence and corruption that the system is occasionally blamed for as long as they profit – directly or indirectly – from it. From that point of view, the change from the Prima to Seconda Repubblica is actually hardly of any significance.

“Power never wears out those who have it, but those who don’t.”

Giulio Andreotti

Not every development is progress.”

Pier Paolo Pasolini

Prologue

The political movements that directly influenced Italian politics until 1990, and indirectly after that, already existed before 1945 in an explicitly anti-Fascist alliance against Benito Mussolini and the political system he typified. The only thing that changed in the Seconda Repubblica was accepting post-Fascist movements – their exclusion had been the basis for the established parties of the Prima Repubblica: on the part of the government, Democrazia Cristiana (Christian

Democracy),⁹⁷ DC, and the opposition of the Partito Comunista (Communist Party), PC.

The change in the political systems from the First to the Second Republic began with an “explosion” of the Communist Party as a result of the European events before and after the *annus mirabilis* of 1989 that did not change the reformist, euro-Communist focus the PC had had since the 1970s and 1980s and ended with the “implosion” of the Democrazia Cristiana in what had become an enormous morass of decadence and corruption. At the same time, this radically changing system gave birth to a new kind of politician who was no longer ideologically motivated and orientated as the former representatives of both the Christian Democrats and Communists were, but as a populist, could change his position at the drop of a hat.

Whereas the figure of Silvio Berlusconi, the libertarian *cavaliere di lavoro*⁹⁸ and anticlerical *massone*,⁹⁹ represents the prototype of the system of the Second Republic, personalities such as Alcide de Gasperi and Aldo Moro, as well as Palmiro Togliatti and Enrico Berlinguer,¹⁰⁰ are regarded as being typical of the first. However, no person better serves as the personification of bridging the gap between the Prima and

⁹⁷ This term can be found for the first time in the reformist wing of the French Revolution and around 100 years later – morally conservative but socio-economically progressive – in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII. In addition to other post-war European Christian-democratic parties (such as the CDU in Germany, the MRP in France and the ÖVP in Austria), the Italian Democrazia Cristiana referred to the latter. The tricolour of personality, subsidiarity and solidarity (as a reply to the “liberty, equality, fraternity” of the French Revolution) is at the core of the Christian-democratic programme. It gives answers to the question of the identity of the person as well as the development and order of the community in keeping with the principle of responsible freedom. For information on the genesis of Christian Democracy see Hans Maier, *Revolution und Kirche. Studien zur Frühgeschichte der Christlichen Demokratie* (Freiburg/Basel/Vienna, 1988).

⁹⁸ Employer.

⁹⁹ (Free)mason. Silvio Berlusconi was a member of the P2 loge along with many accused and convicted persons in the 1990s. Rumour has it that Berlusconi was forced to enter politics to avoid prosecution by the justice authorities through his immunity.

¹⁰⁰ On the history of the Italian Communist Party: Giorgio Galli, *Storia del PCI. Il Partito Comunista Italiano: Livorno 1921 – Rimini 1991* (Milan, 1993).

Seconda Repubblica than Giulio Andreotti. And, if there ever is a third republic, and if “il Divo”¹⁰¹ physically departs from this world before its proclamation, his spirit and soul would not only continue to live in it, but he would possibly even come back to life.

The Prima Repubblica

Later than the French republics, and earlier than those in her Latin sister states of Spain and Portugal (where dictatorships remained in power into the 1970s before the countries changed into a parliamentary monarchy and democratic republic respectively), Italy did away with the monarchy after the Second World War and established a republic. This took place at the instigation of the Communists and with the endorsement of the Christian Democrats. At the same time, the referendum was the population's first immediate anti-Fascist reflex action (and only just received a majority) against a monarchy that had collaborated with Fascism after the 1920s. The second was the passing of a constitution establishing Italy as a centralist state with federal aspects in the form of regional autonomies (that – as the case of South Tyrol shows – involved a long fight before theory could be put into practice). The third, however, failed: the permanent formation of a grand coalition of the Democrazia Cristiana and Partito Comunista.

After the Iron Curtain had descended across Europe, the fear of the extreme aspects of Communism became too strong in the upper- and lower-middle-class Democrazia Cristiana camps to allow them to form any long-term connections with the charismatic agitators of radicalised workers. Therefore, the leaders of the DC preferred informal cooperation to a formal coalition with the PC: the fact that Italy prospered socially and economically in the 1950s and early 1960s is therefore not solely due to the operative genius of Christian-democratic governments in the foreground – first the Centro Destra (under De Gasperi, above all) and then the Centro Sinistra¹⁰² (Amintore Fanfani, Moro, Ciriaco De Mita, for example) – but also the strategic talents of the Communist opposition in the background.

¹⁰¹ “Il Divo” (the divine) is the title of a film on Andreotti's power and influence directed by Paolo Sorrentino (Italy/France 2008).

¹⁰² Centre/right; centre/left.

How often the names in the various cabinets changed was hardly important; the old continuity of the principal contents played a much more decisive role: these were loyalty to the Western alliance in foreign affairs (ultimately also respected by the PC) and the always-desired balance with the trade union within the country. This resulted, *partes pro toto*, in the Partito Comunista making no proposal worth mentioning to leave NATO (despite all the pressure from the Soviet Union), and (in spite of all the threats from the Confindustria¹⁰³) the Democrazia Cristiana maintained a clear commitment to the *scala mobile* – the automatic adjustment of wages to the inflation – for an extremely long period.

The question that is still asked today of whether, faced with the social and economic crises that shook the republic, mainly in the 1970s (such as the series of assassinations carried out by the extreme-left Red Brigades after 1968 and the oil shock in 1974), the *compromesso storico* that was increasingly implemented really solved the new problems of the state, must be left to future political historians to answer: on the one hand because the most important protagonists were lost (Moro was murdered and Berlinguer had died), and on the other because in the 1980s and especially after 1989, the subject had become outdated. A historic compromise between the Democrazia Cristiana and Partito Comunista was no longer necessary, not only because Communism disappeared from the political theatre, but also because, in contrast to Germany at the time of reunification, the Democrazia Cristiana was in its death throes (Arnaldo Forlani¹⁰⁴) and, in contrast to all Christian beliefs, did not experience a democratic resurrection (Mino Martinazzoli¹⁰⁵).

¹⁰³ Union of Industrialists.

¹⁰⁴ The major movements within the Democrazia Cristiana were, firstly, the economic wing of the Confindustria on the right; secondly, the Grande Centro (Antonio Gava) in the centre; and thirdly, the Sinistra Democrazia Cristiana (Fanfani, Moro, De Mita) on the left. A group that steered an in-between course was also called the “dorotei” (Dorotheans). These included the next-to-last DC Chairman Forlani. Even more cryptically, one spoke of the “Andreottiani”, the supporters of the sphinx Andreotti, because they were so difficult to categorise.

¹⁰⁵ The last chairman of the Democrazia Cristiana. Martinazzoli introduced the transition to the Partito Popolare, an unsuccessful change of direction towards the definition and tradition of Don Luigi Sturzo’s movement of the same name that, in the period

A person like Silvio Berlusconi simply had to take advantage of this situation. That it did not lead to any new developments but continued to produce the familiar did not upset the Italians in any way; it was quite the contrary. “Il sistema, insomma, è vicino alla paralisi, e soltanto un animale politico del sangue freddo come Giulio Andreotti può tentare di gestirlo.”¹⁰⁶ What applied to the 1970s hardly lost any of its importance when Berlusconi made his dazzling entry into the political arena (it is nothing more than that for him). Then as now, the symbolic personification of both the First and Second Republics bears the features of none other than Andreotti himself, first as state secretary,¹⁰⁷ minister and prime minister, and then as honorary senator for life. It is most likely his system alone, with its positive and negative influences, that Berlusconi and his supporting cast still have respect for.

The Seconda Repubblica

The following must be understood: whereas in countries like Austria, Germany and France, one speaks of first and second republics (Austria and Germany¹⁰⁸) – and even third, fourth and fifth in France’s case – in the sense of changed constitutions in the formal sense, in Italy, whose amended constitution is still in force, this only applies to the material condition of the state (constitutional reality). From a strictly legal point of view, Italy is still living in the first republic, although, *de facto*, it is long in the second.¹⁰⁹

between the wars, lost to Fascism. The project did not even come close to achieving the quantitative and qualitative importance of the DC and it collapsed only a few years after its foundation due to its voters changing their allegiance to Forza Italia (Berlusconi’s first party) on the one hand and the later Partito Democratico, on the other.

¹⁰⁶ Antonio Ghirelli, *Democristiani. Storia di una classe politica dagli anni Trenta alla Seconda Repubblica* (Milan 2004), p. 118. “As a whole, the system is close to paralysis, and only a cold-blooded political animal like Giulio Andreotti could attempt to lead it.”

¹⁰⁷ Under De Gasperi.

¹⁰⁸ However, in the FRG, the *de jure* second was, *de facto*, divided into a Bonn and Berlin Republic.

¹⁰⁹ The attempt to legally anchor the effective alteration in the political situation was carried out by a Commissione Bicamerale consisting of members of both houses of the Italian Parliament but failed in practice.

Logically, there is no exact date for the separation between the First and Second Republics. The transition took place smoothly sometime around 1990: from the emergence of Umberto Bossi's Lega Nord, to the partial dissolution of the Communist Party and the oscillation of the Democrazia Cristiana, to the takeover of political power by Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia.

The most significant factors were that Bossi introduced radical populism into Italy and Berlusconi took advantage of media support to achieve his goals without any scruples whatsoever.¹¹⁰ From socio-economic and demoscopic viewpoints, this tore the electorate – especially DC voters – apart. The majority turned towards Berlusconi's movement(s), even after the 1990s, which entered into a constitutive *aggiornamento*¹¹¹ with representatives of the church; those left, mainly the Sinistra Democrazia Cristiana, went over to the project of former left Christian Democrat Romano Prodi, who united the reformists from the DC and PC in a new party.¹¹²

Not only the revisions in the structures of the parties, but also their alliances cemented the change around 2000: Berlusconi's first party, Forza Italia, not only began cooperating with Bossi's unpredictable Lega Nord,¹¹³ it even attempted to form a union with Fini's Alleanza Nazionale. Nobody had ever previously broken with the constitutional tradition and stretched the constitutional bow to such an extent.

In contrast to Umberto Bossi, Gianfranco Fini is a clever, not radical, politician, who – step by step – made his original party, the (undoubtedly neo-Fascist) Movimento Sociale Italiano strategically and operationally eligible to participate in collaborations – and even coalitions – by expanding and renaming it the (contradictorily post-Fascist) Alleanza

¹¹⁰ To today, he is still either directly or indirectly the owner of the most important national private TV stations.

¹¹¹ Adjustment, update.

¹¹² Partito Democratico. In 2009, after many years of intensive debate, the entire group – also with the votes of its Christian Democrat members – joined the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament. To a large extent, the fact that it bears this name can be traced back to the Italian tradition.

¹¹³ Berlusconi's first government in the mid-1990s collapsed when Bossi, more or less out of a clear blue sky, withdrew his support.

Nazionale. Berlusconi was the man who finally opened the doors to the government to him.

The resulting permanent mutation of the Alleanza Nazionale into a national-conservative party¹¹⁴ (with a particularly centralistic orientation in the autonomous provinces such as South Tyrol) made it possible for it to transform the (electoral) union with the liberal-conservative Forza Italia, which had been in existence since the 1990s, into a unified movement in 2008: the Polo della Libertà metamorphosed into the Popolo della Libertà (PdL).¹¹⁵ The fact that the PdL was admitted to the European People's Party at the same time is a prestigious success for not only Berlusconi but also Fini.

With Fini at his side, Berlusconi achieved the internal stabilisation of his government. Grosso modo, the external consequences were a liberalisation of the economic policy (that, not least of all, benefited Berlusconi's business interests), breaking away to a certain extent from the social market economy propagated by the DC coalitions as well as a sharpening of the overall security policies – migration policy in particular. Another constitutive aspect of Berlusconi's administration is the struggle with sections of the (criminal) justice system, whose charges he managed to avoid by continuously expanding the immunity legislation. Faced with this situation, even some left-oriented commentators in the economic and journalism fields started to go into raptures over the moderate policies of the DC.

Epilogue

It cannot be determined, *ex ante*, whether Berlusconi's period in government will be regarded, *ex post*, as an era or not. While the Democrazia Cristiana was faced with strong opposition from the Partito Comunista, the Popolo della Libertà is completely without any control mechanism. The Democratic Party Romano Prodi initiated has forfeited much of its élan under his successors and is suffering from internal quarrels between the former left Christian Democrats and Euro-

¹¹⁴ Especially in Israel, but elsewhere as well, Fini expressly distanced himself from his earlier anti-Semitic statements and the tradition of his movement.

¹¹⁵ Pole of Freedoms and People of Freedom.

Communists. Without intending to, this means that it has developed into a support for the system of Berlusconi and his potential successor Fini.

The tremendous success of the Popolo della Libertà is only likely to decrease if it loses two essential pillars of support – namely, the flood of backing it receives from the media and its cooperative axis with the Church (and the latter appears to be already a little shaky). Of course, a stronger opposition would also help.

Both factors have provided Berlusconi & Co. with what still gives their movement its impetus: the broadest constituency of a population that, more than ever, feels a – less rational than emotional – connection with the professed (and somewhat transfigured) tradition of the Democrazia Cristiana.

All in all, the Polo delle – and Popolo della – Libertà appears to be the economically liberal and socially conservative intensification of a profile that, in the past, was already inherent in the Democrazia Cristiana (albeit in a more moderate form), and today, it conforms with many other movements represented in the European People's Party (such as the centralist Partido Popular in Spain and the Portuguese liberal conservatives who call themselves "Social Democrats").

Excursus: The "Christian democratisation" of the EPP member parties in Spain and Portugal

Together with Greece, Spain and Portugal were the only dictatorships in Western Europe (in its political sense) to survive until the middle of the 1970s. Within a few years, they made successful transitions to consolidated democracies.

The process of change (*transición*) from a dictatorship to a parliamentary monarchy under King Juan Carlos started after Franco's death. A broad spectrum was created when parties from the left to the right were sanctioned. The dominating union of parties – Unión del Centro Democrático (UDC) – at the beginning of Spanish democracy was a colourful mosaic of all the Christian-democratic groups that had formed primarily for the purpose of creating broad support for the then head

of government, Adolfo Suárez, in his efforts to develop and stabilise the country's fledgling democracy. Consistently with this, the UDC voters came from a great number of socio-economic levels with extremely heterogeneous demands and expectations. The Alianza Popular established itself to the right of the centre; it was also a conglomerate of many small groups drawn from the former Francoist elite with a more or less clear profession of loyalty to democracy.

With the successive erosion of the UDC and the takeover of the government by the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) in the early 1980s, the Alianza Popular moved towards the political centre and, with the integration of many voters from the UDC's reservoir, changed its name to Partido Popular (PP) in 1989. The long-term party chairman and later prime minister José María Aznar led the party steadfastly towards the European People's Party in the 1990s and established it indisputably as a member of the Christian-democratic family of parties. After two periods in government (the first with the support of regionalist parties), the party has been in opposition under the leadership of Mariano Rajoy since 2004.

In contrast to its European sister parties, the PP has a strong centralistic orientation and, to a large extent, rejects regional autonomy endeavours. This has led to it being weakly represented in the autonomist regions of Catalonia and the Basque provinces in spite of its absolute majority elsewhere, mainly in the regions of Central Spain. The party defines itself as a centrist political group¹¹⁶ and, in its programme, stresses the values of freedom (founded on the dignity of the person), the equality of rights and obligations (this is principally understood as an absence of privileges and discrimination), harmony and justice as being constitutive. The indivisible unity of the Spanish people is a matter of central importance, and it only recognises the autonomy of the regions as an expression of "plurality within the unity of Spain".¹¹⁷ Additional constants in its political self-image are a profession to a freely and socially developed economy, as well as the active role of the civil society in coming to grips with social change.

In addition to the Partido Popular, the Catalanian Unió Democràtica

¹¹⁶ In the original: "formación política de centro".

¹¹⁷ In the original: "... la pluralidad dentro de la unidad de España".

de Catalunya, founded in the 1930s, is also a member of the European People's Party family. It defines itself as a "Christian-democratically inspired" party¹¹⁸ and participates in elections in the *Convergència i Unió* (CiU) union. In the Spanish Civil War, it was on the side of the Republican government, but its confessional orientation resulted in conflicts with the dominating anti-clerical forces, and it led an underground existence under Franco. Today, it represents a moderately regionalist form of politics – in contrast to Catalonia's governing left-nationalists.

Finally – in contrast to its name – the Portuguese *Partido Social Democrata* (PSD) is a liberal conservative party that was founded as the *Partido Popular Democrata* following the "Carnation Revolution" led by Francisco Sá Carneiro and others. Through its union with other explicitly Christian-democratic groups at the end of the 1970s, the party was able to broaden its basis and won the absolute majority. Until today, it has been a member of most Portuguese governments and, with José Manuel Durão Barroso, has provided the EU Commission with its president since 2004.

As was the case in Italy, the major non-Socialist parties in these two states were able to achieve a "Christian democratisation" through the association with the family of parties in the European People's Party.

¹¹⁸ In the original: "... d'inspiració democratacristiana".

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Austria: The Past is Always Part of the Future – The ÖVP and its Path to a Modern Conservative People's Party

Christian Sebastian Moser / Christian Kasper

Summary

The Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) is the integrative force of the centre. Society is in a state of permanent development, and it is therefore necessary to adjust party-political positions accordingly. The eco-social market economy is a tried-and-true compass that guides one through the troubled waters of the impulsive zeitgeist and restlessness of day-to-day politics. Its concept of sustainability, uniting ecological, social and economic responsibility, provides guidelines for reliable political action. In the current crisis especially, one can see that only the values and principles of the eco-social market economy guarantee society's sustainable development.

ÖVP programme discussions in the Second Republic

In contrast to the Social Democrats, the ÖVP (Austrian People's Party) founded itself anew after the Second World War. Fifteen pragmatic guiding principles made it possible for the People's Party to successfully amalgamate Christian-social, conservative and liberal factions in 1945. Through the integration of a wide range of anti-socialist and anti-totalitarian political camps, the ÖVP positioned itself as a broad collective movement of the centre from the beginning of the Second Republic: the socio-political principles were solidarity and personality. In its economic policies, the People's Party developed the model of an economy orientated towards the common good – the social market economy.

All of the programmatic debates and policy processes are described in detail in the special issue of the *Jahrbuch für Politik. Österreichs*

*Innenpolitik 70-75*¹¹⁹ (“Political Almanac: Austria’s Internal Politics, 70-75”) as well as in the 1989, 1992 and 1995¹²⁰ editions. The organisational reforms were also controversially deliberated and discussed: in this way, Josef Taus developed a concept for restructuring the ÖVP from an organisation of alliances to a unified party with a central party membership. Alfred Stirnemann provides a fine overview of the ÖVP’s attempts at organisational reform in the 1992 *Jahrbuch für Politik*.¹²¹

What follows is a hermeneutic interpretation, as well as a thorough investigation, of these texts in order to provide – in nuce – a depiction of the major historical and ideological innovations and programmatic renewal. This methodology will lay open the conceptual essence and decisive turns of the individual texts. In the years of reconstruction, which were so full of privation, the programmatic focus was on the creation and safeguarding of a modest level of prosperity for all the country’s citizens, but in 1972, the People’s Party reacted to the intellectual upheaval taking place and the false promises of the “sixty-eighter generation”. The Salzburg Programme was a level-headed, decisive counter strategy to the radical, utopian philosophy of the student revolution and critical theory. From the position of a materially secure society with full employment, the programme debate started to focus more on immaterial values: for the first time, themes such as the meaning and quality of life were investigated; the development of a broad socio-ecological middle class, as well as the theoretical debate on whether the ÖVP was conservative or progressive, led to the notion of the ÖVP as the “party of the progressive centre”.

¹¹⁹ Kriechbaumer, Robert: *Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik. Sonderband I. Österreichs Innenpolitik 70-75*, Verlag für Geschichte und Politik: Vienna, 1981.

¹²⁰ Steindl, Clemens: *Die Zukunftsdiskussion in den Großparteien*, in Khol, Andreas / Ofner, Harald / Stirnemann, Alfred (eds.): *Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 1989*. Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, Vienna, 1990. Stirnemann, Alfred: *Zwischen Zielgruppen- und Kommunikationsproblemen: Die Parteireform der ÖVP 1991*, in Khol, Andreas / Ofner, Harald / Stirnemann, Alfred (eds.): *Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 1992*. Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, Vienna, 1993. Auer, Clemens Martin / Marschitz, Walter: *Die Diskussion zum neuen Grundsatzprogramm der Volkspartei 1995*. In Khol, Andreas / Ofner, Günther / Stirnemann, Alfred (eds.): *Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 1995*. Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, Vienna 1996.

¹²¹ Cf. Stirnemann 1993.

The party of the progressive centre

By adopting this concept, the ÖVP once again demonstrated its talent for moderating divergent opinions and ideologies and bringing them together intellectually to create a productive entity. The ÖVP advocates a basic conservative position, as its philosophy is developed from a Christian-metaphysical view of the world and – in the tradition of natural law and the Ten Commandments – is oriented towards what are for it non-negotiable basic norms. However, the People’s Party is progressive in the way it accepts evolutionary, not revolutionary, progress in the political system through the creative modification of the past to meet the demands of the present. In the ÖVP version, reforms mean improvements in the performance of an existing system and not the conquest and revolution of the status quo. These commitments had become necessary because, inspired by the sense of a new era as a result of the Second Vatican Council, sectors of the party had demanded a re-politicisation of the faith. The Salzburg Programme ended the secularisation process of the ÖVP when it rejected this demand.¹²² Equality was entered into the programme as a new fundamental value. In addition to these core philosophical definitions, the Salzburg Programme also formulated a commitment to the social market economy. In contrast to the Anglo-Saxon style of capitalism, and Socialism, this economic form was not only the most efficient for the common good, but also provided the best possible political framework for peace and prosperity within the state. In addition to the principle of individual freedom, the social market economy always has social fairness in mind. This means social security for the individual, but always taking the financial and inter-generational systemic limits into consideration. In addition, balance also includes a profession of faith in the social state. Services such as social and pension insurance are ascribed to the state. In a subsequent evaluation, the historian Robert Kriechbaumer characterised the Salzburg Programme as an “important intellectual performance”.¹²³ This programme made it possible to create a clear differentiation to the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ) and sustainably modernise the party.

¹²² Cf. Kriechbaumer 1981.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

Integration of positions

The next call for a programme reform came after the defeat at the elections in 1990. The ÖVP lost almost ten percent and wanted to be able to present a new policy statement in time for the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation. The new programme was intended to display the Party's integrative capabilities¹²⁴ while avoiding major upheavals and fundamental political changes. The discussions started from the realisation that, in the mean time, Austria's political system had become confronted with new right-populist and left-ecological movements. The goal of the People's Party was to articulate its rejection of the preachers of simple truths from the political outskirts, cement the ÖVP as the force of the centre and strengthen the liberal elements. Insights gained in the communitarianism debate in the USA inspired the discourse. Democratic parties and the citizens' society are founded on values that must be actively represented and for which the individual accepts responsibility in his words and actions. Politics without values erodes the very nature of democracy, and it must also be borne in mind that the People's Party's understanding of values is equally indebted to Christianity and the humanist tradition of the Enlightenment. A society based on partnership as a third path, in contrast to capitalism and socialism, a liberal interpretation of the constitution and fundamental rights, and a view of mankind characterised by Christian social ethics are defined as basic Christian-democratic values. In contrast to the discussion on the Salzburg Programme, it was clear from the very beginning of the debate that the People's Party undisputedly understood itself as a Christian-democratic party. The Party characterised itself as being Christian-democratic – and not Christian-social – for the first time. The ÖVP's self-image was agreed on in the Vienna Programme:¹²⁵ the Austrian People's Party sees itself as

- a Christian-democratic party,
- the party of the liberal constitutional state and an open society,
- the party of an eco-social market economy,
- the Austrian party in Europe, and
- socially integrative and, therefore, a people's party.

¹²⁴ Cf. Auer / Marschitz 1996, pp. 167-192.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 176 f.

Four new fundamental values were included in the party programme: security, responsibility, sustainability and tolerance.

“Security” is defined as being more than internal and foreign security. As a central basic desire of the population, it also includes the guarantee of social security (housing, workplace, social security systems capable of being financed over a long term) for the society. Standing in the tradition of the preservation of creation, sustainability established itself as a political norm for dealing with natural and human resources with moderation. Sustainability goes further than just environmental protection and also takes generational justice into consideration. Responsibility stands for the rejection of egoism and the “fun society” and demands that each individual citizen accept personal responsibility vis-à-vis the society for his actions.

In addition to these new principles, the fundamental value of performance was given a contextual reworking. Performance must not only be seen from the point of view of the individual; it also implies a social dimension. Performance without responsibility for the common good, and knowledge of the limitations of the system, goes against Christian-democratic convictions. Undesirable developments, such as the global financial crisis triggered by the bad loans in the USA building industry, could have been avoided with a performance principle based on responsibility. The value of equality was done away with because it interferes with that of freedom of choice and, in political practice, all too often goes hand in hand with lowering the overall level. By setting these priorities, the 1995 Vienna Programme succeeded in establishing the necessary agreement for the essential fundamental values of a pluralist society in a united Europe.

An open reform process

As was the case in 1990, the election defeats in 2006 and 2008 led to the introduction of a comprehensive programme debate. The so-called *Perspektiven Prozess*, a grassroots movement, tried to modernise the Austrian People's Party. The ÖVP is still in the government as the junior coalition partner, and faced with the economic crisis and its claim of providing the Chancellor in 2013, Vice-Chancellor Josef Pröll and General-Secretary Fritz Kaltenegger – with input

from all the alliances and province organisations – began working on a new party programme in spring of 2009. Vice-Chancellor Pröll's desire is for the People's Party's programmatic orientation to be recognizable in its political practice. Freedom, self-determination, performance, the correct balance between the individual and society, sustainability in all areas of life, and priority for subsidiary solutions before centralism are the contextual priorities Pröll has set. In the run-up to the programme debate, Pröll surprised with a new interpretation of the term "conservative": "Being conservative also means creating new things that future generations will perceive as being worth preserving. And this means that innovation is not a threat to conservatism but a prerequisite for its survival."¹²⁶

The People's Party wants to organise an open programme process and also ask itself unpleasant questions: how can we make the voters understand us better? Which of our values do the voters appreciate? The programme will aim at being easily understandable. Every voter should be able to tell at a glance what voting for the ÖVP means. In order to make successful politics it is important to appropriate subjects instead of reacting to the competitors' attempts. Even as junior partner in a government, pertinent content makes it possible to win elections and become the party with the most votes in 2013.

Responsibility for future generations

As the last election results showed, parties are not judged on their successes and merits but on their concepts for the future. Therefore, the People's Party must make its position as a responsible player and the advocate of future generations clear. In the People's Party, responsibility for coming generations has ecological, social and economic elements. It must be possible for the generations coming after us to be able to live in a humane, healthy environment and a just and fair society. Any political action carried out today must be evaluated on the implications and consequences for the future.

¹²⁶ Pröll, Josef: Braucht die ÖVP ein neues Programm? in Khol, Andreas / Ofner, Günther / Karner, Stefan / Halper, Dietmar (eds.): Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 2007, Vienna 2009. p. 16.

This maxim for action applies first of all to the way we deal with ecological resources. Sustainability and the preservation of creation mean taking the needs of tomorrow into consideration. The German word for sustainability – *Nachhaltigkeit* – has its roots in forestry. According to the nobleman Hans Carl von Carlowitz, the continuous use of the forest can only be guaranteed if the number of trees in the forest remains constant. The use of nature and its resources must not weaken its power to renew itself. An increase in prosperity is only possible when the basic stock of an ecological system remains intact. In the present discourse it is often forgotten, or consciously overlooked, that it was the ÖVP that first elevated the concept of sustainability to a political maxim – and that was in 1995. This is in line with the ÖVP's understanding of Christian-democratic responsibility. The preservation of divine creation was recognised as a political assignment.

However, responsible action also implies treating our society conscientiously and with care. The society is also a system with the capability of regenerating and renewing itself. Therefore, the changes and adaptations that are undoubtedly part of a prospering society must be managed with a caution and consideration similar to that applied to the ecosystem. Radical interventions into the education system have lasting effects on the possibilities of the future generations to develop; uncompromising measures taken in family politics have a mid- to long-term effect on the demographic structure of a society. It is a similar matter with emigration and immigration; here, it is necessary to take action with consideration and sensitivity. Austria has been a country of migration and immigration since the 1960s. The result is a pluralist society with a great variety of opinions, interests and groups. This variety leads to differences and conflicts. Responsible societal action includes the profession to a basic form of consensus by way of common values and standards. One of these standards is mutual understanding making reciprocal communication possible. It is essential that immigrants learn the language of the country they live in. The recognition of certain rules of the constitutional state such as freedom, performance, responsibility and solidarity are some of the basic values. Only if these are respected by all is the sustainable and responsible development of the society possible.

And, not least important, forward-looking, responsible action also has an economic dimension. The people must be offered the opportunity

of being able to live from their work. Performance and the capacity for work are important components of social progress. Only when these elements are recognised and respected will they seem worthwhile to the population. The first, important signs were set with projects such as the “billion for the middle-class”, investment incentives and the “apprenticeship package”. In the medium or long run, additional burdens or increases in taxes – which possibly help plug some holes in the budget for a while – will reduce the capability and willingness to perform. The family is the smallest economic unit in society after the individual person. As the People’s Party sees it, the state should foster and support the family, but not become patronisingly involved. In these times of crisis, the People’s Party has succeeded in having a total of 510 million euros made available to families. An increase in the tax-deductions and allowances for children, as well as making it possible to include the costs for child care in these benefits, could result in an annual reduction in the strain on a family amounting to between 2000 and 3000 euros.

Three pillars of responsibility

The responsibility for future generations should not be reduced to a single column as various ideologies and parties like to practice. Socialist and social-democratic parties confuse responsibility with social egalitarianism. According to their maxim, responsibility means treating people equally. However, it can hardly be considered just to lump everyone together and support them independently of their individual talents and gifts. Human nature is manifold. And it is precisely this variety that needs to be able to live side-by-side in a society. Green parties insist on the ecological dimension of responsibility. Sustainability is equated with short-term, sensationalist environmental protection, but has no problems ignoring the social responsibility of politics. Liberal forces bask in the illusion that the market can solve all social and ecological problems. Unfortunately, the “market” hardly ever has a medium- or long-term focus. Immediate success, measured solely in higher profits, makes managers – who, as employees of an enterprise, are neither responsible for this nor the staff – unreceptive to long-term developments. Politics, on the other hand, assumes responsibility for companies and the people who work there. It is therefore the duty of the parties to draw attention to short-sighted optimisa-

tion processes and establish the framework for making long-term developments possible.

The eco-social market economy as a concept for responsibility

The concept of the eco-social market economy unites ecological, social and economic responsibility. Under the conditions of a free market economy, ecological responsibility and social justice lead to sustainable development. The market economy, social fairness and ecological responsibility are some of the fundamental goals of the eco-social market economy. However, the most important component is the understanding that there can be no social state without the market economy, and no social justice without the social state. The role of the state is clearly defined. It has the important task of guaranteeing free competition through appropriate antitrust laws. The market economy needs regulations and limitations that control the relationships of the people in the work process to each other (employee-employer, staff responsibility; in a nutshell, the “social market economy”) as well as the relationship of the people to the environment they live in.

Josef Riegler was one of the first in Austria to promote the ecological, economic and social aspects of responsibility. In the “Manifesto for an Eco-social Agricultural Policy in Austria”, the former minister for agriculture and later vice-chancellor provided the first formulation of the goals of the eco-social market economy. The fact that the Austrian federal government acknowledges “... a social and ecologically sustainable market economy...”¹²⁷ quite clearly carries the trademark of the ÖVP.

Security as a basic human need

In addition to ecological, social and economic responsibility, the ÖVP also stands up for guaranteeing people a secure life. “Security” is a fundamental human need. Things were really euphoric after the end of

¹²⁷ Government Programme for the XXIV legislative period, p. 7,

<http://www.oevp.at/Common/Downloads/Regierungsprogramm2008-2013.pdf>

the Cold War. It appeared that the major lines of conflict between communism and democracy, the market and planned economies, between the East and West, had been overcome, and peaceful coexistence, following the rules of Western democracies, was prophesied. This idealised model for the future did not come into practice. The formerly clear lines of conflict were replaced by a condition of permanent insecurity. The manifest opposition between two economic systems, two concepts of society and political ideologies was replaced by countless small, barely visible or controllable threats. The responsibility of making it possible to live a secure life has become more complex and diversified.

In its new programme, the People's Party will show that it is aware of this responsibility and plans to take concerted action. A comprehensive notion of security will be developed for the people. Security can no longer be reduced to the protection of life and limb and one's personal property. Of course, these factors will continue to be treated importantly. Going beyond this, the People's Party feels called on to guarantee security in all the spheres of life of the individual and society, a secure income, a life without fear of the future, a life in which the citizens can feel protected in their everyday activities. In this way, security not only has military, but also political, economic, social, ecological and cultural dimensions.

Security also has a dimension of solidarity and subsidiarity. Through his work and performance, each citizen should make a contribution to enable the community to intervene on the behalf of the individual. For us, the commitment to the family, to the community and neighbourhood, at the workplace, participation in organisations and in public life are pillars supporting a lived, daily solidarity. The person who accepts responsibility for his fellow man lives solidarity. On the other hand, a person who relies on the abstract solidarity of the state and social institutions takes advantage of the solidarity of others. This cannot be the aim and sense of a form of politics that takes a stance for one's own responsibility and the freedom of the individual.

The programme process sharpens the party's identity

The ÖVP's programme process is faced with the challenge of developing

an innovative political concept from a controlled campaign and not blindly following every trend and the demands of the feature articles in the newspapers and the *juste milieu*. The prerequisites for this were ideal in 2009. As was the case in the 1970s, society and politics are facing a change and are at a turning point in history – but this time, the other way around. In the 1970s, there was an ÖVP government, full employment and an optimistic outlook on the future: the state's coffers were overflowing, and politics was able, for the first time, to deal with not only hard figures but also soft topics such as the quality of life.

The times of the post-material navel gazing of a complacent, ecological anti-rationalism are over; today, politics once again has to confront the public with hard, economic realities: a new class of the working poor has come into existence, the middle class is diminishing, the real salaries of the employed are stagnating, the Austrian population is becoming older. In the coming programme process, the People's Party will face up to these pressing circumstances. It is the People's Party's political will that the prosperity the population has worked hard for not melt away. Therefore, in its programme process, it will look for paths to strengthen the producing trades, stem the rural exodus, improve education and the infrastructure, guarantee long-term energy provision at a price the consumer can afford, secure the sustainability of the social-security system – in spite of dwindling births – and keep the unemployment rate as low as possible.

Meta-politically, the ÖVP will deal with the question of how distribution fairness (between the employers and employees, the taxpayers and those receiving transfers) and freedom (of choice) can best be achieved. A family-friendly environment through the support of families with three or four children, as well as a reduction of the public-sector share and tax rate, could represent additional measures to stimulate the economy. That is the reason that the People's Party will discuss the prime importance of politics in detail: the global financial and economic crisis and the current recession have shown that the market economy needs regulations and the appropriate framework in order to serve the common good. With the eco-social market economy, the ÖVP places its faith in an order model that – in competition with the Socialists and state fetishists in all the other parties and their clamouring for more state, more regulations, more taxes that is becoming louder by the hour – is best suited to provide the right measures to ensure that the present

recession is followed by a boom and growth for Austria's economy.

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Germany: The CDU – A People's Party between Market and State

Christian Sebastian Moser / Christian Kasper

Summary

The Christian Democrats have always played an active role in Germany's transition: from its ties to the West, to the social market economy and reunification, to the introduction of the euro. After the Second World War, the CDU – with its Christian view of man – was able to position itself as a positive alternative to National Socialism, Socialism and capitalism and find its fulfilment as the formative power in a new, peaceful, outward-looking, economically prosperous Germany.

The roots of the CDU

Political groups with a denominational background or with an understanding of politics founded on Christian values already existed in Germany before 1945. The first nation-wide parties were established in the 1860s. As in many other European countries, there were ideological divisions between Socialist movements, liberal political groups (German Progress Party), conservative groups (free-conservative parties) and denominational organisations. The Catholic Centre Party is considered to be the first German “people’s party”. The party landscape in the Weimar Republic following the First World War had its political roots in the former Empire. Religion, tradition, social background, education and culture were the significant criteria for differentiating between a civic-Protestant, a social-proletarian, a conservative, and a rapidly growing national camp in the political landscape.

At the zero hour that followed the barbarism of the Nazis and Germany's devastating defeat in the Second World War, bourgeois forces attempted a new beginning for the country. The political parties that were re-established in Germany referred back to the ideological, organisa-

tional and personal situation in the Weimar Republic. The bourgeois forces also looked back to political groups from before 1933 without there being any sign of an ideologically homogenous concept: in keeping with regional traditions, Christian unionists, supporters of the Catholic Centre and liberal and conservative forces organised themselves under the banner of a “Christian-democratic party”. The creation of a unified party was made even more difficult by the fact that the regional groups did not even represent a single religious faith but had both Catholic and Protestant roots. Parallel parties based on a foundation of Christian values were founded in Cologne, Munich, Stuttgart, Berlin, Frankfurt and Freiburg. Konrad Adenauer, the lord mayor of Cologne, was one of the decisive, driving forces in reconciling the individual groups to form a single “Christian-democratic” party. “Programmatically, the founding and consolidation phase was initially characterised by coexistence and cooperation between the various points of view. The wide range of positions and political concepts – ranging from Christian socialism with its roots in the Catholic trade-union movement to bourgeois economic-liberal theories – in the economic and social policies were extremely difficult to reconcile. The Union’s clearly outlined course in the field of economic and social politics that had started to make itself felt in the spring of 1948 only gradually asserted itself: at the outset, the liberal factor was merely one of the many facets of the collective movement. Little more than the vague goal of developing into a Christian people’s party united the numerous spontaneous, hardly coordinated founding initiatives of the early stages.”¹²⁸

It is clear that the CDU was not established on a unified ideology. The idea of a single, Germany-wide “CDU” separated itself from the exclusivity of a Catholic political movement possibly under the impression of the first German “people’s party” in the nineteenth century. In spite of the fact that 40 percent of the German population belonged to the religion, the Catholic Centre Party rarely achieved more than 14 percent of the vote in Reichstag elections and usually remained only the third force in the Weimar Republic behind the German Social-Democratic Party and the German Communist Party; with the NSDAP’s success in elections after 1930, it was even relegated to fourth place. “Although the notion of founding a Christian party could be traced far back to the

¹²⁸ Zolleis, Udo: Die CDU. Das politische Leitbild im Wandel der Zeit. Wiesbaden, 2008, p. 99

political Catholicism of the nineteenth century and the centre parties in the Weimar Republic, it was the goal of the CDU, from the very beginning, to attract not only Catholics but also Protestants, and that was the reason behind its designation as a ‘Union’.”¹²⁹ It is much truer that the CDU was founded on the concept of being a “platform” for various movements. Christian basic values, the ideals of solidarity, subsidiarity, personality, freedom for the individual, democracy and pluralism were more or less the lowest common denominator uniting the representatives of varying political ideologies.

The connecting links of the CDU

Two central elements soon crystallised themselves out of the many roots that were to play a decisive role in the CDU’s development into a people’s party. On the one hand, the CDU strictly rejected absolutist state concepts and totalitarian systems of government. Their fear of Communism and the Red Army bound many bourgeois Protestant voters to the CDU – even those who actually did not want to become involved in party politics. However, the clear rejection of National Socialism was an irrefutable constant for the CDU. Catholic circles in particular denounced not only the National Socialist view of man and society and also never forgot the persecution of their party founders by the NSDAP during the Weimar Republic. This rejection of totalitarian forms of government created an important link between the Catholics and Protestants in the new people’s party going far beyond their religion.

On the other hand, the common Christian system of values soon proved itself to be a far-reaching bond for the CDU. For the first time since the end of the Nazi dictatorship, it became possible to refer to religious denominations and Christian values in public and political life. The regional Christian parties took advantage of this regained possibility and included the Christian view of man and Christian values prominently in their programmes. This was received extremely well by a large section of the population. Due to their fundamental oppositional stance on National Socialist ideology, the Catholic and Protestant churches

¹²⁹ Schneiker, Andrea: Die Geschichte der CDU. In <http://www.bpb.de/themen/42G3J0.html>, accessed on 24 November 2009

were among the few moral authorities to have survived. Christian values and concepts were regarded as humanist ideals regardless of social strata, profession and even ideology.

The social market economy

Anti-Communist, anti-Nazi, a Christian, humanist concept of man and its positioning itself as a people's party of the centre, formed the ideological backbone of the CDU. Chastened by the chaos of war and faced with a material plight that is impossible to conceive today, the CDU in North Rhine-Westphalia developed a new political school of thought with neither socialism nor capitalism, but the social market economy and its goals of prosperity for all in its Ahlen Programme of 1947: "The capitalist economic system could not do justice to the vital national and social interests of the German people. ... The content and goal of [a] social and economic reform can no longer be capitalistic striving for profit and power, but only the well-being of our people. A common order should provide the German people with an economic and social condition in keeping with the rights and dignity of man, serve the spiritual and material development of our people, and secure domestic and external peace."¹³⁰ The re-establishment after the Second World War was the result of the determined will of heterogeneous personalities and political groups. In no way was agreement in the way the future should be formed politically a precondition for the foundation of the CDU and CSU, which is the reason that the CDU was able to integrate a great number of divergent movements from the outset. As Hanns Jürgen Küsters writes, the Union parties developed "... correspondingly, in tense relations between the regional party focuses – partly as a result of the different occupation politics – and their respective leading personalities".¹³¹ It became necessary to temper the disparate interests of the progressive Catholics from the Rhine region, conservative Protestants and non-denominational members as well as workers and employers.

There were often massive areas of dissension between the different

¹³⁰ Küsters, Hanns Jürgen: Das Ahlener Programm der CDU der britischen Zone vom 3. Februar 1947; at <http://www.kas.de/wf/de/33.813/>; accessed on 24 November 2009

¹³¹ Ibid.

programmatic movements – especially between the economic-liberal and Christian-social groups. On the one hand, there was a view of the world and mankind that was strongly influenced by the Catholic code of social ethics and, on the other, the desire for more pragmatism in politics. According to the economic-liberal wing, progress was chiefly a measure of economic recovery. Social politics was regarded a priori as being the field of activity of the SPD and the German Trade Union Association, where the CDU had no chance of developing of clear-cut profile.

Organisational structure of the CDU

The heterogeneous political movements had an impact on the organisational structure of the CDU. The CDU basis represented the broad political spectrum of the party with its diversified wings. Strong personalities were much more important in an integrative function to camouflage ideological rifts. From the outset, the CDU had a tendency towards "personalisation" of its politics: politicians with a high level of charisma and fascination consolidated the basis as well as the CDU's voters. In particular, Konrad Adenauer – the first CDU chairman – played a decisive role in establishing the image of the party both within its ranks and with the public. Under Adenauer, the general population mainly regarded the CDU as being the "Chancellor's party". The German Christian Democrats also pursued this "personality principle" under the chancellors Ludwig Erhard, Helmut Kohl and Angela Merkel – albeit in a somewhat toned-down manner.

The Adenauer era

Chancellor Adenauer was extremely cautious in his programmatic work. In the party programme, he avoided terms such as conservative, right and bourgeois in order to position the CDU as a party of the centre with a strong rejection of totalitarian and socialist systems. This centre course – with a definite "yes" to the market economy while rejecting capitalism – determined the economic policies of the post-war period. The aim of the reconstruction of Germany and the country's re-ascent after 1947 was based on the bold currency reform, the Düsseldorf guiding principles and the economic reforms instituted by Ludwig Erhard.

Erhard was not in favour of an absolute market, but did advocate restraining the influence of the state. Its role was to establish and supervise the regulations for competition and guarantee the functioning of the infrastructure, education and legal security. The social activities of the state should be financed and assured through free competition. Erhard's political goal was prosperity for all.

Even today, Erhard – the first minister of economic affairs (1949-1963) and second chancellor (1963-1966) – symbolises the feeling of the upswing and resulting optimism and is considered the father of the German economic miracle and “social market economy”. Erhard's philosophy was influenced by the theoreticians Walter Eucken, Franz Oppenheimer and Wilhelm Röpkes, and the works of the sociologist Alfred Müller-Armack.

For Erhard, the state had a clearly defined role: competition was constantly threatened from many sides. The state, founded on a liberal social order, should secure the preservation of competition. A monopolies law based on prohibition was to be considered an indispensable fundamental law. Should the state fail in this area, it would soon lead to the end of the social market economy. Erhard considered prosperity for all and prosperity through competition as inseparably tied to each other. In this respect, Erhard set clear limitations to the “liberalist” economy of former times: “A person who believes that monopolies are called for is on the same intellectual level as those Social Democrats who conclude that automation leads to the necessity of a state-planned economy.”¹³² Erhard fought many battles, on many fronts, in connection with the social market economy – including with the German industry that, at the time, was showing tendencies towards protectionism. However, he also took up the cudgels against the redistribution apologists, the class strugglers and the growing social industry because Erhard clearly understood that every mark had to be earned before it could be redistributed. Political energy should be used to increase the GDP and raise profits, and not for distribution struggles: “It is much easier to give everyone a slice of a cake that is steadily growing in size than to argue about who should get how much of a small one, because this

¹³² Neumayer, Christoph: Ludwig Erhard: Übervater der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft, in Burkert-Dottolo, Günther / Moser, Christian Sebastian: Stichwortgeber für die Politik, Vienna, 2006, p. 56

would mean that every advantage would have to be paid for by a disadvantage.”¹³³ With his courageous course, Erhard put an end to the German disease of national (Hitler) and international (Marx) socialism and established the Union's progressive tradition. Erhard was absolutely aware that a population that was suspicious of the market – as was the case with the Germans – could only be convinced of the benefits of the social market economy if the mass of the populace profited from it and the people placed their trust in the system.

Throughout its history, the CDU was often forced to introduce necessary reforms against the will of the electorate but for the benefit of Germany: initially, Konrad Adenauer had no majority for Germany's commitment to the West and Helmut Kohl had to struggle against resistance and mass demonstrations to push through the NATO double-track decision, the reunification, as well as European unity and the introduction of the euro.

The Union's opponents regarded this progressive tradition of the CDU and its ideological flexibility as value relativism and arbitrariness. However, this ideological flexibility was a result of the heterogeneous interests of the various wings and movements within the Union. Its great strength developed specially out of its conciliation of different interests and varying ideologies.

Development into a members' party

In the mid-1960s, the CDU underwent a modification from pragmatic to programmatic politics in reaction to the central changes in the general context of its activities. First of all, the CDU found itself in the role of the opposition after 1969. The coalition with the FDP had come to an end in 1966. After a brief intermezzo as a grand coalition under Kurt Georg Kiesinger, the SPD and FDP formed a social-liberal government in 1969 with the CDU as the largest opposition party. The voters now expected long-term concepts and alternatives from the CDU in its role as an opposition party – completely unlike government policies.

Secondly, the former “chancellor party” was rapidly developing into a

¹³³ Ibid., p. 56

members' party on a broad basis. The number of members increased from around 300,000 in 1960 to approximately 735,000 in 1983. This development meant that, for its work on content, the decision-taking processes for political resolutions also had to be founded on a broader basis. In the 1950s and 1960s, Adenauer and Erhart often determined the political agenda in a small circle of advisors close to the chancellor. The new members now demanded more co-determination in basic decisions and the formulation of the Union's goals.

And, thirdly, the CDU was forced to react to the social changes in Germany. It had become possible to move out of one's original social milieu, and the CDU also had to reposition and sharpen the focus of its ideology. As early as the middle of the 1960s, it could no longer be assumed that practicing Christians were politically attached to the CDU. The increasing mobility of the voters also applied to the SPD's core electorate among the workers. "It follows that the start of a wide-ranging values debate and in-depth formulation of the Christian view of man came as no surprise, but was absolutely in keeping with the new development because Christian values had an abstract, theoretical foundation and were no longer appropriate to the logical reality of the everyday life of the population. As the discussion on the question of co-determination shows, the Union perceived its orientation on its political ideology based on Christian claims: it laid claim to being a people's party going beyond individual social strata, and the 'social market economy' remained the focus of its economic policies."¹³⁴

The first party programme, 1978

The first party programme that was adopted in Ludwigshafen in 1978 succeeded in balancing the long-standing lines of conflict between "capital" (economic liberal) and "labour" (Christian social) elements. Even more, overcoming this supposed difference became the central assignment of the CDU under Helmut Kohl and, along with the basis of Christian values, formed one of the CDU's programmatic constants. "Social market economy" makes a clear commitment to the market economy without ignoring the responsibility of creating social balance or at least reducing social imbalance to a tolerable level. That is why

¹³⁴ Zolleis (2008), p. 180

the CDU's Ludwigshafen policy statement of 1978 is characterised by the desire for a distinct social profile and the fundamental values of "solidarity and justice".

The 1978 programme placed a stronger emphasis on the "Christian view of man" as one of the paradigms of the CDU's political activities. As a free and responsible being, man has an obligation to act independently. He is responsible to himself and society for all his activities. The CDU considers it its responsibility – both in its economic-political concept and social ideals – to make this independent activity possible. Enabling the less fortunate members of society, such as those in need of care, single mothers, the unemployed and young people to participate is therefore one of the party's prime concerns.

While the 1970s were characterised by a programme discussion on a broad basis, the start of Helmut Kohl's chancellorship in the 1980s once again led to a period of elite centring in the CDU that would last into the 1990s. The party basis limited itself to the role of a vetoing power. The German electorate became more and more volatile, and the parties increasingly lost their organisational power. The accession of the newly formed German states accelerated this process. "The characteristic element of the period was continuity, and the CDU leadership was hardly interested in a contentious debate on the party's future politicians as a result of the changes that had taken place in society. On the one hand, this was due to the role of the party that was in government at the time: any detailed discussion on content would have impeded the day-to-day governmental activities. However, a constructive programmatic debate could not ignore the work in government."¹³⁵

The reunification of Germany

The 1994 fundamental programme did not intend to provide any kind of new programmatic or ideological orientation, but a basis for Chancellor Kohl's governmental activities and endeavours. Helmut Kohl had pushed through the enormously costly reunification with East Germany and was now trying to achieve continuity and tranquillity for the reunited country. That is the reason that the CDU also followed the

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 224

path of continuity in its value debate. The Christian concept of man remained the CDU's pivot; the "C" remained the basis of the party's fundamental values. In contrast to the 1978 programme, that of 1994 focused more on "freedom" as a central value – clearly under the influence of the fall of the Iron Curtain (this is also indicated by the title "Freedom in Responsibility").¹³⁶

The country was confronted with enormous challenges as a result of reunification in the early 1990s through the father of German unity, Helmut Kohl. This occurred at a time when international competition was increasingly placing pressure on Germany as a business location. Kohl's government had to fight a battle on two fronts: on the one hand, the development of the former German Democratic Republic had to be accelerated, and on the other, the business location itself was in need of modernisation. Restructuring of the social state and privatisation of federal investments were essential prerequisites for assuring the future of Germany. Kohl's government reformed the state's social-benefit agenda. This was accompanied by privatisation activities in the transportation sector that led to the transformation of the railways, the Deutsche Bundesbahn in the west and the Deutsche Reichsbahn in the east, into a single public limited company. One year later, the postal and telecommunication systems were reorganised and Kohl privatised the Federal Post Office. The reunification would have been impossible without this resolute action. It is more or less in the nature of things that a great achievement like the reunification would outshine all the other domestic reform impulses implemented during the "Kohl era".

New policy programme, 2007

The CDU also developed perspectives for the twenty-first century under Chancellor Angela Merkel. In 2007, the CDU presented its third policy programme conceived for the coming two decades. In this paper, the Union defines itself as a "people's party of the centre" and acknowledges its Christian-social, liberal and conservative roots. However, it also concedes "... that a specific political programme cannot be developed

¹³⁶ Freiheit in Verantwortung. Grundsatzprogramm der CDU Deutschlands, beschlossen am 21.-23. Februar 1994, Hamburg; <http://www.grundsatzprogramm.cdu.de/doc/grundsatzprogramm.pdf>; accessed on 24 November 2009

from the Christian faith alone. The CDU is open for all those who respect the dignity and freedom of all people and support the resulting basic convictions of our politics."¹³⁷

The benchmark for orientation is the Christian concept of man that leads to the three fundamental values of "freedom, solidarity and justice". The CDU considers the creation of a "society of opportunity" its political goal for Germany. Each citizen should receive the best education possible in order to fulfil his or her talents and capabilities. The CDU's goal is a society of free citizens living in security.

The CDU sees the support of families, an educational campaign for all, intensification of research activities to make it possible for German engineering to regain its former top position, the preservation of social security for all generations, the creation and assurance of a solid budget, as well as the conservation of creation as the most pressing challenges. For the first time, the CDU acknowledged that Germany is a country of integration and provided the definition that "Integration means accepting responsibility for our country. Germany is a county of integration. ... Knowledge of the German language is the key to integration. Our maxim is to encourage and challenge. A person who rejects integration must take sanctions into account. Integration has a decisive impact on all areas of politics."¹³⁸

With this programme, the CDU managed to further develop the bond between the rights of the individual (freedom) and the rights of society (solidarity) in a sound manner and in keeping with the times.

The priorities of the second Merkel cabinet

After the experiment with the Socialists and Greens, and the grand coalition between the CDU and SPD that was so unusual for Germany, the country is now once again being governed by a coalition between the

¹³⁷ Freiheit und Sicherheit. Grundsätze für Deutschland. Kurzfassung des Grundsatzprogramms, beschlossen am 3.-4. Dezember 2007 in Hannover; <http://www.grundsatzprogramm.cdu.de/doc/080215-grundsatzprogramm-kurz.pdf>; accessed on 24 November 2009

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 11

Union and its strong junior partner, the FDP, as a result of the victory at the elections held on 27 September 2009.

Chancellor Merkel intends to lead Germany to new strength with the new “five-point programme”. The “black-yellow” coalition aims at increasing growth, and the five major points of the declaration of government are a) overcoming the crisis, b) a new orientation of the relationship between the citizen and the state, c) providing answers to demographic change, d) regulating the way natural resources are dealt with and e) creating a new definition of freedom and security in the light of present-day threats.

Overcoming the effects of the international finance and economic crisis is Chancellor Merkel’s most pressing task. The 2009 recession was the most serious economic crisis since the Second World War; the economic slump is five times as severe as in the major recession at the beginning of the 1970s. This means the Merkel’s cabinet number 2 is faced with the greatest trial by fire since German reunification. The government established the following priorities in its 124-page coalition contract:

In the field of taxes, finance and the budget, the government is increasing the child allowance in a first step to 7008 euros as of January 2010. The monthly children’s benefit will be increased by 20 euros per child (currently 164 euros). Small and medium incomes, as well as families, will receive tax relief amounting to 24 billion euros. In addition, Merkel is going to cut back non-wage labour costs – pension, health insurance, nursing care and unemployment benefits – so as not to exceed 40 percent. In the same way as reducing bureaucracy and mitigating the strain on medium-sized enterprises, energy policy has a prime position on the government’s agenda: black-yellow is going to extend the lifespan of atomic power plants. In addition, the coalition has made a clear statement in favour of climate protection and the expansion of renewable energy that will receive increased support – for example, off-shore wind parks will be constructed. The government is also pushing the utilisation of biomass and organic fuels as sources of energy more than ever before.

The black-yellow government is also focusing on family politics, and Merkel’s second cabinet is planning to increase family support. Money

paid to parents who care for their children at home will be introduced in 2013 and will amount to 150 euros for children under the age of three. “If applicable”, it can be paid out in the form of a voucher that can be used for education and similar activities. The children’s allowance that Ursula von der Leyen introduced in the grand coalition will be further developed, and “co-parental support” paid out for up to 28 months to partners who share the responsibility of bringing up their children. This can be traced back to an old proposal made by Ursula von der Leyen: in future, parents who reduce their working time to 60 percent will only have to forfeit half, instead of a full, month of parental leave.

Education is another of the black-yellow government’s main political priorities: Germany should develop into a “republic of education with the best day-care centres, the best schools and vocational colleges, as well as the best universities and research institutes”.¹³⁹ The government intends to increase federal expenditure for education and research by 12 billion euros by 2013. The aim is to provide “more equal opportunities at the beginning, openness and fair chances for advancement for all”.¹⁴⁰ The support and education of young children will also be intensified.

As a result of the crisis of the German Social Democrats, the CDU has become the “last people’s party” in Germany.¹⁴¹ While the coalition partner, the FDP, mainly represents the interests of the self-employed and those with a higher income, the Christian Democrats still claim to make politics for all strata of society. That is another reason for Angela Merkel calling herself the “chancellor for all Germany”. With this interpretation of her office, Merkel was often confronted with criticism from within the party as being too woolly, shapeless, not conservative enough and too little programmatic. However, the Christian Democrats in Germany were never the custodians of the pure tenets, and a strict ideology and this criticism therefore completely misses the mark. It is actually quite the opposite: under Angela Merkel, the Chris-

¹³⁹ Wachstum. Bildung. Zusammenhalt. Koalitionsvertrag zwischen CDU, CSU und FDP. 17. Legislaturperiode, <http://www.cdu.de/doc/pdfc/091024-koalitionsvertrag-cducsu-fdp.pdf>; accessed on 24 November 2009, p. 51

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 51

¹⁴¹ Cf. Lau, Miriam: Die letzte Volkspartei: Angela Merkel und die Modernisierung der CDU, Munich, 2009

tian Democrats have once again been able to re-establish themselves. With new players such as Ursula von der Leyen, Norbert Röttgen and Theodor Gutenberg, the Union has become more attractive to voters from other social strata and milieus. Today, the Union is seen as being more modern, more open and therefore more successful in German cities and the urban environment; even the traditionally social-democratic Ruhr region is now governed by the Christian Democrat Jürgen Rüttgers. This was all made possible by the gentle modernisation of the party under Merkel. In North Rhine-Westphalia, more workers voted for the CDU than the SPD for the first time; even young, employed women and urban people (in Hamburg, for example) are now increasingly giving their votes to the Christian Democrats: the CDU is regarded as the party of those willing to play their part and who are proud of their homeland.

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Hungary: The History of the Bourgeois Camp since the Fall of Communism

Lajos Keresztes

Summary

In the 20 years since the fall of Communism, the Hungarian bourgeois camp has changed completely. The former major power, the MDF, placed a one-time Socialist finance minister at the top of its list of candidates for the European elections. For this reason, the European People's Party suspended the MDF's membership on 10 September 2009. On the other hand, Fidesz – formerly a national-liberal youth organisation – has been able to integrate the entire centre and centre-right political spectrum. It is now eagerly looking forward to the 2010 election with high expectations, and even the possibility of achieving a two-third majority cannot be ruled out.

In the 1970s, it became obvious that the Soviet-type social system had slithered into a deep moral, political and economic crisis in Hungary. The revolution in 1956 had already shown that a major portion of the Hungarian society was not receptive to a Stalinist ideology. The only basis for legitimation left to the governing party was their policy of providing a standard of living above that of the other Warsaw Pact countries. However, in the second half of the 1980s, it became apparent that the planned economy was not even in the position of being able to provide the financial means to satisfy these comparatively modest objectives. During the 1970s, the country's debts increased so dramatically that Hungary was on the brink of insolvency in 1982. The resulting dependence on foreign countries resulted in the erosion of the dictatorship.

In June 1985 the first semi-legal meeting of the groups that could imagine the country not as a one-party dictatorship made it clear that the oppositional groups agreed that it would be possible to overcome the

system with a Western-style multi-party democracy. At the same time, the question of the transition methods rekindled the dissent between the “rural-peasant” and “urban” groups with its roots in the first half of the twentieth century. The first were in favour of a kind of “Hungarian model” where Hungarian small and medium-size enterprises would be the determinative group in the economy, whereas the “urban” faction saw the quickest way to modernise the country in the rapid, complete adoption of the Western economic and political system.

In September 1987, the country’s most famous intellectuals founded the Hungarian Democratic Forum (Magyar Demokrata Fórum, MDF). When this movement formed itself into a party, the later party chairman and prime minister József Antall characterised the “rural-peasant” roots, Christian Democracy and national liberalism as the three columns on which the party was built. Numerous other parties were founded in 1988. On 30 March 1988, 37 young students formed a new organisation named Fidesz (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége – Alliance of Young Democrats). Initially, the aim was to establish a new, autonomous, independent youth organisation to unite the politically active radical-reformist youth groups and individuals.

One of the most important questions at the time was about the role that the historical parties that had existed before the introduction of the one-party system should play. In the bourgeois camp, the “natural” allies of Antall’s MDF were the smallholders and Christian Democrats. On 16 June 1989, Viktor Orbán held a speech in the name of the youth where he proposed that negotiations be held on the immediate withdrawal of the Soviet troops in the country and demanded that Hungary leave the Warsaw Pact.

In summer 1989, a series of negotiations began between the “oppositional roundtable” – a union of all opposition parties – and the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (MSZMP), then the ruling party. The last parliament of the single-party state began with the ratification of the results of the negotiations. In retrospect, the oppositional parties were strongly criticised for their naïveté because they were only prepared to negotiate on the most important changes in the public sphere in the period leading up to the first free elections without taking on a position in the government. The only economic matter the oppositional roundtable was prepared to discuss was the immediate stop of construction

work on the Bős-Nagymaros power plant. They were unable to have an influence on the privatisation that had started spontaneously – in the media, for example – until the next spring, which later led to serious disadvantages for the bourgeois camp.

The participants in the “oppositional roundtable” soon agreed that the German model should provide the guidelines for the new Hungarian constitution. In keeping with the agreement reached on 18 September 1989, the constitution, penal code and criminal-proceedings law were amended, and the legislation that the constitutional court constituted, which regulated the activities of the parties and parliamentary elections, passed. Only the national-liberal Fidesz and the left-liberal Union of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) refused to sign. The oppositional parties were afraid of the ruling party, which still appeared to be quite popular at the time, and laid down a two-thirds majority in important areas – even including the budget – that would have made the country absolutely ungovernable. Those sections of the 1989 agreement that made governing more or less impossible were revoked after the first multi-party parliamentary elections in spring 1990 on the initiative of the MDF with the support of the SZDSZ oppositional party. The SZDSZ were rewarded for their support by being allowed to appoint the president of the republic.

At the party congress held in October 1989 – as a result of the internal upheaval in the party – the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (MSZMP) disintegrated; its immediate successor was the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP).

The MDF “suicide government”

The system of democratic institutions that is still in force today came about as the result of the parliamentary work of the first years. As early as in summer 1989, József Antall signed a provisional agreement with the leaders of the European Democratic Union (EDU) making it possible for the three coalition parties to be jointly admitted as members following the first free elections.

On 3 May 1990, the provisional head of state, Árpád Göncz, gave the winner of the election Antall – who had received 24.7 percent of the vote

and 42.5 percent of the seats – the commission to form a government. Three parties – the MDF, the Independent Smallholders, Agrarian Workers and Civic Party (FKGP) and the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) – formed a coalition agreement. On the evening of 23 May 1990, the Hungarian parliament elected József Antall prime minister and approved the government programme.

When the first free elections were held, the national debt had already reached 22 billion dollars, or 75 percent of the GDP. At the same time, between 1990 and 1996, almost 1.5 million of the 5.1 million jobs in Hungary had been lost through the disintegration of the COMECON market and the decline of the deficit Socialist economy. In the following ten years, it was possible to create only 300,000 new jobs.

Along with the economic difficulties, Hungarian society was also affected by two subjective developments. On the one hand, it soon became clear that, compared with West Europe, the country's relative prosperity within COMECON – the standard of living provided by the notorious “goulash Communism” – was relatively low. The Hungarians also had to face up to the fact that their comparatively high level of economic development among the Communist states could not compete with their West European competitors, and that Hungary's expectations of the EU were exaggerated. Many people even hoped that Hungary would be admitted to the EU in 1995. A large number of Hungarians did not experience a feeling of liberation after the “Kádár era” (Communist Hungary). The government was forced to introduce economic shock treatment. One of the elements of these policies was the comparatively rapid privatisation that was completely contrary to the programme of the bourgeois parties.

In addition, no results were forthcoming in those important national matters – such as improving the lot of Hungarians living outside the country – that were so important to the bourgeois camp. Even mentioning this question – because of the war in Yugoslavia, for example – sounded suspicious to the West. The taxi-driver blockade that immobilised the country after 25 October 1990 indicates the changes in public opinion. At the time, a major section of the population made the democratic government, which had been in power for only a few months, responsible for the difficulties that the forced introduction of the market economy – including the reduction of fuel subsidies – had

brought with it (and not the state Socialism that was responsible for the country's bankruptcy). After that, the centre-left government had to fight a battle on two fronts. On the one hand, the radical members in the MDF became increasingly vocal. On 21 February 1991, József Totgyán, chairman of the Smallholders' Party, announced that his party was going to leave the coalition because the prime minister had not implemented the measures necessary to change the system. The chairman of the Smallholders' Party went into opposition with the smaller section of its parliamentarians – the party had already split into two factions. The later founders of the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP) were of the opinion that not keeping the MDF's most important campaign pledge – namely, that officials in the multi-party state were not answerable for their actions – was to blame for the increasingly self-assured behaviour of the old Socialist henchmen. They criticised the Prime Minister harshly when it became clear that, within the framework of the new regime, it was almost impossible to be compensated for injustice experienced in the dictatorship. He was also accused of having made a pact with the SZDSZ without being authorised by the executive committees of the MDF. Another reason that they left was because they felt that the MDF government had not even attempted to have at least a part of the debts accumulated during the Kádár era annulled.

On the other hand, the leftists used a trick to increase their influence: they accused the centre-right government parties of wanting to reinstate the corporative state of the 1930s and of being in cahoots with radical rightists. On 26 September, the Democratic Charta Movement was founded. Numerous left and liberal intellectuals and politicians used paid advertisements in the press to inform that they felt that democracy in Hungary was in danger. The Charta united politicians from the MSZP and SZDSZ for the first time – a sign of things to come with their coalition in 1994. Initially, the Fidesz was also part of the movement, but withdrew in 1992 because it considered the survival of the post-Communist networks to be the greatest danger facing Hungarian democracy and not the strengthening of the radical right.

The year 1993 saw a drastic change in the bourgeois camp when the radical wing, led by István Csurka, left the MDF and founded the MIÉP. At the same time, the Fidesz relinquished its status as a “youth party” once and for all. Until 1993, there was a stipulation in the party's statutes that set an age limit of 35 for members. Politically, the Fidesz moved

in a national-liberal direction. The Fidesz's left-liberal wing joined the SZDSZ. At the end of the year, the Fidesz made a final, embittered attempt to prevent the MSZP's landslide victory by forming a union with the SZDSZ.

The fragmentation and reorganisation of the bourgeois camp

The bourgeois camp that had split into half a dozen parties was shocked by the success of the successor party to the Communists, the Socialists. In the 1994 election, they received one-third of the votes cast and 54 percent of the seats in parliament. In order to increase its international acceptance, the MSZP entered into a coalition with the second largest faction in parliament, the left-liberal SZDSZ, which had more than 18 percent of the seats. The largest bourgeois force, previously the most important government party, MDF, collapsed completely and received only a total of 12 percent of the valid votes. The Fidesz, which had been one of the most popular parties before its swing to the right, reached 7.7 percent and rejected the offer made by Prime Minister Gyula Horn to participate in a coalition.

The left-liberal coalition held a two-thirds majority in parliament and skilfully took advantage of this to increase their power: they limited communal elections to a single round to prevent cooperation between the split bourgeois parties. In addition, the government did away with the five percent hurdle for being admitted to parliament. Along with these changes, the MSZP's victory rang in changes in public law, a much greater upheaval in social politics: structures that had petered out after the change were reintroduced. The circles that had the power in the state converted the political influence they had at the time of the change into economic power. This material background allowed them to secure their influence on society, and they reverted to their political power. With these conditions to back them, the governing parties wanted to settle down to several legislative periods in power. One part of this strategy was formed by the austerity measures that became notorious under the name of the "Bokros package", which primarily affected the middle classes and accelerated privatisation. On the one hand, this guaranteed the resources necessary to reward the faith of the recipients of government transfer payments (the Socialists' most steadfast electoral clients) and, on the other hand, sapped the mate-

rial basis, in this way slowing the process of Hungary developing into a bourgeois society and eroding the possibilities of any possible political competition flourishing.

Confronted with this situation, the bourgeois camp had two choices. One was to radically ignore the "system of the change", and this is what the Smallholders' Party chose to do. Some Christian Democrats and members of the MDF were also attracted by these concepts.

The other possibility was to pursue a "bourgeois path". This was taken up by the Fidesz as a counterweight to the left bloc. In keeping with these ideas, the Fidesz decided to change its name for the first time at its seventh party congress by adding "Hungarian Civic Union". The programme "for a civic Hungary" was passed at the same time. On the one hand, this stated that the Fidesz is a national-liberal, bourgeois party and, on the other, that an electoral programme to strengthen the middle classes, which still had to be drawn up, should be one of its ideological foundations. In a press statement released in October 1995, the party chairman Viktor Orbán raised the idea of a party union with the Christian Democrats and MDF, as this would be the only possibility to form an alternative to the parliamentary majority of the MSZP-SZDSZ. The MDF split once again at the beginning of 1996, making it absolutely clear that the Fidesz was the leading force in the bourgeois camp. In 1996, Viktor Orbán, the chairman of the Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Union, and Sándor Lezsák, the MDF chairman, agreed to cooperate at the coming elections. As the result of a bribe scandal that greatly discredited the government parties, the Fidesz achieved ratings close to those of the major party in government in the opinion polls.

The radicalisation of the party leadership of the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) led to resignations and expulsions, and ultimately the parliament faction ceased to exist in the summer of 1997. Thirteen of those who had resigned entered into the Fidesz faction, and, since the MDF faction had also split in 1996, the Fidesz became the largest opposition faction in Hungary.

The Fidesz formed a union with the Hungarian Christian Democratic Union (MKDSZ), which had left the KDNP, similar to the one with the MDF. As a result, joint candidates supported by the Fidesz and

MKDSZ ran for office in the electoral wards, and some MKDSZ politicians ran on the Fidesz ticket. In summer, the Fidesz took part in the largest joint action of the opposition parties: a petition against allowing foreign citizens to acquire property that achieved the necessary number of signatures to bring about a call for a referendum in September. In addition to causing the government to back down on the question of owning property, the most important result of the petition was that the Fidesz, which had formerly been regarded with suspicion by the rural population because of its liberal past, became increasingly accepted by this group.

The bourgeois alternative

With its slogan of “More than Just a Change of Government”, the Fidesz defeated the MSZP, which had been considered the favourite, in the May 1998 parliamentary elections. The list of the leaders of the bourgeois camp that promised the end of the change received 29.6 percent of the votes cast and the largest number of parliamentary seats: 147 in all. In addition, the 16 MDF representatives, as joint Fidesz candidates in the electoral wards, were also voted into parliament. The prime minister elect, Viktor Orbán, rejected the Socialist’s offer to form a grand coalition and entered into an alliance with the MDF and the Smallholders’ Party. The Fidesz provided 12 of the 17 ministers, with the remaining five coming from the smaller coalition parties. A distinct change in the non-left wing of the Hungarian political landscape came about when the national-radical MIÉP managed to get into parliament as a result of the changes made by the former social-liberal government. This also resulted in the political spectrum of the Fidesz moving more towards the centre.

In contrast to its predecessors, the new government followed an anti-cyclical economic policy to stimulate domestic demand. It attempted to make Hungarian small and medium-size businesses able to compete with foreign enterprises on the local market before Hungary’s accession to the EU, and the few large Hungarian concerns were to be protected from foreign investors. In the field of social politics, the cabinet pursued strengthening of the middle classes and tackled the demographic problem of ageing. The government’s activities were focused not only on increasing material prosperity, but also on the intellectual well-being of

the population, increasing the national cohesive forces and the feeling of belonging. The events that took place in 2000/2001 on the occasion of the celebrations commemorating the thousandth anniversary of the founding of the state served this purpose. Hungary’s foreign policies focused on the so-called “status law” that aimed at regulating the relationship between the Republic of Hungary and exile Hungarians in Romania, Serbia and the Slovak Republic.

In September 1999, the head of government and party chairman, Viktor Orbán, signed a coalition agreement with the Hungarian Christian Democratic Union, after which the party took an internal decision to separate the two offices. In November 2000, the Fidesz left the Liberal International and applied for admittance to the European People’s Party; in December of the same year, it was admitted to the European Democratic Union. The Fidesz now regarded its search for its political identity as having been successfully fulfilled and proclaimed that it would no longer define itself through separation from other formations. Distancing itself from anything or anyone through accusations from the left, as during the Antall government, or any other means ceased to be a topic of discussion.

In contrast to the united left bloc, the Fidesz saw its route to success in an adaptation of the so-called CSU model (the Christian Socialist Union runs for office independently in Bavaria and jointly with the CDU in elections to the federal parliament), and that meant overcoming the fragmentation of the bourgeois parties. It therefore provided a refuge for the representatives of the Small Landholders’ Party faction that had split because of internal, ideological discussions and corruption scandals and entered into an electoral partnership with the MDF and Christian Democratic Union that, at the time, no longer reached the five-percent mark necessary to enter parliament.

Development of the party in opposition

The social-liberal coalition had an extremely close win in the 2002 elections. The Fidesz received 41 percent of the valid votes. It was defeated by the MSZP, which promised a change towards more prosperity by pledging to give civil servants a 50 percent pay increase and introduce a thirteenth month’s pension.

The Fidesz organised rallies of an unprecedented magnitude between the two rounds of the parliamentary elections. An analysis of the results of the election shows quite clearly that the party lost its forecast 6-10 percent lead as a result of the poor mobilisation of its voters. At the time, the Fidesz had only 4,000 members and was unable to have a representative in each of the country's 11,000 electoral wards. It was unable to mobilise support as the Socialists, who were firmly anchored in the society, succeeded in doing. The importance of mobilisation is even greater when one considers that the number of undecided or swing voters who decide at the last minute whether they are going to the polls and who they are going to vote for is relatively high in Hungary.

Shortly before the runoff, Viktor Orbán held a speech to sustain and channel the enthusiasm in which he asked his supporters to form "bourgeois circles". In spite of the pressure from the government, this made it possible for the Fidesz to avoid the fate of the MDF, which had disintegrated after the defeat in 1994 due to a lack of common experiences and activities, and was never able to make a recovery. The Fidesz came up with the notion of "One Camp – One Flag", meaning it claimed to integrate the entire bourgeois camp. Finally, the Democracy Centre was established, with investigating the rumours of vote-rigging among the items on its agenda. On 17 May 2003, the party united with other conservative and bourgeois parties to form a movement, and the name was changed to Fidesz-Hungarian Citizens' Union. The party congress elected Viktor Orbán chairman.

The MDF representatives who entered parliament on the joint ticket with the Fidesz formed an individual faction. The major section had strong disagreements with its own party leadership, which was distancing itself increasingly from the Fidesz and drifting more and more towards the "left" in 2004.

After its defeat in the 2004 European elections, the NSZP replaced the – increasingly unpopular – Péter Medgyessey with the almost completely unknown Ferenc Gyurcsány. The new head of government regarded dealing a blow to the bourgeoisie as his main mission. He led a concentrated election campaign against the referendum brought about by citizens' action groups to grant Hungarians living outside the country dual citizenship. By doing this, he accepted that he was overturning the consensus that had so far existed between the parties in parliament

regarding foreign policy and became persona non grata in the eyes of the entire bourgeois camp after 5 December 2004.

Total opposition

For a short while, it seemed that the voters had confirmed Ferenc Gyurcsány's strategy of "opposing the opposition" because the social-liberal coalition once again achieved the absolute majority in the April 2006 elections. The voters preferred hearing the government's message promising a further increase in prosperity than the Fidesz's warnings about the economic problems on the horizon. In addition, the MDF – which just scraped over the five-percent hurdle – made it clear between the two rounds that it was interested in Fidesz's defeat. The leaders of the then-conservative party who managed to stay in the saddle with the support of voters from the left and the media were counting on the Fidesz collapsing after a defeat and that the forum would take over a section of the crumbling citizens' union.

Substantial amendments to the 2006 budget became necessary when the deficit for the first quarter reached 17 percent and the social-liberal coalition published the so-called "convergence programme" that included major budget cuts and was slated to come into force on 1 September. Until today, it is not clear how it happened, but on 17 September, the head of government's speech held at a meeting of the MSZP faction on 26 May 2006 in Balatonöszöd became public. In this, Ferenc Gyurcsány admitted that the government was forced to introduce drastic austerity measures because the country was close to bankruptcy. The prime minister also spoke openly about the fact that the government had lied continuously throughout the previous two years to protect its interests for and win the elections, and had done nothing to try to avoid the threatening catastrophe. Publication of this speech led to disturbances, and the violent incidences with the police on 23 October finally resulted in Hungarian politics splitting into two camps. The government side claims that the opposition – together with radical elements – had made an attempt to overthrow the legitimate government. The Fidesz's interpretation is that the head of government, who was desperately trying to hang on to his power, would resort to anything to stay in office. The Citizens' Union consequently boycotted the prime minister's statements that preceded the parliament's business of the day.

The other consequence of the events in the autumn of 2006 was the strengthening of the radical groups demanding revolutionary changes. They accused the Fidesz of treason because, even in that drastic situation, it had never left the basis of complying with the constitution. The other threat that manifested itself in the demonstrations made the coalition close ranks for a period. In this way, the government head was able to strengthen his position within the party without any serious resistance, and he reorganised the health and education systems according to market-economy criteria. From the outset, the reform measures had an uphill battle because they were simultaneously accompanied by a far-reaching reduction in resources without any consultations being held with the medical profession or other bodies representing the interests of those affected. The desperate reshaping on the part of the administration, as well as the noticeable haste of the government, also resulted in the legal provisions not having the necessary quality.

At the end of 2006, the opposition wanted to initiate a referendum to prevent neoliberal concepts, which the Fidesz thought harmful. However, the social-liberal cabinet was neither willing to form a government of experts nor agree to new elections. After one and a half years of constitutional bickering, the referendum was held on 9 March 2008 and showed the lack of social consensus. As a result of this devastating defeat, the social-liberal coalition fell apart and the MSZP was forced to create a minority cabinet, which led to a dramatic drop in the élan of the reforms.

After the cuts made in 2006, real wages fell by 4.8 percent in 2007 and the austerity measures that were almost entirely based on increasing revenue lead to serious problems in competitiveness. These undermined what was left of the government's authority to such an extent that the complete paralysis of economic growth was apparent even before the start of the international finance crisis.

In autumn 2008, Hungary was only able to avoid financial collapse through the assistance of a twenty-billion-euro loan from the IMF and the EU. The measures that were demanded – such as doing away with the thirteenth monthly pension payment and the civil servants' thirteenth monthly salary – hit the core group of Socialist voters with full force, and Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány resigned. His successor was Gordon Bajnai, whose government introduced the required measures

through which the budget deficit became a social deficit. The withdrawal of the financial means made it practically impossible for the health services, educational bodies and community administration to fulfil their fundamental responsibilities as laid down by law. Public safety, which had become shaky, accompanied by the Roma question, formed another serious social trouble spot. It is no mere coincidence that, in the European elections, the radical-right Movement for a Better Hungary received more votes than the Socialists in those communities in North-eastern Hungary where the majority of the Roma live.

Its consistent stance resulted in the Fidesz receiving a remarkable 57 percent of the votes in the European elections. This result also shows that a major portion of the society also expects a change after the elections in spring 2010.

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Poland: Common Roots – Separate Paths: Poland's Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform), Its History, Profile and Protagonists

Christian Passin

Summary

The liberal-conservative Civic Platform (PO) has governed Poland since 2007 with its small coalition partner the Polish People's Party (PSL).¹⁴² The party chairman and prime minister, Donald Tusk, comes from the liberal and conservative circles of Gdansk that have been politically active since the 1980s. A number of parties and electoral alliances were necessary to establish a basis for a sustainable, liberal-conservative, pro-European party before the PO could be founded in 2001. The parties disappeared, but their protagonists and ideologies have endured. They are the same in 2009 as they were in 1989.

A résumé to start with

The Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska/PO) – in government since 2007 – is a relatively young party that was founded in 2001 by politicians coming from the Freedom Union (Unia Wolności/UW), the electoral alliance Solidarity Electoral Action (Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność/AWS) and other bodies. The Freedom Union, the Liberal Democratic Congress (Kongres Liberalno-Demokratyczny/

¹⁴² The Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe/PSL) was founded on 5 May 1990 through the amalgamation of the United People's Party block party and several agrarian groups. The PSL took over the assets and structure of the ZSL. Programmatically, the PSL sees itself in the tradition of the farmers' parties of the period between the two wars and shortly after the Second World War. The PSL, a coalition partner of the Alliance of the Democratic Left in 1993-1995 and 2001-2003, is a member of the European People's Party (EPP).

KLD) and the Democratic Union (Unia Demokratyczna/UD) are regarded as the direct – or indirect – post-1989 predecessor parties of the PO: politicians and intellectual forces from these parties continue to play a decisive role in the Civic Platform and are firmly established in the key positions of Poland's domestic and European politics.

The elections for the presidency in 2010 and parliament in 2011 will show whether the Civic Platform has been able to establish a firm place for itself in the history of Poland's political parties. Although today's opponents to the Civic Platform were its allies in the past, they remain the same old protagonists who have been struggling democratically for the claim to power in Poland since 1989. Today, it is the battle between a pro-European, liberal-market philosophy represented by the current Prime Minister Donald Tusk and his Civic Platform¹⁴³ and a Eurosceptic, national-Catholic ideology represented by the twin brothers Lech and Jarosław Kaczyński¹⁴⁴ and their Law and Justice Party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość/PiS).

These are three elected officials who were politically involved in the early stages of the Independent Self-governing Trade Union “Solidarity” (Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy “Solidarność”/NSZZ “Solidarność”) – in a word, Solidarity¹⁴⁵ – 30 years ago: “At the time,

¹⁴³ Donald Tusk, born in 1957, is a member of the Kashubian minority and was one of the founders of the Gdansk subsidiaries of the Solidarity Student Committee (Studencki Komitet Solidarności/SKS) that was established in 1977 as a reaction to the murder of the Cracow student Stanisław Pyjas. In 1980, he was also among the initiators of the Independent Movement of Polish Students (Niezależne Zrzeszenie Studentów Polskich/NZSP) and became active in the Solidarność trade-union movement. Tusk founded the Liberal-Democratic Congress (1990), the Freedom Union (1994) and the Civic Platform (2001).

¹⁴⁴ Jarosław Kaczyński, born in 1949, founded the Centre Alliance (Porozumienie Centrum/PC) in 1990 to support Lech Wałęsa in the presidential election. After the decline of the AWS election platform, he and his twin brother Lech established the PiS; he has been its chairman since 2003. He was prime minister from July 2006 to November 2007. Lech Kaczyński, the former minister of justice (2000-2001) and mayor of Warsaw (2002-2005), has been the president of Poland since 2005 and was the first chairman of the PiS from 2001-2003.

¹⁴⁵ Solidarność developed out of a workers' strike movement in summer 1980 and was officially founded on 17 September 1980. The union was banned following the procla-

all three of them struggled in the Solidarność trade union against the Communist regime. The Kaczyńkis, however, could usually be found in the third row at demonstrations. Their sphere of activity was in the back rooms; they were considered to be the gifted string-pullers behind the scenes. But Tusk, who was studying history in Gdansk at the time, was out in front and established the student's Solidarność Alliance, marched in the vanguard at demonstrations, and suffered physical injuries in the confrontations.”¹⁴⁶

The roots of the Civic Platform: The Liberal Democratic Congress (1989/90-1994)

Among the members of the first “democratically” elected government under liberal-Catholic Prime Minister Tadeusz Masowiecki¹⁴⁷ following the “semi-free” elections¹⁴⁸ on 4 and 18 June 1989 were Jan Krzysztof

mation of martial law on 17 April 1989. For information on the history of Solidarność see “Online-Ressourcen zur Geschichte der unabhängigen Gewerkschaft Solidarność”, <http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/site/40208487/default.aspx>, accessed on 4 September 2009.

¹⁴⁶ Krohn, Knut: Wer ist Donald Tusk? Online edition of *Der Tagesspiegel*, 21 October 2007, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/zeitung/Fragen-des-Tages;art693,2403920>, accessed on 19 June 2009.

¹⁴⁷ Tadeusz Mazowiecki, born in 1927, was a representative of the tolerated Catholic group Symbol (Znak) in the Sejm from 1961-1971. He became active in Solidarność in 1980 and participated in the roundtable as an adviser to Solidarność's leader, Lech Wałęsa. He resigned as prime minister on 14 December after being defeated in the first round of the presidential election on 25 November 1990. He and his followers later founded the Democratic Union (Unia Demokratyczna/UD), which subsequently became assimilated into the Freedom Union with Mazowiecki as its first chairman in 1994-1995.

¹⁴⁸ The negotiations at the so-called Round Table (6 February to 5 April 1989) between the Communist regime with the, at the time banned, Solidarność led to the elections in June 1989. Independently of the outcome of the election, 299 of the 460 seats in the Sejm were reserved for the regime parties (Communists and their allies) with the remaining 161 for candidates without any party affiliation. There was no quota for the 100 members of the newly created second house of parliament, the Senate. Mark Henzler gives an overview of the political careers of the participants in the Round Table in his article “Die Leute vom Runden Tisch. Eine Anwesenheitsliste” (“The People at >

Bielecki¹⁴⁹ (a member of the Liberal-Democratic Congress after 1990) as deputy prime minister and Leszek Balcerowicz¹⁵⁰ (a member of the Democratic Union after 1990) as finance minister. They were both representatives of a political ideology that, with its enthusiasm for reforms founded on “capitalistic” ideas under the heading of “shock therapy”, characterised the first years of restored democracy in Poland. Later, the two of them could be found united in the ranks of the Freedom Union.

Advocates of this orientation found a nationwide platform for their ideas with the establishment of a Liberal Congress in November 1989. This evolved into the Liberal Democratic Congress (KLD) in April 1990 with the later minister for privatisation, Janusz Lewandowski,¹⁵¹ as its first chairman.

The presidential election that took place in autumn 1990 sealed the long-term dividing line between the national-conservative, national-Catholic, pro-Wałęsa camp, which had developed out of Solidarność, and the liberal-conservative, liberal, moderate-Catholic, pro-Masowiecki supporters. These differences were further intensified when Wałęsa founded the centre-right party the Centre Alliance (Porozumienie Centrum/PC), which was loyal to him. This fragmentation of the anti-

▷ the Round Table. A Roll Call”: <http://www.polityka.pl/die-leute-vom-runden-tisch-eine-anwesenheitsliste/Lead30,1783,281870,18/>, accessed 30 August 2009.

¹⁴⁹ Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, born in 1951, studied at the University of Gdansk and was a Solidarność adviser from 1980-1988. He was elected to the Sejm in 1989 and was one of the founders of the Liberal Democratic Congress in 1990. In 1991, he became prime minister and LDC chairman, 1992-1993 minister for European integration and subsequently executive director of the EBRD for Poland, Bulgaria and Albania until 2003.

¹⁵⁰ Leszek Balcerowicz, born in 1947, studied economics and was finance minister in the governments led by Mazowiecki (1989-1990), Bielecki (1991) and Buzek (1997-2000). The Balcerowicz Plan that provided for the economic restructuring of Poland from a Communist planned economy to a free-market economy was named after him. He was chairman of the Freedom Union in 1995-2000 and president of the Polish National Bank in 2001-2007.

¹⁵¹ Janusz Lewandowski, born in 1951, studied economics in Gdansk and was a member of Solidarność in 1980-1989, founding member of the Liberal Democratic Congress (1990-1995), member of the Board of the Freedom Union (1995-2001), and member of the Civic Platform since 2001. Minister for privatisation in the governments led by Bielecki (1991) and Suchocka (1992-1993). Member of the Sejm in 1991-1993 and 1997-

Communist camp found its way into the history of the political parties in Poland under the title of “war at the top”.¹⁵²

After autumn 1990, the KLD – which initially supported Lech Wałęsa – participated in the Centre Alliance under the leadership of Jarosław Kaczyński, but left it again in spring 1991 when the PC committed itself to a Christian-democratic programme. In contrast to the PC, the KLD quite clearly advocated market-economy positions without taking any socially mitigating measures into account. The KLD opposed government interventions and supported reforms. The KLD – as the party of private property – demanded severe, progressive privatisation, as well as Poland’s accession to the European Community. The KLD’s Jan Krzysztof Bielecki was the country’s second post-Communist prime minister and was in office from January to December 1991. In May 1991, Bielecki was elected to the position of KLD chairman.

The following – first really free – parliamentary elections on 27 October 1991 revealed just how dramatic the fragmentation of the Polish political landscape had become: around thirty parties were elected into parliament and the KLD received only 7.5 percent of the vote and 37 seats. This was due to the fact that, as the “party of the intellectuals”, it had supported the plan of Finance Minister Balcerowicz with its, in part, radical economic programme and was met with an enthusiastic response in only the large, mainly university, towns.

The unification of the right and left liberal camps – the Freedom Union (1994)

Early parliamentary elections soon became necessary. This was not a surprise as, in a mere two years, three prime ministers had been “consumed”: Jan Olszewski (23 December 1991 – June 1992), Waldemar

2004, observer at the European Parliament from 2003-2004, European parliamentarian since 2004. In June 2009 he was nominated by the Polish government as member of new EU Commission (2009-2014).

¹⁵² Mildenerger, Markus: “Die Transformation des politischen Systems Polens am Beispiel der Parteien” (The Transformation of Poland’s Political System with the Parties as Examples): <http://www.dgap.org/publikationen/view/755691daceb311da9c7153673676606c606c.html>, accessed 26 June 2009.

Pawlak (5 June 1992 – 10 July 1992) and Hanna Suchocka (11 July 1992 – 25 October 1993). The elections on 19 September consequently resulted in a debacle for the Catholic, national-conservative parties and *Solidarność*. This was principally the result of the rupture of the anti-Communist camp and the economic shock therapy prescribed by Finance Minister Balcerowicz.

The newly introduced majority voting system benefited the victory of the post-Communist SLD, which became the strongest party with 20.4 percent of the vote (171 seats). The KLD barely reached four percent and was no longer represented in parliament. On the other hand, the UD managed to win 10.6 percent and was even able to increase the number of its representatives from 62 to 74.

Following the elections, the Democratic Union proposed an amalgamation with the Congress. However, this process was accompanied by many heated discussions and factional struggles in the Democratic Union. After the “conservative faction” under Aleksander Hall¹⁵³ had left the party in September 1992 to found the Conservative Party (*Partia Konserwatywna*/PK), a new “conservative-liberal” faction established itself within the UD and now stood in opposition the long-established “social-liberal”¹⁵⁴ group.

¹⁵³ Aleksander Hall, born in 1953, comes from Gdansk and was a member of the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civic Rights (*Ruch Obrony Praw Człowieka i Obywatela*/ROP*CiO*) founded in March 1977. In 1979, he was a founding member of the oppositional Young Poland Movement (*Ruch Młodej Polski*/RMP) that was dissolved in 1989. He was elected to the Sejm in 1989 and was one most severe critics of Wałęsa and his presidential candidacy in 1990. In summer 1990, he founded the Forum of Democratic Rights (*Forum Prawicy Demokratycznej*/FPD) that, as an individual faction, formed the right wing of the “left-liberal” Democratic Union that had been founded at the end of 1990. The Conservative Party he founded in 1992 became part of the Conservative People’s Party in 1997, which became a constituent of the Civic Platform in 2001. His wife, Katarzyna Hall, has no party affiliation and has been the education minister in Tusk’s government since 2007.

¹⁵⁴ The members of the “social-liberal” wing come from the Citizens’ Movement Democratic Action (*Ruch Obywatelski - Akcja Demokratyczna*/ROAD) that was founded in July 1990 to support Mazowiecki and the Committee to Defend Workers (*Komitet Obrony Robotników*/KOR) – the first large-scale anti-Communist civil-rights movement.

The Freedom Union was finally established on 24 April 1994. The chairmen of the Union and the Congress, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Donald Tusk, took over the leadership of the new party: Mazowiecki as chairman with Tusk as his deputy. The party’s 100-member executive board was composed of 73 representatives of the former Union and 27 from the KLD.

“The foundation of the Freedom Union was an attempt to unite the forces of the centre in what had become a fragmented party landscape: However, time showed that it was hardly possible to reconcile liberal, Christian-conservative, laicist and left-liberal movements with each other. This led to conflicts over content and personnel. The Freedom Union did not have what it takes to develop into a large people’s party of the centre.”¹⁵⁵

An additional turning point for both the development of the party landscape and the Freedom Union came about with the presidential election of 1995, when the challenger, Aleksandar Kwaśniewski (SLD), won the runoff held on 19 November against the incumbent, State President Lech Wałęsa, with 51.7 percent of the votes. The Freedom Union’s candidate, Jacek Kuroń,¹⁵⁶ came in only third at the first ballot, with 9.2 percent.

This naturally had an affect on the Freedom Union. Representatives of the conservative wing, including Jan Rokita,¹⁵⁷ who had spoken

¹⁵⁵ Vetter, Reinhold: “Wohin steuert Polen? Das schwierige Erbe der Kaczynski” (Where is Poland Heading? The Complicated Legacy of the Kaczynskis), 1st ed., March 2008, Christoph Links Verlag, p. 108.

¹⁵⁶ Jacek Kuroń (1934-2004) was one of the founders of KOR in 1976, *Solidarność* adviser in 1980-1981, labour and social minister in 1989-1990 and 1992-1993, and a founding member of the UD and UW where he represented a somewhat “social-democratic” line.

¹⁵⁷ Jan Rokita, born in 1959, was elected to parliament for the first time in 1989. Similar to Tusk, he was already active in the NZSP during his student time. He became a member of the Democratic Union in 1991, belonging to its right wing. He was head of the office of the Council of Ministers in the Suchozka government (1992-1993). In 2000, SKL chairman; in 2001 he was elected to the Sejm for the fifth time – this time as a PO candidate. In 2003, as the head of the PO faction (2003-2005), he played a decisive role in the parliamentary EU discussion under the title of “Nice or death”. Main candidate ▷

out against the left-liberal Kuroń as presidential candidate in 1995, joined the Conservative People's Party (Stronnictwo Konserwatywno-Ludowe/SKL) in 1997.

Under the impression of the dominance of the left – now, both the prime minister and president came from their ranks – the right-wing camp formed itself after 1996 under the leadership of Solidarność to become the Solidarność Electoral Action (AWS).¹⁵⁸ The results of the elections of 24 September 2007 proved that this tactical union had been a wise move: the AWS became the largest power, with 33.8 percent of the vote and 201 of the 460 seats in parliament. In 1993, the UW received 13.4 percent of the votes, almost as many as the UD and KLD together (14.6 percent); this resulted in 60 seats – 14 less than the UD.

“Above all, the reason for the relative success of the UW was a result of the increased unity of the party, the popularity of its chairman Leszek Balcerowicz and its skilful election campaign.”¹⁵⁹

Back to the roots: The foundation of the Civic Platform in 2001

The centre-right government that was formed following the victory at the 1997 elections consisted of the AWS¹⁶⁰ electoral platform and the

▷ of the PO in the 2005 parliamentary election that ended in defeat. Rokita then handed over the faction leadership to Tusk. He retired from political life in 2007 but was one of the founders of “Polska XXI” in 2008. His wife, Nelli Rokita-Arnold, a former member of the SKL and PO, had been a PiS representative since 2007.

¹⁵⁸ The Solidarity Electoral Action (Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność/AWS) was founded at the initiative of the chairman of the Solidarity Union, Marian Krzaklewski (see note 22), out of 39 parties, trade unions and various political institutions as a consequence of lost presidential election of 1995. For more information see Holländer, Michael, “Konfliktlinien und Konfiguration der Parteiensysteme in Ostmitteleuropa 1988-2002”, p. 190, Books on Demand GmbH, 1st ed., 2003.

¹⁵⁹ Niewiadomska-Frieling, Anna: Politische Parteien Polens nach 1989, p. 80, http://www.diss.fu-berlin.de/diss/receive/FUDISS_thesis_000000002015, accessed on 12 June 2009.

¹⁶⁰ The political arm of Solidarność, the Social Movement of the AWS (Ruch Społeczny Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność/RS AWS) founded in 1997, was the driving force in the AWS.

UW, practically uniting the entire Solidarność camp from 1989. However, the coalition government – led by Jerzy Buzek¹⁶¹ from the AWS with the UW's Balcerowicz as finance minister – was faced with many conflicts regarding content and personnel right from the outset.

“The Solidarność Electoral Action and Freedom Union were not ideal partners for each other. The UW was considered European, outward-looking, the party of the salons of the large cities and the intelligentsia; the AWS provincial, much too Polish, plebeian and Catholic. Only a few months before the election, some sections of the AWS had blamed the UW for the suffering caused by the radical process of adaptation after the fall of Communism and criticised it as having paved the way for the victory of the ‘post-Communists’ in the 1993 parliamentary election.”¹⁶²

In addition to the leader of the AWS faction and chairman of Solidarność, Marian Krzaklewski,¹⁶³ Prime Minister Buzek was a decisive factor in the RS AWS.¹⁶⁴ Buzek, who transferred to the Civic Platform after the defeat of the post-AWS parties at the 2001 elections and successfully

¹⁶¹ The Protestant Jerzy Buzek, born in 1940, finished his studies of chemical engineering in 1964. In 1981 he became chairman of the Solidarność Congress for the first time. In 1997 Buzek was elected to the Sejm for the RS AWS and, shortly thereafter, was named prime minister. He was chairman of the RS AWS from 1999-2001 and guided it into the European People's Party. Buzek was also the leader of the AWS from 2000-2001. Following the legally determined separation of the trade unions and parties in April 2001, as well as the increasing influence of national-Catholic forces, Buzek founded the election union Solidarność Electoral Action of the Right (Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność Prawicy/AWSP) that was resoundingly defeated in the 2001 parliamentary elections.

¹⁶² Analysis of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, “Die Regierungskoalition aus AWS und UW”, Digitale Bibliothek, 1999, <http://library.fes.de/fulltext/stabsabteilung/00476002.htm#E10E3>, accessed on 23 June 2009

¹⁶³ Marian Krzaklewski, born in 1950, was active in Solidarność after 1980 and became chairman of the organisation (1991-2002) after Lech Wałęsa's election to the office of president of Poland. After the victory at the 1997 elections, he turned down the office of prime minister, but accepted the position as head of the AWS faction. He resigned from his positions in the AWS to run for the presidency in the 2000 elections.

¹⁶⁴ Gnauck, Gerhard: “Jerzy Buzek, sattelfester Ritter an der Weichsel”, online edition: *Die Welt*, 27 February 1999: http://www.welt.de/print-welt/article567154/Jerzy_Buzek_sattelfester_Ritter_an_der_Weichsel.html, accessed on 23 June 2009.

participated for it in the European elections of 2004, has been president of the European Parliament since 2009.

Several government crises had to be overcome after the AWS-UW coalition had taken up office and it came to the “final showdown” in May and June 2000. Attempts to save the government, including the replacement of Prime Minister Buzek, failed. Krzaklewski was not accepted by the Freedom Union as a compromise candidate. Ultimately, the AWS formed a minority government on 6 June. This saw the premature end of the longest-serving Polish government after 1989.

The breach of the government coalition¹⁶⁵ and the victory of the incumbent, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, at the presidential elections held on 8 October 2000 (elected with 53.9 percent of the vote in the first round) prepared the ground for the foundation of the Civic Platform. With his 17.3 percent of the vote, independent, liberal-conservative Andrzej Olechowski¹⁶⁶ was the sensation of this election. He came in second in front of the AWS candidate and Solidarność head Krzaklewski (15.6 percent). By the way, Olechowski offered to run for election as a Freedom Union candidate, but was turned down by the party on the basis of his political biography.¹⁶⁷ However, Olechowski was supported by the conservative sections of the UW during the election campaign.

After Balcerowicz's resignation as head of the party following his nomination as president of the National Bank, the “left-liberal” Geremek¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ A comprehensive analysis is provided by Tewes, Henning: “Die Regierung Buzek–Balcerowicz in Polen - Leistungen und Scheitern”, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_1673-544-1-30.pdf

¹⁶⁶ The economics expert Andrzej Olechowski, born in 1947, was finance minister in 1992 and foreign minister in 1993-1995. He was an independent candidate for the presidency in 2000. In 2001 he was one of the founders of the Civic Platform and left in 2009. He made a public confession that he had collaborated with the Polish secret service before 1989.

¹⁶⁷ For more information, see Kosemen, Orkan: *Institutioneller Wandel und europäische Integration: Der Einfluss des EU Beitrittsprozesses auf die Politikgestaltung in Polen, Tschechien und Ungarn*, Dissertation, Humboldt-Universität Berlin, p. 68, 2005, <http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/dissertationen/koesemen-orkan-2005-07-12/PDF/Koesemen.pdf>, accessed on 23 June 2009.

¹⁶⁸ Bronisław Geremek (1932-2008) became a Solidarność adviser in 1980; he was

defeated the “economy-liberal” Tusk with 338 to 261 votes at the party congress in December 2000. As a consequence, Tusk left the Freedom Union.

Between 11 and 19 January 2001, Tusk, Olechowski and the president of the parliament, Maciej Płażyński,¹⁶⁹ announced the foundation of a liberal-conservative “electoral platform” that soon changed its name to the Civic Platform and made its first public appearance on 24 January. A survey made immediately thereafter¹⁷⁰ showed that 23 percent of the electorate could imagine voting for this new party.

“While sceptics dismissed the Platform as an ephemeral entity for frustrated career politicians, the enthusiasts saw it as the first genuinely liberal-conservative party in Poland that could possibly revolutionise the party spectrum and play a dominant role in the centre-right segment. The opinions of the leading players were similarly diversified: many regarded Olechowski and Tusk as dazzling media stars, Płazynski as a brilliant strategist and organiser. The other side defined the first two as politicians who had repeatedly failed and who had achieved very

imprisoned after the proclamation of martial law in 1981 and took part in the round table. After 1989 parliamentarian and after 1990 member of the Democratic Union. Later in the Freedom Union where he was chairman from 2000-2001. In 1997-2000 foreign minister and UW European parliamentarian after 2004 followed by the Democratic Party (Partia Demokratyczna/PD), the immediate successor of the Freedom Party, since 2005.

¹⁶⁹ Maciej Płażyński was born near Gdansk in 1958. Like Aleksander Hall, he was a member of the Young Poland Movement and, similar to Donald Tusk, was a leading protagonist in the NZSP student movement. He was a co-founder of the Liberal Congress in 1989 and, after 1990, a member of the Republican Coalition (Koalicja Republikańska/KR) that later became part of Hall's Conservative Party. From 1990 to 1996, he was chief administrator of the Gdansk district and, after 1997, AWS representative and parliamentary president (1997-2001). He was one of the founders and first chairman (2001-2003) of the PO. From 2001 until leaving the party in May 2004, he was head of the PO faction and was an independent senator in 2005-2007. He was the PiS candidate for Gdansk in the 2007 parliamentary elections and is currently a representative without any party affiliation.

¹⁷⁰ Kość, Wojtek: *A Surprising Alliance - The birth of a liberal-conservative platform in Poland*; *Central Europe Review*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 29 January 2001, <http://www.ce-review.org/01/4/kosc4.html>, accessed on 23 June 2009.

little as a result of their permanent indecisiveness, and Plazynski as a shady, run-of-the-mill politician.”¹⁷¹

Tusk and his political companions from their time together in the Liberal-Democratic Congress, as well as the youth organisation and trade association of the UW, who had defected to him formed the ideological backbone of the new party. In March, some sectors of the Conservative People's Party under Jan Rokita joined the Platform to create a common election union for the autumn 2001 polls. This almost brings us full circle. Many of the liberal and conservative politicians from Gdansk who had been active in student politics even before 1980 and had found a “home” in the AWS and UW after 1997 now saw themselves reunited without any “left-liberal” ballast to hinder them: “The PO is in favour of rapid privatisation, and continues to be interested in the wide-scale opening of the domestic markets for competitive products from abroad. It principally supports the deregulation of the economy, a linear income tax, as well as streamlining the state machinery, and competes with the UW in dealing with the subject of ‘supporting the middle classes’: its basic value orientation is liberal-conservative, with a definite dissociation from the clerical and structurally conservative forces in the AWS. ... The Platform comes extremely close to representing a modern, secular, pro-European, centre-right formation.”¹⁷²

However, the competitors of yore, the Kaczyński brothers, who had entered the AWS coalition with their Central Alliance in 1996, established a new party in 2001. They also wanted to benefit from the leftovers of the ASW/UW government coalition. From that time on, their Law and Justice party developed into the major opponent of the PO: however, the Polish left once again took over power from 2001 to 2005 before sinking into oblivion in the 2005 and 2007 elections.

Present and future

Tusk was the only member of the former triumvirate of Tusk, Płażyński

¹⁷¹ Freudenstein, Roland: “Die neue politische Lage in Polen”, Country report of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 16 January 2001, <http://www.kas.de/wf/de/33.2122/>, accessed on 4 September 2009.

¹⁷² Niewiadomska-Frieling, Anna, p. 144

and Olechowski – the so-called “Three Tenors” – to remain in the party. After 2003, the party won the European elections in 2004 and 2009, as well as the early parliamentary election in 2007, under his chairmanship. The disappointing result in 2005 is history: not only the battle for the presidency (PO candidate: Tusk), but also that for the office of minister president (PO candidate: Rokita), was lost.

The parliamentary election on 21 October 2007¹⁷³ saw the surprising triumph of Tusk's Civic Platform. After his victory over Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński in the television debate nine days before the polls, the PO was in the position of being able to count on a very good result.

In an election campaign where European and foreign affairs matters played an important role – the EU summit in Lisbon was held immediately before the elections on 18 and 19 October – the Platform polished up its profile with a chapter on Europe, “A Strong and Secure Poland in the EU”, that took up 10 of the 84 pages of its election programme. In addition to the continuing integration in the areas of foreign, defence and energy policy, the protection of the common agricultural policies was a determining topic.¹⁷⁴

The campaign promises such as “Prosperity for All” showed a changed party that was now more strongly involved with social questions. In his government programme, Tusk promised an economic miracle similar to Ireland's which would make Poland one of the ten most developed countries in the EU by 2015.

In the spring of 2008, the situation of the Civic Platform was as follows: “If the PO intends to develop into a durable people's party, it is essential that it take steps to further expand its attention to the

¹⁷³ Data and facts on the 2007 parliamentary elections can be found in Polen-Analysen no. 23, 20 November 2007, Deutsches Polen-Institut Darmstadt und Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, Bremen, <http://www.laender-analysen.de/polen/pdf/PolenAnalysen23.pdf>, accessed on 4 September 2009.

¹⁷⁴ An in-depth analysis of European political matters in the 2007 parliamentary election campaign is given by Prof. Aleks Szczerbiak, Sussex European Institute, in Election Briefing No 37 – Europe and the October 2007 Polish Parliamentary Elections http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/documents/epern_37_poland2007.pdf, accessed on 4 September 2009.

voters' basis, party and member organisations, political management, internal and external communication, programmatic profile and integrative capabilities. On the other hand, the past success at elections has showed that it is able to carry out campaign activities in an exemplary manner."¹⁷⁵

Following the European elections of 2009 – halfway through Prime Minister Tusk's mandate to govern (2007-2011) – the situation of the Civic Platform became increasingly consolidated: "As a result of the European elections, it can be stated that Tusk's government is still firmly in the saddle after two years in office and that the PO was even able to increase its number of votes in spite of the economic crisis. ... It is also clear that – as in the last Sejm elections – the PO attracts young, well-educated voters and finds its main support in the large cities and Western Poland."¹⁷⁶

In addition, the analysis of the EU elections undertaken by the German Centre for Applied Political Research determined that "[m]ore accentuation was placed on national affairs in the election campaign. European matters were only mentioned within the context of the factions of the European Parliament. Apart from that, the main thing was increasing the authority of the parties. As the voting system in Poland provides for the voters being able to vote directly for a candidate, this has led to a strong personalisation of the election campaign. More than any other party, the Civic Platform took advantage of this to increase its opportunities. There are many prominent politicians in its ranks who are well-known to Polish citizens and whom they trust without having to consider European questions."¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Raabe, Stephan Georg: Zur Lage der Bürgerplattform (PO) in Polen – Regierungspartei mit Perspektive, 25 April 2008, Country report of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Foreign Office Poland, http://www.kas.de/proj/home/pub/48/1/-/dokument_id-13558/, accessed on 4 September 2009.

¹⁷⁶ Bölling, Anna Katharina: Europawahlen in Polen: PO siegt, 10 June 2009, Country report of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Foreign Office Poland, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_16758-544-1-30.pdf, accessed on 4 September 2009.

¹⁷⁷ Kononenko, Viktoriia: Bürgerplattform als klare Siegerin Polens nach der Europawahl. CAP-Webdossier zur Europawahl 2009: <http://www.cap-lmu.de/themen/europawahl/download/europa09-Kononenko-Ergebnisse-Polen-PO.pdf>, accessed on 4 September 2009.

But whatever became of the other founding fathers of the PO? Płażyński left the party in May 2003 and is now an independent parliamentarian. The Citizens' Movement "Poland XXI" (Ruch Obywatelski "Polska XXI"), which was founded by the former PO faction leader Rokita and other politicians, is considering him as a candidate for the presidential elections in 2010.

Olechowski left the PO in July 2009 after criticising the party's obsession with power and its programmatic chaos.¹⁷⁸ He could also make himself available as a possible candidate for the president's office in 2010 – this time supported by the DP, the party that succeeded the UW, that had denied him its support in 2000.

Seeing that all good things come in threes, Tusk could also run for the presidency in an attempt to revenge his defeat in 2005. The incumbent, Lech Kaczyński, is eagerly awaiting this candidacy and can hardly wait to enter into the "battle to end all battles". With a victory, he intends to set the ball rolling for the 2011 parliamentary election campaign in order to take his revenge for the defeat suffered by the PiS in 2007.

To keep his chances intact, Tusk was forced to reform his government and faction as a result of the gambling affair (September 2009).¹⁷⁹ The Civic Platform had to sacrifice the vice-premier and interior minister, the minister of justice, the deputy minister of the economy, the faction chairman and the person responsible for the party's finances. Grzegorz Schetyna¹⁸⁰ – who is also the general secretary of the party – had hardly

¹⁷⁸ Foreign Service of the Polish Radio: Olechowski verlässt Bürgerplattform, 3 July 2009, <http://www.polskieradio.pl/zagranica/de/news/arttykul111353.html>, accessed on 4 September 2009.

¹⁷⁹ See: Raabe, Stephan Georg: Regierungskrise in Polen, http://www.kas.de/proj/home/pub/48/1/year-2009/dokument_id-17777/index.html and Neuformierung der Sejm-Fraktion der PO, http://www.kas.de/proj/home/pub/48/1/year-2009/dokument_id-17919/index.html, Country report of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Foreign Office Poland, 7 and 26 October 2009. Accessed on 3 November 2009.

¹⁸⁰ Grzegorz Schetyna, born in Opole in 1963, was the chairman of the strike committee of the Polish universities in 1988 and took part in the roundtable as the students' representative. Member of the Liberal-Democratic Congress, the Freedom Union and Civic Platform. Elected to the Sejm in 1997, 2001, 2005 and 2007; vice-premier and minister of the interior in 2007-2009.

resigned from his position as deputy prime minister and minister of the interior before being named faction chairman. Schetyna is considered to be Tusk's successor for the office of prime minister.

Regardless of the results of the 2010 presidential election and the parliamentary polls in 2011, the development of the Polish party system and its protagonists will remain as exciting, puzzling and convoluted as it has been since 1989. Why should anything change?

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Sweden: The “New Moderates” in Sweden

Arthur Winkler-Hermaden

Summary

After 2002, the “New Moderates” completely changed the logics of Swedish politics. With their programmatic readjustment, the Moderates opened themselves considerably towards the centre and at the same time were able to overcome the programmatic dissension that had existed in the bourgeois camp for decades. The Alliance for Sweden – the cooperation platform of the four bourgeois parties – is the result of considerably changed Moderate Party and also a personal success story for the party chairman and current Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt. The Moderates toned down their political rhetoric, abandoned their image of being a determined tax-reduction party, and opened themselves up to new groups of voters. Now, the conception of a “new workers’ party” is being promoted.

It is impossible to find adequate praise for the strategic achievement of the formation of the four-party coalition “Alliance for Sweden” that made it possible for the bourgeois parties to overcome their political differences to a large extent. The elections to the Swedish parliament, the Reichstag, in 2006 resulted in a bourgeois majority and a fragmented leftist opposition. This would have been absolutely inconceivable just a few years ago.

In the meantime, the “New Moderates” have reached around 30 percent in the opinion polls and intend to further erode the hegemonic position of the Social Democrats in the elections to be held in September 2010, in this way sustainably changing the Swedish party system. The current prime minister, Reinfeldt, is absolutely capable of achieving such a success. In any case, many indicators indicate that, next year, the “New Moderates” will be the first bourgeois government in Sweden to succeed in keeping the Social Democrats out of power for two parliamentary periods and therefore establish itself as a new party all Swedes can vote for.

In retrospect

The Moderate Coalition Party – today, usually called simply the “Moderates” – was founded in Sweden in 1904¹⁸¹ and had its roots in conservatism. In the first years following its establishment, the preservation of the monarchy, the defence of Sweden and the supremacy of law were the central concerns of the Moderates and their goal of supporting and preserving the existing institutions in the country. The Moderates developed as a reaction to the Liberals and Social Democrats¹⁸² that had established themselves somewhat earlier. They were especially determined to defend the individual and economic liberties that were threatened by the rise of Socialism.

At the outset, the Moderates favoured a kind of applied protectionism in their commercial policies. Taxes, as well as subsidies, were regarded as being appropriate economic measures in agriculture and consequently implemented. The creation and protection of a national Swedish industry was a central concern of the Swedish Conservatives and nationalisation was considered a suitable means for achieving this goal. The general modernisation and democratisation process in Europe after the First World War also had an influence on the Moderates who – in view of the unrest in Sweden inspired by the Russian Revolution – came out in favour of introducing universal suffrage in 1918.

In the area of foreign policy, the Moderates supported Swedish neutrality. In opposition, they fought against Sweden's entry into the League of Nations in 1920, which was connected with relinquishing Swedish neutrality that had been in force for more than one hundred years. The then party chairman, Arvid Lindman, declared that he was not prepared to be an internationalist, as he much preferred remaining a Swede.

¹⁸¹ The Moderates were founded under the name of the General Electoral League (Allmänna almansförbundet) and later changed this to simply Rightist Party (Högerpartiet). As a result of the revolutionary feelings and the disturbances of 1968, it was renamed Moderate Coalition Party in 1969.

¹⁸² These were founded in 1902 and 1889 respectively.

The rise of the Social Democrats

With the strengthening of the Social Democratic Workers' Party (SAP),¹⁸³ liberal ideas became increasingly influential among the Moderates. The economist Gustav Cassel, in particular, played a decisive role in the Moderate's later turn towards economic liberalism. However, the economic crisis in the 1930s that encouraged government interventionism in the economy and thus played into the hand of the Social Democrat's policies in the area prevented genuine economically liberal tendencies from developing among the Moderates for the time being. And with the development of the Swedish welfare state – using the metaphor of a “people's home”¹⁸⁴ (*folkhemmet*) – the Social Democrats were in the position of being able to introduce a model for the society and economy that appealed to the voters.

In addition, there had been a creeping marginalisation of the Moderates since the 1930s. They relinquished their position as the largest bourgeois party to the agrarian-civic Centre Party that cooperated with the Social Democrats. They lost the voters' support and, as a rule, only received between 12 and 17 percent in the elections. The Moderates were forced to the right edge of the party spectrum where they became isolated. Although the Social Democrats were the dominating political force in the country, they rarely achieved an absolute majority,¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ In the elections for the second chamber of the Reichstag in September 1914, the Social Democrats (36.4 percent) and Moderates (36.5 percent) were almost equal for the first time. The Social Democratic Workers' Party has been the strongest party in Sweden since the 1917 Reichstag elections (39.2 percent). The first Social Democratic minority government was established in 1920. The foundation for the Social Democrats' hegemony in Sweden, which has lasted almost to today, was laid under Tage Erlander following the 1932 Reichstag elections. With only a few interruptions, the Social Democrats have been in power for a total of 63 years.

¹⁸⁴ It is an interesting ideological historical fact that the term “people's home” (*folkhemmet*) introduced by Per Albin Hansson in 1928, which was to become a synonym for the Swedish welfare state, actually originated from the Moderate Reichstag parliamentarian, political scientist and geo-politician Rudolf Kjellen. Cf. Kjellen's famous work *The State as a Form of Life* (1916).

¹⁸⁵ Twelve of the seventeen Social Democratic governments since 1920 were minority governments, two majority coalitions (SAP and Centre Party), two majority governments, as well as a single concentration government (1939-1945).

and taking advantage of the dissension between the bourgeois parties over matters of content, assured their position of power through partial cooperation with the two centre parties – the agrarian Centre Party and Liberal People's Party.¹⁸⁶

In the Second World War, Sweden remained (officially) neutral. In keeping with the motto that the end justifies the means, the government managed to achieve its goal of keeping Sweden out of the war. However, it must be noted in this connection that, in reality, Sweden cooperated economically and in terms of foreign policy with all sides depending on the progress of the war and manoeuvred between Nazi Germany and the Allies. In any case, it was good for business. The Swedish economy profited from this and, after the war, the country experienced a period of full employment, low inflation and moderate taxation. The economic boom – principally as a result of export activities – served as the true foundation for the realisation of the Swedish welfare state. However, precisely at the moment when this system started to arouse interest and become a well-regarded export article in the field of social politics, it became impossible to maintain. With the decrease in the country's economic performance,¹⁸⁷ the escalating allocation of funds for wel-

¹⁸⁶ The Liberal People's Party is actually a socio-liberal party that propagates "social responsibility without Socialism". In its early years, it openly supported the Social Democrats in their struggle to introduce social reforms and democratise society. Later, the Swedish Liberals opposed the Social Democrats because they did not want to be involved in their nationalisation programme. At the same time, the Liberals maintained a critical distance to the Conservatives and, in this way, indirectly supported the Social Democrats. A willingness to cooperate with the other bourgeois parties has only developed comparatively recently. This led to participation in the bourgeois government of the 1980s and 1990s. There has been a structured cooperation with the other bourgeois parties since 2005 that reached its peak in the foundation of the Alliance for Sweden. This laid the foundation for the change of power in 2006.

¹⁸⁷ The international economic crisis in 1973 that resulted from a dramatic rise in oil prices led to an increase in unemployment in Sweden. The rapid development of the Swedish industry in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the sharp increase in production, had led to a continuous, dynamic increase in the standard of living that lasted until the early 1970s. Starting in the mid-1970s, the tempo of the improvement in the living standard slowed down before grinding to a halt at the end of the 1980s. The economic crisis led to the Social Democratic government being voted out of office and the formation of a bourgeois coalition government in 1976.

fare policies could ultimately only be financed by the highest tax level worldwide and massive state intervention in the labour market and social sphere. Sweden became an over-regulated society that, in the opinion of many Social Democrats, should make use of the instrument of the employee's funds to take completely new steps in the economic and social fields.¹⁸⁸

Constitutional changes make a change of power easier: necessity of party cooperation

It was against this background that the Moderates, under their leader at the time, Gösta Bohman, managed to take advantage of many of the Swedes' feelings of discontent about the Social Democrats' changes to society and once again become the largest bourgeois force in the country. Ideologically, this was accompanied by an increased turn towards the free-market economy that developed into one of the Moderates' central dogmas.¹⁸⁹ This must be regarded as a reaction to the ideological re-shaping of society undertaken by the Swedish Socialists. The Moderates therefore developed into an ideological counterbalance to the Social Democrats, created a more clear-cut ideological profile, and became increasingly successful on the voters' marketplace. In the 1979 Reichstag elections, the Moderates received 20.3 percent of the votes cast and cleared the magic 20-percent hurdle for the first time since 1932. Since that time, the Moderates have consistently been the strongest bourgeois party and – with two exceptions – have always received more

¹⁸⁸ The idea of an "employee fund" that was launched by the powerful Swedish Trade Union Organisation LO (Landsorganisationen i Sverige) in the 1970s was taken up by the Social Democrats and led to bitter ideological disputes between the Moderates and Social Democrats. The idea was to collect a portion of the profits of the enterprises in a fund and use this money to buy shares in these companies. The funds were administered by the trade union. This was intended to gradually lead to a nationalisation of production in Sweden similar to what had taken place in Yugoslavia.

¹⁸⁹ There is no denying that many of the Moderates' supporters consider themselves libertarian rather than liberal. It is also interesting to note that market-liberal think tanks such as the Timbro Institute in Stockholm have a close relationship with the Moderates that seems unusual to even benevolent observers from Central Europe, where Christian democratic parties do not carry out such a targeted discussion with the political foundations of a pure market economy.

than 20 percent of the votes cast in the Reichstag elections.

In addition, an adjustment to the political system as a result of the constitutional reform of 1970¹⁹⁰ suddenly made it easier to come to power. The Reichstag was reorganised as a single-chamber parliament that led to the Social Democrats' institutionalised basis of power, which had perpetuated their political power in the first chamber due to the longer legislature periods and the possibilities of exercising their veto powers, being smashed.

Since the establishment of the single-chamber parliament in Sweden, the government has depended on the actual distribution of power at the Reichstag elections. This made it possible to bring about a change in power through the creation of coalitions. However, programmatic differences showed that the four bourgeois governments that had been formed between 1976 and 1982 were extremely instable.¹⁹¹ While the Moderates favoured a rapid, fundamental change in the Swedish welfare state, the centre parties were more hesitant in this regard and rejected the tax reductions and privatisations proposed by the Moderates. The Centre Party preferred to make its mark in the field of environmental protection (rejection of nuclear energy), whereas the Liberal People's Party saw itself as the protector of social politics.

¹⁹⁰ A second important constitutional change, which was the political reward for the first in 1970, followed in 1974. The bourgeois parties voted in favour of the Social Democrats' move to reform the monarchy. This did not lead to the monarchy being abolished, but to the King being stripped of most of his powers so that he is now restricted to purely representative activities. The preservation of the monarch after the constitutional reform was a political compromise. The Social Democrats and the Left Party, as well as the Liberal People's Party's youth organisation that has abolishing the monarchy anchored in their statutes, agreed for its preservation as long as the King had no political power. As Olof Palme expressed so concisely, it should be possible for the monarch to be abolished with a stroke of the pen, "bara på ett pendrag", in future. For example, the radically representative form of the Swedish monarchy allows the king to make state visits, but only in the company of a political watchdog to make sure that the head of state makes no political statements.

¹⁹¹ In 1976, the Moderates, Liberal People's Party and Centre Party together reached a majority of 11 seats. Thorbjörn Fälldin from the Centre Party was named prime minister. Dissension over the peaceful use of nuclear power led to the government resigning in October 1978 after only two years in office. A minority government led

The Social Democrats were also confronted with the necessity of forming coalitions or cooperating with other parties as a result of the 1970 changes to the constitution. Olof Palme formed a Social Democrat minority government after the 1982 Reichstag elections. In order to preserve his power, Palme – as well as his successor Ingvar Carlsson – was forced to rely on cooperation with the Communist Party that re-christened itself the Left Party in 1990.

In the 1980s, the increases in production that had characterised Sweden's economic development slackened, and this developed into a decrease in industrial production and a negative balance of payments with foreign countries at the start of the 1990s. At the same time, the massive increases in the public sector placed a growing strain on the economy. The rapid rise in unemployment led to a further increase in the budget deficit and national debt. The growing discontent with the Social Democrat government brought about its defeat in the 1991 Reichstag election and the formation of a bourgeois coalition government (Moderates, Liberal People's Party and agrarian Centre Party) with Carl Bildt, the former chairman of the Moderates, as prime minister.

In spite of all the attempts made to encourage business initiatives and major savings in state expenditure, Carl Bildt's government was not able to combat unemployment, the rapidly growing budget deficit and increasing national debt. The burdens taken on from the previous government proved to be too great, and the internal dispute between the coalition partners and economic crisis of the period led to this government having only been in office for three years when it came to an end in 1994.

Under the leadership of Ingvar Carlsson and Göran Persson, the Social Democrats were once again able to form minority governments from 1994 to 2006. However, it became apparent that tacit support from the

by the Liberal's Ola Ullsten (directly supported by only 39 seats) took over office. In the 1979 elections the three bourgeois parties achieved the smallest possible majority of a single seat. Thorbjörn Fälldin formed a new three-party government that dissolved in May 1981 due to differences over taxation policies. Fälldin then formed a government with the Centre and Left Parties that remained in office until the elections in September 1982.

Communists was necessary – as had been the case between 1982 and 1991. Over time, this cooperation increased and developed into a kind of de facto coalition between the Social Democrats and Left Party as well as with the Greens, who had been a political force since the 1990s. This increased cooperation between the Social Democrats and leftist parties led to the creation of what the public perceived as being a left-wing bloc that was increasingly challenged by the bourgeois parties who had also increased their level of cooperation.

With a combination of tax increases and savings that called for massive intervention into the welfare system, the Social Democrats attempted to once again balance public finances. This was intended to keep inflation at a low rate and at the same time create leeway for redeeming the high national debt. The public finances did improve gradually, but the cuts in the social system proved to be painful and led to great discontent among those voters who traditionally favoured the Social Democrats. Four years previously, the Social Democrats had received 45.3 percent of the votes, but in the 1998 Reichstag elections, this dropped to only 36.4 percent and was the worst result since the 1930s. The Moderates received 22.9 percent – their best performance since 1982. In spite of this setback, Göran Persson was able to hang on to his position as prime minister with the help of the Left Party and a small group of the Greens that were represented in parliament.

The dawn of a changeover of power

It appeared that the time was ripe for a changeover of power. This impression was further strengthened in the opinion polls carried out in connection with the 2002 Reichstag elections. Denouncing the economic policies of the Social Democrats, the Moderates – under the leadership of Bo Lundgren – made a name for themselves as an uncompromising tax-reduction party. Although the party leadership was enraptured by the prospects of a radical correction of the Swedish system, this approach was not well received by the Swedish voters, who were clearly not interested in a sweeping reorganisation of the welfare state. Contrary to the trend in the opinion polls,¹⁹² the Social Democrats won

¹⁹² One week before the election, the pollsters forecast a result of 21 percent for the Moderates.

the Reichstag elections held in September 2002 with almost 40 percent of the votes cast, while the Moderates suffered a major setback and had to accept having received a mere 15.3 percent. An additional reason for the failure at the 2002 elections was the result of the fact that the bourgeois parties had shown themselves as being unable to really unite their forces and present themselves as a political alternative to the Social Democrats. As had happened so often the past, they created an image of dividedness, and the Swedish voters were ultimately unable to recognise how a bourgeois coalition government would shape Sweden's future. They therefore resorted to “the Social Democratic model for the future that they were accustomed to from the past”.

The Moderates' defeat in 2002 led to changes in personnel as well as a reduction in staff and the streamlining of the party headquarters. Many of the party's leaders resigned immediately after the election. After being massively criticised within the party, Bo Lundgren handed his office over to Fredrik Reinfeldt at the Moderates' party convention on 25 October 2003. Immediately after taking up office, the formerly strictly liberal¹⁹³ Fredrik Reinfeldt pushed for a complete programmatic about-turn for the Moderates. Similarly to New Labour in Great Britain, the Moderate Coalition Party (Moderata samlingspartiet) was renamed the New Moderate Party (Nya Moderaterna). The party dropped its goal of wide-ranging tax reductions and toned down its political rhetoric. Fredrik Reinfeldt made this change even more explicit in his statement that the New Moderates had now become the “new workers' party”.

The Reichstag election 2006

The initial situation for the Nya Moderaterna

The surprisingly good performance of the bourgeois Alliance for Sweden that many had forecast from the opinion polls before the election was mainly due to the integrative and creative approach of the then 41-year-old party chairman of the Moderates – Fredrik Reinfeldt. After he had replaced the unfortunate Bo Lundgren – who had brought

¹⁹³ Cf. *Det sovande folket* (“The Sleeping People”) by Fredrik Reinfeldt, Moderata Ungdomsförbundet (ed.), 1993.

about the Moderates' lowest-ever result of approximately 15 percent in the 2002 Reichstag elections – Reinfeldt succeeded in giving the party a completely new orientation in a mere three years.

The Moderates had previously been a conservative party that rejected the welfare state to a large degree and represented the interests of the economy, but now the “New Moderates” came out in favour of the welfare state, which they wanted to improve through moderate methods. In addition, the “New Moderates” under Reinfeldt recognised the importance of the trade unions for Sweden's social life. They even went so far as to adopt union positions – something they were criticised for within the party. Their election campaign slogan was “Sweden Needs a New Workers' Party – The New Moderates”. Similarly to Tony Blair in Great Britain, this opened them up towards the centre, considerably expanded their electoral basis and established them, along with the other bourgeois forces, as a serious alternative to Göran Persson's Social Democrats.

In the period leading up to the 2006 Reichstag elections, Fredrik Reinfeldt was able to implement several important, sustainable, strategic decisions that strengthened not only the Moderate Party, but also the entire bourgeois camp.

First of all, he succeeded in creating a credible re-orientation of the Moderates. One should not forget that Reinfeldt, who was born in 1965 and grew up in Social Democrat Sweden, was a product of the Swedish welfare state with every fibre of his body. For Reinfeldt, shared maternity leave and other social innovations that are not taken for granted in Central Europe are completely normal, and he had also taken advantage of them. In a certain way, this has also made Reinfeldt a representative of Social Democratic Sweden, and he was able to convince his compatriots that – as promised in its name – the Moderates were only aiming for a moderate change in the system that would actually only be an improvement.

Secondly, by founding the Alliance for Sweden, Reinfeldt succeeded in uniting the four bourgeois parties to a large extent. This was a strategic masterpiece that would have brought him the Nobel Prize for Politics – if such a prize existed. Being able to unite the bourgeois parties that traditionally nurtured their differences and bind them together into a

joint electoral programme, making them a suitable alternative to the left bloc of the Social Democrats, Left Party and Greens was something that nobody before Reinfeldt had ever achieved in the history of Swedish politics. The dyed-in-the-wool power politician Reinfeldt showed the right instinct when he invited the other parties – and even the Social Democrats – to form the Alliance for Sweden and work together for the country's betterment.

Initial situation for the other bourgeois parties

The Centre Party was the key to the development and unity of the Alliance for Sweden. Of course, the Centre Party was a bourgeois movement, but – in contrast to the other bourgeois parties – had regularly been prepared to cooperate with the Social Democrats, for which it was rewarded with participation in various governments. However, under its present party chairwoman, Maud Olofsson, the Centre Party has undergone some dramatic changes in its position and even given up some of its former core positions. The previously extensive cooperation between the Centre Party and Social Democrats in the important areas of nuclear power, defence policy, etc. were relinquished in favour of a strengthened collaboration within the bourgeois alliance. The Centre Party has changed more than any other and now demands “a better-functioning EU” and the opting out of nuclear power only after the electricity supply can be guaranteed by alternative sources.

The Liberals' election campaign was overshadowed by the so-called “data espionage scandal”. Members of the Liberals had logged in to the central computer of the Social Democrats and studied their election campaign plans. The Social Democrats made the “data espionage scandal” an issue one week before the election, and it was dramatically staged and became the main topic in Swedish domestic politics for several days. The Liberal People's Party had the weakest result of any of the bourgeois parties in the Reichstag election and, compared with 2002, lost almost half of its votes. However, this loss could also have been due to the fact that, in 2002, the Liberals had experienced a dramatic increase in votes at the expense of the Moderates and reached one of the best results in recent Swedish political history. These “borrowed votes” then flowed back to the Moderates in 2006.

With Göran Hägglund, the Christian Democrats had a new party chairman and a difficult starting position. They had to manage to get over the four percent-hurdle to remain in the Reichstag and, in this way, assure the possible election success of the Alliance for Sweden. However, Hägglund was able to achieve excellent results in the television interviews carried out before the election, and the Christian Democrats finally crossed the line with 6.6 percent of the votes.

The joint manifesto of the bourgeois parties

To the surprise of many political observers, the four bourgeois parties managed to agree on a joint manifesto for the elections – a first in the political history of Sweden. Regardless of the fact that the political heterogeneity of the bourgeois parties led to some important subjects (nuclear energy, sick-leave payments, property taxes, etc.) being inadequately dealt with or completely ignored in the manifesto, the agreement of the four parties to cooperate in the Alliance for Sweden must be regarded as a major political success and chiefly ascribed to Fredrik Reinfeldt, the bourgeois candidate for the office of prime minister.

While the bourgeois parties managed to draw up a joint electoral programme, each of the three parties in the left-wing bloc competed with its own individual programme, and it comes as no surprise that the leftist parties' performance in the election campaign showed little unity.

The major points in the electoral manifest of the Alliance for Sweden were:

- Decreasing income tax by as much as SEK 1,000 (110 euros) per month. Measures to reduce long-term unemployment. Reduction of the taxation on services. Halving taxation on labour for 19- to 24-year-olds. Support programme for female entrepreneurs.
- Introduction of grading from the 6th class in school (formerly from the 8th). Language training for immigrants.
- Introduction of a limit to payments for dental treatment and the assumption of the difference by the social-insurance authorities. Investments in the field of psychiatry amounting to five billion SEK (app. 550 million euros) over the next ten years.

- Examination of the sentences for felonies. Measures to reduce juvenile delinquency. Creation of new police departments with 20,000 police personnel by 2010.
- One billion SEK (110 million euros) for climatology and improving the condition of the sea.
- A reform of property taxation – possibly even its annulment.

Results of the 2006 Reichstag elections

The Reichstag election on 17 September 2006 brought a surprise. The bourgeois four-party Alliance for Sweden achieved a victory that many describe as being a historic event. The alliance between the Centre Party, Liberals, Christian Democrats and Moderates (Conservatives) gained 48.24 percent of the votes and 178 seats in parliament, with the left bloc (Social Democrats, Left Party, Greens) achieving 46.08 percent and 171 seats. This made it possible for the bourgeois parties to form a stable, majority government.

The bourgeois success at the election was further emphasised by the local and regional elections that took place at the same time. In the local council elections in Stockholm, the Alliance for Sweden was able to take back the majority from the leftist parties when it reached 55.7 percent (an increase of seven percent) of the votes, and the new mayor of the city came from the ranks of the Moderates. The bourgeois parties also greatly increased their number of votes in the Stockholm administrative district (plus 7.1 percent).

The Alliance for Sweden's election success

The following reasons show why the success of the bourgeois parties under the leadership of the Moderates' party chairman Fredrik Reinfeldt must be regarded as a historical change of direction:

- In spite of the country's good economic position and budget surplus, the governing Social Democrats – and Prime Minister Persson in particular – were clearly voted out of office. They are now overshadowed by a united bourgeois alliance that almost acts as if it were a single party.

- By Central European standards, a majority of seven seats may appear small, but in contrast to the last bourgeois government under Carl Bildt, Reinfeldt has a genuine majority in the Reichstag. One must bear in mind that, ever since the introduction of the one-chamber parliament in 1970, Swedish governments have been in office with a majority for only four years. All of the Social Democrat governments since 1971 – and most before that – were merely minority governments.
- As the major political force in the country, the head of government has come from the ranks of the Social Democrats for 65 of the past 77 years. This was only the third time that the Social Democrats had to make way for a bourgeois government. The last bourgeois prime minister was the conservative Carl Bildt in 1991-1994, who formed a minority government with the support of the Liberals, Christian Democrats and Centre Party.
- At the last elections, the Social Democrats still received close to 40 percent of the votes – more than twice as many as the second-largest party, the Moderates, with 15 percent. On the eve of the elections, the difference between the two parties had melted away to a mere nine percentage points.
- Compared with the 2002 elections, the Social Democrats lost 4.5 percent points and fell to 32.5 percent – their worst result at Reichstag elections since 1914.
- The Moderate Coalition Party increased its number of votes by almost 11 percent – the greatest rise ever experienced by a party in Reichstag elections. The Moderates increased from 15.3 percent to 26 percent, making it their best election result since 1928.
- Compared with the previous elections, a total of 34 percent of the voters changed their party allegiance – the largest number ever. This made the decreasing bonding between voters and their parties also obvious in Sweden.
- More than half of the voters (2.6 of 4.8 percent) who withdrew their support from the Social Democrats defected immediately to the traditional arch-enemy, the Moderates, showing that their concept of presenting themselves as a new workers' party appealing to their core group of so-called "sensible Socialists" had borne fruit to a large degree.

Disregard of the classical Social Democrat topics of unemployment

Placing his faith in the excellent economic situation, growth and a budget surplus – and quite clearly suffering from a swollen head – Prime Minister Persson ignored the problem of unemployment in Sweden to a large degree and, in this way, relinquished what was classical Social Democrat territory. From time to time, he almost mechanically mentioned the government's goal of reducing the unemployment rate to four percent in 2006, and a programme to create work was initiated – much too late and with not enough determination – in 2005, but in the eyes of the voters, the government was not tackling the problem with sufficient vigour.

On the other hand, the bourgeois opposition made unemployment the main theme of the campaign. The Alliance for Sweden estimated the real unemployment rate – taking rampant sick leave, training programmes, etc. into consideration – as much higher than the official one and made the Social Democrats, who had been in government since 1994, responsible for the negative developments. The arguments brought forward by the bourgeois parties increasingly put the Social Democrats in a tight spot they were not able to get themselves out of with their attempts at warning about a "neoliberal evolution" by the Alliance that would make the workers' lot even more precarious.

In addition, to the amazement of many people, the Moderates presented themselves as a new workers' party in order to attract the so-called "sensible Social Democrats" – those who lived a bourgeois lifestyle but voted Social Democrat.

The mayor of Gothenburg (Sweden's second largest city) was one of the people who soon realised just how lethal the little attention the Social Democrats were paying to the subject of unemployment could be. At the beginning of 2006, he criticised Persson within the party and accused him of not doing enough to combat unemployment. Lord Mayor Göran Johansson went as far as to resign from the Social Democratic party leadership in protest. However, in contrast to Persson, he succeeded in gaining an increase in votes in Gothenburg and was able to consolidate his position.

The inferior crisis management of Persson's government and the attempts to cover this up after the tsunami catastrophe in December 2004 shattered many Swedes' faith in the Social Democrats.

The 2003 referendum on the introduction of the euro¹⁹⁴ had already brought one of the Social Democrats' major weaknesses to the surface: the internal dissension within this major party on a matter of great importance for Sweden. The Social Democrats' lack of creative power in this decisive question, combined with the inner-party dispute, was neither to the party's advantage, nor was it suited to build confidence.

Persson's weariness of holding office

Internal Social Democrat planning actually did not intend that Persson should stand for re-election in 2006. With the murder Anna Lindh, who was considered to be Persson's successor in September 2004, and lacking any alternative personalities – there were no established "heirs apparent" among the Social Democrats – Persson once again entered the ring. After ten years as prime minister, signs of being weary of the position had frequently become obvious. In 2005, Persson had already openly discussed his plans for the time after his period as prime minister. His purchase of a farm to the south of Stockholm increased speculation that Persson was about to retire from public life.

Although Persson put up a strong performance in the many television and radio debates, his 18-years-younger opponent Reinfeldt was more than able to keep abreast of him, and Persson was nowhere near as unflappable as a long-serving, successful prime minister should be when confronted with a challenger with no government experience. In retrospect, it must be stated that Persson proved to be a weak defender who had quite simply underestimated a dangerous opponent. This was reflected in the so-called "prime minister question", where Reinfeldt always received better ratings than the incumbent Persson. In no way did Persson benefit from being in office in this electoral confrontation.

¹⁹⁴ The Swedes made a clear decision, with 55.9 percent voting against the introduction of the euro. The Greens, the Left Party, the Centre Party and many Social Democrats had come out against the introduction of the euro.

The opinion polls on the popularity of the individual party leaders released by Swedish television on the eve of the election also showed Persson with 17 percent, trailing far behind Reinfeldt (31 percent) and in only fourth place. Female voters in particular showed a much greater preference for Reinfeldt than the incumbent.

There can be no question that Persson was personally responsible for the Social Democrats' electoral defeat, and he rapidly beat a retreat from political life. Many people accuse him of a high-handedness and arrogance accompanied by a lack of orientation on the future that drove the Social Democrats into the abyss.

In the very hour of his defeat, Persson prophesied a comeback of the Social Democrats and defiantly proclaimed that they would not tolerate a neoliberal destruction of the achievements of the welfare state.

Uncertain stance for the case of the Social Democrats forming a government

A trump in the opposition's hand was the unresolved and uncertain question of the government should the Social Democrats once again be commissioned to form one. Before the elections, Prime Minister Persson steadfastly refused to discuss the possibility of a coalition with the Greens and former Communists. The Greens in particular were not prepared to support a red government once again without being rewarded with ministerial posts. In addition, Göran Persson surprised the television viewers in the week before the election with the statement that he was also prepared to consider a coalition with parties to the right of the centre.

Change of power as the declared goal of the Alliance for Sweden

However, the opposition had been working single-mindedly towards a changeover in power for two years. The Moderates were the driving force behind the foundation of the bourgeois four-party alliance; they were seconded by the Centre Party that invited the four parties to the first coordination meeting in August 2004. After this, the four bourgeois

parties developed their common positions in six working groups that were made available to the public over internet and even invited individual Social Democrats to take part. The result of this work was 16 agreements between the four parties covering almost all political areas that finally resulted in a joint electoral manifesto. This was a political novelty and underlined the unity and cohesion of the bourgeois opposition.

The opposition's concentrated activity had a positive effect on the public and the Social Democrats lost their traditionally most important trump card – the opposition's lack of unity. The Swedish voters were better informed about the intentions of the opposition than the programme of the government. Those who chose the bourgeois Alliance for Sweden knew what they could expect. On the other hand, those who voted for the Social Democrats would only discover what was in store for them after the election.

This was further aggravated by the fact that, in contrast to the bourgeois parties, the three to the left of the centre entered the election with three different programmes. Time and time again, this made it possible for the bourgeois groups to turn the tables and point out the lack of unity among the parties on the left. In the final television discussion, the party leaders were asked about their measures against unemployment: the old-communist chairman of the Left Party Lars Ohly promised to create 200,000 new positions in the public sector, the head of the Greens, Maria Wetterstrand, came out in favour of 40,000 new jobs, while Persson smugly stated that at the time no other country in Europe was creating more workplaces than Sweden.

The Conservatives' commitment to the welfare state

Not only the Social Democrats' portrayal of a feuding opposition, but also the warnings about a "swing to the right" and the destruction of the welfare state, had lost their intensity. The bourgeois parties – and here, chiefly the Conservatives – had opened themselves towards the centre to get away from their image of being the embodiment of the neoliberal rollback that was about to relegate the welfare state to the trash heap of history. Reinfeldt had realised that it would be impossible to win a Swedish election with neoliberal – let alone libertarian – rhetoric and

the demands for a radical change in the system. The "New Moderates" therefore supported the achievements of the welfare state and the labour laws in force. However, the election manifesto does include a long list of reforms with the main goal of creating new businesses and jobs, reducing transfer payments to the citizens and giving them more pay and, in this way, making them accept more responsibility for themselves.

With this change of policy, Reinfeldt – who had taken on the leadership of the Moderate Party and was clearly hardly interested in any kind of strict ideology – had an overwhelming victory in the 2003 elections. Up until election day, he had been confronted with subdued but influential criticism from the conservative Moderates within the party "that he had betrayed the real values", but this no longer bothered him after his success. Reinfeldt appears to be a pragmatic power-seeker with little interest in ideologies – fundamentally different from the last conservative Prime Minister Carl Bildt. While it was well known that Bildt rejected the welfare state, Reinfeldt accepted it and intended to improve it.

United opposition team

The Alliance for Sweden presented itself to the public as a united, determined team working positively to achieve the common goal of bringing about a change of power. The four bourgeois parties were largely successful in managing to minimize any internal conflicts over their struggle for the individual bourgeois voters. Alongside Reinfeldt, the driving force behind the alliance was Maud Olofsson, the chairwoman of the Centre Party, who renewed her party and gave it a new orientation. The former agrarian party now also presented itself as the advocate of the business community. De facto, the Centre Party also gave up one of its core concerns – the withdrawal from the nuclear energy programme – after decades.

Göran Hågglund also created a favourable impression. The head of the Christian Democrats initially seemed rather colourless but developed positively with his office and emerged from the shadow of his charismatic predecessor in the election campaign.

The fourth in the group was Lars Leijonborg. Celebrated as the "Lion

King” after a strong election performance in 2002, the discovery of the data espionage scandal has now forced the head of the Liberals to act politically out of the defensive.

Fredrik Reinfeldt is considered to be integrative, conciliatory and a far-sighted strategic planner. His decision to name the former Moderate government head Carl Bildt Foreign Minister in his coalition government must be seen as a doubly smart move. On the one hand, this brought an expert in the field of foreign politics into his team and, on the other, he craftily integrated an astute critic from within the party who, as already mentioned, was more interested in the Liberals pursuing liberal policies, into his work. In this manner, as well as through his convincing political success, he has managed to silence many ideologically motivated critics from within the party.¹⁹⁵

Political developments since the 2006 Reichstag elections

The domestic aims of Reinfeldt’s government are oriented on the joint electoral manifesto of the four bourgeois parties to a large extent with the priorities set on the following topics:

- Creation of jobs
- Simplification of establishing businesses
- Healthcare, old-age care, welfare state
- Gender mainstreaming, support for women and families
- The climate problem and ensuring energy supply
- Education and research
- Taxes: lowering income tax, halving – and later eliminating – property tax, “It should pay to work”

Prime Minister Reinfeldt frequently stresses the importance of creating

¹⁹⁵ That Reinfeldt was not undisputed within the party was shown in summer 2007 when the Defence Minister Mikael Odenberg, a member of the Moderates’ liberal-conservative wing, resigned unexpectedly. The defence policy that had played a major role in the Moderates’ programme since its foundation in 1904 was more or less jeopardised by the policies of the Moderate Minister of Finance Sven Otto Litorin. Reinfeldt and Litorin were prepared to make severe financial cuts affecting military policies and sacrifice this “sacred cow”. Odenberg was unable to concede to this and resigned.

new jobs, protecting the climate, as well as the social topics of health and education.

Reinfeldt’s most recent government statement for the current legislature period in September 2009 was made with the effect of the global economic crisis on Sweden in mind. With his eye on the elections in 2010 and the threat of increasing unemployment rates, Reinfeldt positioned the government alliance as the better social coalition with more economic competence than the left opposition parties. The main points in the speech were the priority of combating unemployment, the necessity for stable state finances to come to grips with the crisis and the concept that the individual should profit from his or her work, as well as supporting the spirit of entrepreneurship and making it easier to set up new businesses, a tax reduction for low and medium incomes and the stimulation of social cohesion. Reinfeldt proposed that one reflect on the “values of the Swedish society”. The climate and energy politics were additional points. However, no mention was made of “withdrawing from nuclear energy” as proclaimed in February 2009 and the planned expansion of nuclear power supplies. As in the 2006 election campaign, EU topics were pushed to the sidelines and not even mentioned.

In spite of – or possibly because of – the economic and finance crisis, Fredrik Reinfeldt’s government has managed to maintain its position. Reinfeldt’s opinion poll results are better than ever at the expense of the Social Democrats.

Mona Sahlin, who took over the party leadership from Göran Persson in March 2007 following his defeat at the elections, was considered to be the Social Democrats’ great white hope for a long time. Her programme mainly concentrates on the spheres of the environment, the creation of new jobs, welfare with special emphasis placed on young people, and peace (an active European and foreign policy, the further development of international law, disarmament and equality in the international area). In March 2008, one year after taking up her position, she had extremely good ratings of 38 percent, but these had fallen to 30 percent by March 2009. In contrast, Fredrik Reinfeldt managed to increase his popularity from 40 to 52 percent in the same period of time.¹⁹⁶ The

¹⁹⁶ Cf. the results of a poll made by the Synovate opinion research institute, http://www.temo.se/Templates/Page_448.aspx, accessed on 2 November 2009.

economic crisis has led to a shift in priorities and – as in other European countries – strengthened the position of the parties in government.

The development of the acceptance of the Alliance for Sweden in the so-called “Sunday question” also gives a clear-cut impression: while the popularity of Reinfeldt’s government sank steadily after the election until the second half of 2008 and the difference between the Alliance for Sweden and the left bloc was sometimes above 20 percentage points, it has now experienced an about-turn. In the meantime, the Alliance has come as close as 0.7 percent to the left bloc.¹⁹⁷ The strength of the Alliance for Sweden also made itself felt in the June 2009 European elections, where the government increased its percentage from 40.2 to 42.6 and the opposition fell from 43.4 to 41.1 percent.

Prospects

The question that many people are asking today is whether the Moderates and Fredrik Reinfeldt will be able to repeat their 2006 success in the elections to be held in September 2010 and keep the Social Democrats away from the feeding troughs of power for two legislative periods for the first time in Sweden’s post-1932 political history. There can be no doubt that the great strategist Reinfeldt has such a plan and intends to undermine the dominating positions the Social Democrats have so far held in the Swedish party system in the upcoming election. His dream is probably to be able to position the Moderates in the centre of the voter spectrum and establish it as a new people’s party that all Swedes can vote for and, in this way, assume a strategically dominant position. There are many reasons that make it seem likely that Fredrik Reinfeldt will actually be able to be successful in achieving a further decisive victory at the polls in September 2010.

First and foremost: there have been no disagreements in the Alliance for Sweden over the past four years. Its great political success has united it and it seems to be absolutely in the position of being able to enter into the Reichstag elections with a joint programme as was the case in 2006. This will then make it possible for Reinfeldt to create the scenario of a

¹⁹⁷ Cf. the results of a poll made by the Synovate opinion research institute, http://www.temo.se/Templates/Page_____195.aspx, accessed on 2 November 2009.

campaign between two political blocs with clearly defined roles: on the one side, the united bourgeois camp with a successful period in government behind it during which it led Sweden safely through the economic crisis – and, on the other side, the divided left opposition that had not gone through a renewal phase in the last four years. The dichotomy between a united, bourgeois will to create something new and a moaning, backward-looking, left opposition is immediately apparent.

Secondly: the “New Moderates” now reach around 30 percent in the opinion polls.¹⁹⁸ Of course, these are not election results but they do give an indication of the Moderates’ potential. The New Moderates are about to make a sustainable change to the Swedish party system. The Moderates, as well as the other parties, probably consider the concept that some people have proposed, of amalgamating the four bourgeois parties to create a single large centre/centre-right people’s party, as not very desirable. The strategy is more likely to be one of existing separately but uniting in election campaigns. The clientele of the bourgeois Swedish parties is rather varied. A merger would annoy quite a few loyal voters and, as long as joint election campaigns are carried out, a union of the four parties is not even necessary. On the contrary, the last election showed that the Moderates in particular were able to draw a larger number of voters away from their ideological opponents the Social Democrats.

Thirdly: in general, the atmosphere in Sweden is quite optimistic. The government can show a positive balance for its work. The alliance has so far performed more than reasonably and the polls show that the population respects this. The Alliance’s government team is young – many ministers are in their forties or even younger – and full of vigour. The Swedish EU Presidency in the second half of 2009 was a resounding success. The crown princess is going to be married in June 2010, three months before the Reichstag elections. This event will almost certainly be accompanied by a feeling of national euphoria that should increase the Moderates’ chances for a successful election result.

Fourthly: the Moderates occupy a number of key ministerial positions that could have an important influence on the voters in the election campaign. In addition to the office of prime minister, the Moderates

¹⁹⁸ The Social Democrats currently have around 35 percent.

are in charge of the Labour Ministry and the strategically important Finance Ministry, as well as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Justice, which fulfils the agenda of an interior ministry in Sweden.

Fifthly: in the eyes of the leader of the Social Democratic opposition, Mona Sahlin, there seems to be no way to stop the incumbent, Prime Minister Reinfeldt. No matter how hard she tries, she just does not come close to Reinfeldt in the opinion polls where, as we have already mentioned, he enjoys record ratings.

In spite of all of these arguments, a possible election success for the Alliance for Sweden is still a long way off and has to be fought for. However, the fact that the Moderates have engaged Karl Rove, the former head of George Bush's election campaign, shows that they consider the coming election the "mother of all battles".

Paradoxically, one of the biggest dangers for a future election success lies in the increased popularity of the "New Moderates". Although the Moderates can bask in record results in the opinion polls, it must be borne in mind that this is partially at the expense of the other bourgeois parties. In a Synavate poll on September 2009, the Liberals reached six percent, the Centre Party 5.1 percent and the Christian Democrats 4.2 percent, with the Moderates at 29.8 percent. Another particular danger is that one of the smaller bourgeois parties – and here, most likely the Christian Democrats – could fail to take the four-percent hurdle in September 2010. Should that happen, the Moderates' plan of continuing their activities in government would be thwarted in one fell swoop.

A second dangerous imponderability could arise should other parties run and manage to garner more than four percent of the votes. This is particularly the case with the extreme-right Swedish Democrats¹⁹⁹ and the recently founded Pirate Party.²⁰⁰ If a new party managed to enter the

¹⁹⁹ The radical right-wing Swedish Democrats are currently fluctuating around the four-percent mark.

²⁰⁰ The recently founded Pirate Party, which managed to win one seat with 7.1 percent of the votes cast in the June 2009 European elections right off the bat, must be closely watched in this regard. The Pirate Party was particularly successful with young voters. It is against software patents and restrictive copyright legislation, and for increasing civil rights in the area of data protection in electronic networks. The Pirate Party achieved

Reichstag, it could tip the scales and manoeuvre between the two major blocs. Even if it were possible to form a bourgeois government under these conditions, its survival would be seriously threatened.

In spite of all this – and with all due caution – there is good reason to believe that the Moderates have a fair chance of winning the Reichstag elections in 2010. Irrespective of all previously stated, it should be noted that the Swedish Moderates are noticeably different from the Christian-democratic parties in the rest of Europe. This is particularly apparent in the areas of abortion and homosexual marriage. The Moderates endorse both with an unambiguity that is incomprehensible to a Central European. When dealing with these matters, the Moderates are in consensus with all of their other political competitors. Only the Christian Democrats occasionally have diverging opinions in these matters.

In EU questions, the Moderates are considered the most "pro-Europe" party in Sweden.²⁰¹ They strongly supported Sweden's accession to the EU in 1995 and were also in favour of Sweden entering into the euro zone in 2003. According to Prime Minister Reinfeldt, there is no discussion about holding another referendum on the introduction of the euro in the current legislative period. This is mainly out of consideration for the euro-critical Centre Party. However, seeing that the Swedish crown has been the object of intense speculation since the beginning of the global financial crisis and lost considerable value compared with the euro between September 2008 and February 2009, it is possible that the Swedes will also change their attitude towards the euro at sometime in the future.

In their more than hundred-year history, the Moderates have frequently proved that they are an extremely flexible party that always knows how to adapt itself to the realities of society without acting arbitrarily or relinquishing its principles. In spite of all the rhetoric about being a "new workers' party" and turning towards the centre, this will hardly change in future. No matter whether they are in government or opposition, the Moderates will remain one of the formative powers in Sweden's political life in the decades to come.

19 percent of the votes of those under thirty, making it the major party for this group, with more support than the Social Democrats.

²⁰¹ EU affairs play almost no role in current Swedish domestic politics.

The Slovak Centre-Right: Drawing Some Parallels

Katarína Králiková

Summary

The history of the centre-right in Slovakia since 1989 has been characterised by periods both in and out of power, by electoral success and disappointment, and by times of political unity as well as times of deep fragmentation. For many years since the fall of Communism in Slovakia, the Slovak centre-right has formed part of the country's government. During those years it has been responsible for pushing through vigorous reforms that have contributed towards reinforcing democracy in Slovakia and transforming it into one of Europe's most dynamic economies. However, both timing and an inability to overcome internal conflicts at crucial times have worked against the Slovak centre-right, and damaged its efforts to consolidate and build upon its success. It now faces the challenge of proving its credentials ahead of the 2010 national elections. Nevertheless, the quality of democracy in Slovakia is worsening, and to a great extent it is up to the centre-right to turn this around.

From the time of the first post-Communist elections in Slovakia, the Slovak centre-right parties have had a strong influence on the direction of the country. The Slovak centre-right has formed part of the government for ten years out of the 20 that have passed since the fall of Communism. Unlike the contemporary political history of other Central and Eastern European countries, the Slovak centre-right parties have not been fighting against the post-Communist, leftist parties since 1993, but rather against the authoritarian and nationalist-populist ones.²⁰²

Immediately after the fall of Communism, the Slovak centre-right parties were in government in the years 1990-1992. During this

²⁰² Grigorij Mesežnikov, *Pravica na Slovensku úspechy a problémy*, Parlamentný kuriér, November 2005

time, they created a political and legislative basis for systematic reforms in Slovakia. From March to September 1994, the centre-right parties were again in government, together with the post-Communist SDL Party (Party of the Democratic Left), which later merged with the SMER-SD Party (Direction – Social Democracy), the party which is currently in power. From 1998 to 2002, they represented the core of a wider democratic coalition, to which two leftist parties, the SDL and SOP (Party of Civic Understanding), also belonged. Finally, after the elections of 2002, a programmatically and ideologically homogenous coalition was formed, this time composed exclusively of the parties of the centre-right.

The development of the Slovak centre-right after 1989

The centre-right parties in Slovakia were the main initiators of systematic reforms after 1989. The Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) is one of the oldest political parties in Slovakia and was formed after the fall of Communism. Its creation was stimulated by the appeal of 30 November 1989, which called for the formation of Christian-democratic movements in Slovakia. Catholic dissidents and people close to the Public Against Violence (VPN) political movement, which had overthrown the Communist regime and established plural democracy, played an important role in its creation.²⁰³ In the first free elections in 1990, the KDH gained 19.21 percent of the vote and became part of the national, as well as federal, coalition. From its formation, besides the mainstream KDH there was another ideological platform in KDH, led by Ján Klepáč; it was in favour of a confederative ČSFR and the referendum on Slovakian independence.²⁰⁴ This group separated from the KDH and formed a new political party, the Slovak Christian Democratic Movement, which was later renamed the Christian Social Union and merged with the nationalist Slovak National Party in 1998.

However, as an inevitable result of the economic reforms and liberalisation of the Slovak economy, many Slovaks suffered from high inflation, increasing prices and rising unemployment. It was at this time of

²⁰³ Vladimír Ondruš, *Atentát na Nežnú revolúciu*, IKAR, ISBN 978-80-551-1898-7, 2009, p. 38

²⁰⁴ KDH, *History of KDH*, online: <http://www.kdh.sk/article.php?historia::1990>

economic uncertainty, as well as uncertainty about the future of Czechoslovakia and the formation of the Slovak state, that the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) emerged and positioned itself as an opponent of the reform-oriented politics of the first non-Communist government. As a result of its resistance to reform, as well as the unclear promises regarding the future of the Czechoslovak state, the HZDS increased its popularity among Slovaks.²⁰⁵

In 1992, the HZDS, led by Vladimír Mečiar, won the elections in Slovakia with a leftist-nationalist programme, while the liberals and conservatives of Václav Klaus, who wanted to pursue economic reform, obtained the majority in the Czech Republic. With the differences between the two sides too great to form a coalition, they agreed on a separation which was concluded in secret deliberations between the parliaments. The government of the authoritarian Mečiar was not a good experience for newly independent Slovakia. He rejected reforms, maintained bad relations with the EU and NATO, and drove Slovakia into international isolation.²⁰⁶ He established a semi-authoritarian regime that manipulated the election legislation, restricted media freedom, and violated minority rights. He played the “Hungarian card”, i.e. threatening Slovaks with the imminent danger of the allegedly expansionist politics of Hungary and the disloyalty of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. Since then, Slovak political parties have been divided into democratic and authoritarian parties. This division became even more visible in the years between 1994 and 1998, when Mečiar attempted to establish a regime of non-liberal democracy.²⁰⁷

At this time, the KDH was the biggest opposition party and organised several large-scale meetings protesting the authoritarian rule of the Slovak government. Ján Čarnogurský was the chairman of the party and remained in this position until 1996. However, in 1996, Mikuláš Dzurinda, party vice-chairman for the economy, announced his candidacy for the chairmanship of the party. Even though he received 14 votes fewer than Čarnogurský, he offered an alternative to the “old” KDH and opened the

²⁰⁵ Michal Ivantyšin, *Krušný osud pravice*, OS č.3, March 1999

²⁰⁶ Wilfried Martens, *I struggle, I overcome*, Centre for European Studies, Springer, ISBN 978-3-540-89288-5, 2009, p. 195

²⁰⁷ Kai-Olaf Lang, *Populismus in den neuen Mitgliedsländern der EU: Potentiale, Akteure, Konsequenzen*, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, May 2009, p. 25

party not only to believers, but also to atheists and liberals. In the same year a “Blue Coalition” consisting of the KDH, the Democratic Union (DÚ) and the Democratic Party (DS) was formed. It organised petitions for the direct election of the Slovak president and for fair elections. After this, two other parties (the Social-Democratic Party and the Green Party) joined and the coalition was renamed the Rainbow Coalition. A strong opposition bloc, the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), was created, with Mikuláš Dzurinda as its spokesman.

After the adoption, in May 1998, of the election law which stipulated that a party must obtain five percent of the vote in order to enter parliament,²⁰⁸ the SDK coalition was transformed into a party. In the same year, it overruled Mečiar and Mikuláš Dzurinda became prime minister. However, immediately after the elections, intra-party struggles regarding dual membership started to occur. SDK members could not also be members of their original mother parties. Dzurinda proposed the creation of a political union as a solution. However, this was refused by two parties – the DS and KDH. In 2000, therefore, a new political party was created – the SDKÚ, with Dzurinda as its leader. Dzurinda and nine other members of the SDK coalition bloc then announced their withdrawal from the KDH, and in April 2002 the cooperation agreement between the SDK coalition parties ceased to exist.

In the 2002 elections, the SDKÚ formed a coalition with the KDH, the Alliance of the New Citizen (ANO) and the Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK), and started to push forward its ambitious reform package. When Slovakia became a member of the European Union on 1 May 2004, the SDKÚ gained three seats in the European Parliament. Two other European People's Party members, the SMK and KDH, gained two seats each. In last year's EP elections, the SDKÚ secured two seats, the same number as the SMK and KDH. The governing SMER gained five seats in the European Parliament and strengthened its position compared with the 2004 European elections, when it had gained three seats.

²⁰⁸ Slovak Election Law no. 331/1998 amending Law no. 346/1990, online: <http://www.zbierka.sk/Default.aspx?sid=15&PredpisID=14596&FileName=98-z331&Rocnik=1998&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

1998: a turning point

One of the decisive factors that helped the centre-right parties gain sufficient votes in the elections of 1998 and defeat Mečiar's HZDS was their solid programme. In 1998, the SDK presented an extensive policy manifesto. It was the largest post-1990 election document and was written by politicians as well as academics. Its main message was that the SDK offered Slovaks not only a political, but also a programmatic, alternative. With its motto of “change”, it aimed at turning Slovakia in a new direction, starting the necessary reforms and bringing it back on the track of Euro-Atlantic integration.²⁰⁹ In 1998, a well-chosen pre-election strategy helped the centre-right to overcome serious fragmentation in Slovakia. Its dynamic 1998 campaign not only mobilised voters, but was also effective in attracting citizens with pro-democratic credentials. Another factor was the strong position of the centre-right in the civil society, and its active participation in informal democratic alliances and cooperation with think tanks, independent media, and church and civic-society representatives. The public saw the centre-right parties as firm defenders of democracy and believed in their pro-European orientation. After the 1998 elections, the key points of the election document were transposed into the programme of Dzurinda's first government.

The results of the elections in 2002 proved that the four-year governance of the centre-right and leftist parties had resulted in the weakening and ultimate downfall of the post-Communist left and, similarly, had led to the overall reinforcement of the centre-right's position in Slovakia. It achieved much success, even in spite of conflicts between the coalition parties and the painful process of internal re-organisation.

The centre-right coalition government then pushed through an ambitious programme of sectoral reforms. In addition to a constitutional reform and the decentralisation of the public sector, the government implemented tax reforms (flat tax of 19 percent); reformed public finance, the social system, pension and health care, and the labour criminal laws; and introduced a judicial reform.²¹⁰ The tax reform

²⁰⁹ SDKÚ-DS, History of SDKÚ-DS, online: <http://www.sdku-ds.sk/content/historia-sdku-ds>

²¹⁰ SDKÚ, Volebný manifest SDKÚ 2002, online: <http://www.sdku-ds.sk/content/volebny-manifest-sdku-2002>

meant much more than just changes in tax rates; the ultimate aim was to transform the Slovakian tax system into one of the most competitive among developed countries. In the area of direct income taxation, the Slovakian tax reform focused on the implementation of a direct single-rate tax and applied the principle of taxing all income equally. The new legislation reduced the 21 different types of direct income taxation in Slovakia and significantly eliminated its discriminatory effects. In addition to this, the corporate tax rate was reduced to 19 percent, and VAT was harmonised with the other tax reforms and changed to 19 percent.

The two principle people behind the reform package were Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda and Finance Minister Ivan Mikloš. Thanks to their decisive reforms, Slovakia's economic growth rose by over five percent annually for five years, including 2007, when its growth rate of 10.4 percent was the highest in Europe. This paved the way for Slovakia to be invited to join the euro zone as one of the first new EU member states.²¹¹ As a result of the successful politics of the Slovakian centre-right, the international perception of Slovakia changed and it was nicknamed the "Tatra Tiger" or "Investor's Paradise". The World Bank's *Doing Business 2005* report ranked the Slovak Republic as the best reformer in 2004 and seventh out of 145 countries surveyed in terms of their investment climate.²¹² Such success had not come easily however. Indeed, the opposition parties had fought relentlessly against the government's reform package throughout its entire period in office. They tried hard to disrepute and, as a consequence, to induce the demise of the members of the government, as well as to provoke early elections. On the basis of their petition in 2000, the Slovak president announced a referendum about the early parliamentary elections. However, the referendum turned out to be a fiasco for its initiators.

2006 elections: an inevitable development or a lost opportunity?

At the beginning of February 2006, the KDH left the coalition after the

²¹¹ Mart Laar, *The Power of Freedom: Central and Eastern Europe after 1945*, Centre for European Studies, UNITAS Foundation, 2009, ISBN 978-9949-18-858-1, p. 227

²¹² Forbes 2005, pp.101-103

governmental crisis sparked by the treaty on the right to objection of conscience concluded with the Holy See.²¹³ The adoption of this treaty was one of the KDH's priorities.²¹⁴ In 2005, Slovak Prime Minister Dzurinda said that the treaty should be thoroughly discussed. However, when the minister for foreign affairs announced that he would not sign the treaty, the SDKÚ-DS²¹⁵ supported his view and the KDH left the coalition. This provoked early elections, after which the centre-right parties found themselves again in the position of being able to form a government. However, because of disputes between the three parties, governance was passed over to the socialist-populist Robert Fico, who formed a coalition together with the autocrat Mečiar and the xenophobic and nationalist Slota of the Slovak National Party. Once again it was proven that only understanding and cooperation between members of the same political family can lead to lasting political results.²¹⁶

Often, conflicts between the centre-right coalition partners undoubtedly contributed to their failure in the elections of 2006. At times of growing internal differences between the coalition parties, the popularity of the then major opposition party – the leftist and populist SMER, the party of current Prime Minister Robert Fico – grew rapidly. However, the disunity of the centre-right was not the only reason behind its failure. The Slovak people were confronted with many rapid and often

²¹³ In 2000, the Holy See and the Slovak Republic signed a Basic Treaty (No. 326/2001 Coll.) which included the following provision: "The Slovak Republic recognises the right of all to obey their conscience according to the doctrinal principles and morals of the Catholic Church. The extent and conditions of the application of this right will be defined by special Accord between the [Holy See and the Slovak Republic]." This appears to be the first time that the Holy See has addressed the general issue of freedom of conscience in a concordat going beyond issues connected with military service to include reference to freedom of conscience in health care, education, legal services and labour law. If it is ratified, the Draft Treaty will have the status of a treaty under international law. It will therefore bind both parties to the treaty, and it can be terminated only with the agreement of the parties or upon termination of the Basic Concordat which it implements.

²¹⁴ Ján Čarnogurský, *The Story of Slovakia's Integration into Europe*, European View, December 2009, p. 172

²¹⁵ Note: SDKÚ-DS was called the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKÚ) before it merged with the Democratic Party on 21 January 2006

²¹⁶ Wilfried Martens, *I struggle, I overcome*, Springer, 2009, p. 196

painful reforms, the fruits of which only became visible much later. Positive results, such as overall macroeconomic stability, a significant increase in foreign investment and a decreasing unemployment rate did not suffice to guarantee the electoral victory of the centre-right.

A radical reform package achieved remarkable results. However, it left some victims whose businesses collapsed, whose houses and flats were lost, and who ended up living in poverty in its wake. This provided the SMER with a good basis to consolidate its popularity by criticising Dzurinda's reform-oriented politics and offering an alternative promising a complete revision of the reforms. Today, one can say that SMER's promises were proven to be mere populist rhetoric. Moving away from his election promises, Fico continued with Dzurinda's policies in almost all areas, keeping economic reforms intact and successfully taking Slovakia into the euro zone.²¹⁷ Unfortunately, the positive impact of those reforms was only seen after the centre-right government had been replaced by the socialist one. As a result, even today Mr Fico gets credit for the work done by his predecessors.

2010: a new chance for the centre-right?

According to recent polls, the current SMER-SNS-HZDS coalition still enjoys high levels of popularity, and the total popularity of the three opposition parties combined does not reach that of SMER. The coalition's proposals are easily passed in parliament, and it openly ignores the opposition.²¹⁸ The rules guiding the way a party can operate in opposition are closely linked to how the governing political forces understand the execution of power – and, in this respect, the statement made by Mečiar in November 1994 says it all: “It is after the elections, get used to it.” The opposition parties played during his term in the government a significantly marginalised role, and their legitimacy was constantly questioned.²¹⁹ After the elections in 1994, the opposition did not have any representation in the presidency of the Slovak parliament and had

²¹⁷ Mart Laar, *The Power of Freedom: Central and Eastern Europe after 1945*, Centre for European Studies, UNITAS Foundation, pp. 231-232

²¹⁸ Grigorij Mesežnikov, *Nová šanca pre opozíciu?*, *Hospodárske noviny*, January 2008

²¹⁹ Andrej Onufer, *Pred 15 rokmi sa začalo temné obdobie mečiarizmu*, September 2009, online: <http://aktualne.centrum.sk/domov/politika/clanek.phtml?id=1191762>.

no representatives in several committees. The coalition openly rejected all of the opposition's legislative proposals. After the 1998 elections the centre-right put an end to the democratic abuses carried out by the political majority in power, and the opposition was respected and allowed to become an integral part of democracy in Slovakia. However, following the elections in 2006, such democratic abuses once again became visible. The government now openly shows that it does not need the opposition and ignores its legislative proposals. An example of government's ignorance is an unfair timeslot, late in the evening, given to the opposition to discuss their proposals. The rhetoric of Mr Fico, who sees the opposition as a malign entity with which it is impossible to co-exist or cooperate, is closer to the rhetoric of the leaders of authoritarian parties.²²⁰ In countries where such parties rule, the opposition formally exists and sometimes even takes part in the elections, but never wins. Slovakia, however, is not such a country; a party can be in the coalition one day and in the opposition the next. Mr Fico lives in a state of euphoria. He hopes that he will be able to govern with only one coalition partner after this year's election and sees the opposition solely as a formal rival. Some politicians understand this only once they begin to mobilise protest and suddenly find themselves in the opposition, as was the case with Mečiar nearly twelve years ago.

Unfortunately, the three opposition parties are still weakened by intra- and inter-party conflicts. As a result, the SDKÚ-DS and KDH have already lost some of their parliamentarians. The KDH, based on the principles of Christianity, conservatism and social market economy, stems from the tradition of Slovak Christian democracy as well as the tradition of Western Christian and democratic values. Its fundamental principles are freedom, solidarity, subsidiarity and justice. Whereas the KDH is more of an ideological party, SDKÚ is above all a pragmatic and programmatic party with a persuasive portfolio of economic successes. In other words, this party has the ability to solve socio-economic problems and also help the development of the educational system in Slovakia. The SMK is an ethnic party which, contrary to the aggressive SNS, does not build its profile as an anti-Slovakian party. Nevertheless, it is, first of all, a party of the Hungarian minority, and her main goal is to protect and represent the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.

²²⁰ Grigorij Mesežnikov, *Opozícia ako kanárik demokracie*, *Parlamentný kuriér*, January 2008

As mentioned before, some new parties have recently emerged on the Slovak political scene. SaS, the Freedom and Solidarity party, mainly wants to mobilise the first voters and current non-voters. Its ideology is based on principles such as freedom, solidarity, ethical behaviour and common sense. The party wants to minimise the government's interventions and reduce the influence of the state on the society. It strongly supports laissez-faire capitalism and promotes the fight for transparency and against corruption. The Most-Híd party was created to support cooperation, reconciliation and tolerance between Slovaks and Hungarians; bridge the conflicts and differences between various minorities and ethnic groups through dialogue; and eliminate any sort of discrimination in the country. According to the survey done by the FOCUS agency in January 2010, SDKÚ-DS enjoys popularity of 15.2 percent, KDH 9.0 percent, SMK 5.6 percent, Most 5.2 percent and SaS 5.1 percent.²²¹ If unified, they could offer a "colourful" but reasonable alternative to the leftist parties.

On the contrary, all leftist parties (with the exception of the orthodox Communist Party) merged with the SMER, which has now become very monolithic compared with the fragmented opposition.²²² And not only that. It is basically the only relevant socialist party in Slovakia and does not have any competitors on the left side of the political spectrum. That is perhaps the reason that the government was able to withstand the scandals of its coalition partner, Mr Slota and his SNS party. This coalition was the reason for the SMER-SD being temporarily suspended from the European Socialists. Last year, Mr Fico deprived SNS of the Environment Ministry, one of the three cabinet portfolios it holds. But Mr Slota is unlikely to take his party out of government altogether and will continue his attacks on Hungarians and Roma; Mr Fico is most likely to play the nationalist card together with him. Last summer, Fico's government passed a controversial amendment to the language law²²³ which was criticised not only by the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, but also by the European Parliament. In September 2009, the amend-

²²¹ Miroslav Kern, SDKÚ a SaS sú ako na hojdačke, SME, January 2010, online: <http://www.sme.sk/c/5213250/sdku-a-sas-su-ako-na-hojdacke.html>

²²² Grigorij Mesežnikov, Spor populizmu a demokracie, SME, December 2008

²²³ Slovak Language Law no. 318/2009, Amending Law no. 270/1995, online: <http://www.zbierka.sk/zz/predpisy/default.aspx?PredpisID=209137&FileName=zz2009-00318-0209137&Rocnik=2009>

ing act made the control over the correct use of the Slovak language stricter and made it possible for "law-breakers" to be fined up to 5,000 euros. During the same summer, Slovakia prevented the Hungarian president from crossing the border to unveil a statue of St Stephen in the predominantly Hungarian city of Komárno. This was a breach of EU rules on the freedom of movement.²²⁴

On the other hand, the centre-right, rather than trying to strengthen its position by unification, has chosen to remain fragmented, and new centre-right parties have recently emerged. However, the SDKÚ-DS and KDH are not giving up their election dream. Recently, both parties introduced some new personalities in their structure as part of their election preparations. Besides including new members, four new teams in the SDKÚ-DS – for the restoration and modernisation of Slovakia, for a dignified life, an anti-crisis team and one for law and justice – are working on the programmatic alternative. KDH has also implemented some personnel changes, the most important being in the leadership of the party. Last October, Slovakia's former commissioner, Ján Figel', returned to national politics and replaced Ján Hrušovský as chairman of KDH. He brought a European dimension into the party along with new people and fresh ideas. He entered Slovak politics with great ambitions and would have needed only a few votes more to have been elected one of the vice-presidents of the European People's Party at the congress held in Bonn last December. The parties have finally modernised their websites and started to use internet-based social networks following the example of last year's presidential candidate, Iveta Radičová, who used the internet widely during her campaign and won the confidence of many young people. The defeat of Radičová, who was supported by the three opposition parties (SDKÚ-DS, KDH and SMK) and the non-parliamentarian conservative OKS, shows that Slovakia is a politically divided country where the voters can be easily activated by primitive nationalist slogans. Given the current political situation in Slovakia, Radičová's election result is, nevertheless, extraordinary.²²⁵ It has actually shown that a growing number of citizens believe that politics in Slovakia should be more democratic, fair and transparent. And this is good news for the centre-right. The bad news is that the 2009

²²⁴ The Economist, Frost bite, Volume 392, Number 8646, August-September 2009, p. 26

²²⁵ Grigorij Mesežnikov, Presidential Election in Slovakia: Outcomes and Context, online: www.boell.cz, May 2009

regional elections, marked by low voter turnout, electoral corruption and great use of the Hungarian card, were won by the Socialists. Seen more optimistically, the number of seats obtained (184 for the socialists and 155 for the centre-right²²⁶) is, however, relatively balanced.

The opposition parties should bear in mind that it is not likely they will win SMER voters over to the centre-right, and they should mobilise their own “hidden” voters better. If this were the case, they would have a real chance of gaining a total of 40% of votes.²²⁷ They must now work on persuasive arguments proving that they can offer better, and more concrete, ways of getting out of the crisis and the recession than the governing SMER, which, besides rhetoric about the importance of state regulation and dirigism, has not been able to show any tangible results. Not only that, they should find a way of working together to offer an alternative to the left. They should forget their old conflicts and open up to cooperation with their closest ideological partners.

The current government has also started to prepare for the 12 June elections. However, it did not come out with a persuasive programme, but decided to play an unfair and merciless pre-election game. Prime Minister Fico decided to re-open a six-year-old case concerning unexplained financing of the SDKÚ, and to season it with some new information about what he called money laundering, fictitious firms and tax-haven bank accounts. Political scientist Kusý also noted that at the time when this case emerged, the regulations were different and publishing information was not obligatory. Fico’s efforts are nothing but an effort to overshadow the current government’s scandals by bringing up older issues. Fico’s government, for example, has still not explained the suspicious sale of Slovakia’s excess emission quotas to an obscure firm, the Interblue Group, whose registered address was a lock-up garage in the USA.²²⁸ But Mr Fico does not care about the rule of law – should he be convinced that the SDKU has committed a crime, he should have announced it to the prosecutor so that criminal proceedings could be

²²⁶ Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Results of the Regional Elections 2009, Infostat, online: <http://portal.statistics.sk/vuc2009/menu/indexV.jsp?lang=sk, 2009>

²²⁷ FOCUS, Volebné preferencie politických strán-október 2009, 2009

²²⁸ Beáta Balogová, Old scandal spells new trouble for SDKÚ, Slovak Spectator, February 2009, online: http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/37774/2/old_scandal_spells_new_trouble_for_sdku.html

initiated, rather than at a press conference on 22 January some months before the elections. As a result, SDKÚ’s chairman, Mikuláš Dzurinda, announced on 1 February that he will not be on the party’s slate in the upcoming general election.²²⁹ He decided so largely because he wants the election campaign to focus on people and party programmes, and not the scandals and dirty accusations. His decision might also help the unification of the opposition parties and improvement of their cooperation. For example, a new party, SaS, will be willing to start negotiations about creation of a bigger pre-election coalition block if Dzurinda is not a leader of the candidate list. Dzurinda will retain his post of SDKÚ leader and stressed that he is looking forward to the party’s campaign as well as to answering questions about party’s financing. Political analyst Juraj Marušíak said he was surprised by “how passively and humbly Dzurinda was putting up with attacks by Prime Minister Robert Fico, and how fast he gave up his position as a leader for the election”.

This move by the Socialist government indicates that this year’s elections are most likely to be undignified and dirty. Therefore, the centre-right parties should now first of all mobilise their teams and present a modern, dynamic, online and audiovisual campaign offering clear choices in order to mobilise their voters. Even though the euphoria of what happened more than twenty years ago has vanished, and voter turnout no longer reaches 95 percent, it is still relatively high when it comes to national elections.²³⁰ Until recently, however, Slovakia was often faced with important decisions, something which significantly contributed to higher voter turnout. In the first free elections in 1990, the Slovaks needed to support the fall of Communist rule. In 1992, they wanted to have a say in the division of Czechoslovakia; then, they desired to put an end to the authoritarian regime of Mečiar and Slovakia’s international isolation. Later, they wished to give a green light to Slovakia’s entry into the Euro-Atlantic structures.²³¹ This year, Slo-

²²⁹ When writing his article, it was not known who will head the SDKÚ’s candidate list, as this will be decided by the party’s primary election due later in February. Two already known candidates are Iveta Radičová, vice-chairwoman of the SDKÚ and second in the presidential elections in 2009, and Ivan Mikloš, vice-chairman of the SDKÚ and a former minister of finance.

²³⁰ Martin Slosiarik, Aká bude účasť? Inštitút pre verejné otázky, 2009

²³¹ Zora Bútorová, Oľga Gyárfášová, Slovensko a voliči pred voľbami pohľad za oponu ▷

vakia's membership in the EU or NATO is not at stake, but the elections will mirror the state of political culture in Slovakia. One should remember that democracy and quality of life are not isolated projects, either granted to a country or not, but a continuous process based on free and active civil participation.

Conclusions

Slovakia is now in the European Union, NATO, Schengen and the euro zone. More investments are flowing into the country. However, some pre-existing issues did not fade away with the end of Mečiar's government in 1998.

Back then, Slovakia was still trying to resolve the problem of the Language Act. Today, Slovakia is facing the same problem after President Gašparovič's signing of a controversial amendment to the Language Law²³² last summer, which made the control over the correct use of the Slovak language stricter. Before 1998, Slovakia had complicated relations with several countries. Last August, the frosty relations between Hungary and Slovakia turned even colder when the Hungarian president was banned from crossing the border to unveil a statue of St Stephen in South Slovakia. Corruption, clientelism, credibility and the effectiveness of jurisdiction are also other issues that remain as pressing today as they were in the 1990s.

Before 1998, the government consisted of the authoritarian and populist Mečiar and his HZDS, the nationalist and xenophobic Slota and his SNS, and Lupták and his ZRS (Association of Slovak Workers). Today, the government consists of the populist Fico, the nationalist Slota and the autocratic Mečiar. Many of the issues have not died away, however, and are simply waiting to re-emerge at the right moment. Recently, Ján Figel', chairman of the KDH, said that history does not repeat itself, it simply rhymes.²³³ It is necessary to search for long-lasting solutions

▷ volebných preferencií, Domino fórum, May 2005

²³² Slovak Language Law no. 318/2009, Amending Law no. 270/1995, online: <http://www.zbierka.sk/zz/predpisy/default.aspx?PredpisID=209137&FileName=zz2009-00318-0209137&Rocnik=2009>

²³³ Vanda Vavrová, Interview with Ján Figel': História sa rýmuje, <http://www.pluska>.

and not populist ones. The Slovak centre-right wants a social state, not a socialist one. And a social state cannot be based on collectivism or statism – the state must first earn money before redistributing it, not the other way around. The state should prioritise being active and competent, rather than being too powerful. And people should not rely on the state alone to do everything for them. The good news is that the basic principles of the democratic state are sufficiently stable in Slovakia and can withstand the attempts of non-liberal nationalist populists to weaken them. Nevertheless, the quality of democracy over the next four years will depend upon the results of this year's elections.

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Romania: A Difficult Territory for Centre-Right Parties

Günther Dill

Summary

The situation surrounding the end of the Ceaușescu dictatorship, post-revolutionary stabilisation and the difficulties connected with Romania's political and social transformation also affected the development of a multi-party system in the country after 1989. Following the failure of the Christian-democrat PNTCD in government, the consolidation and further development of the centre-right spectrum did not receive any sustainable impulses until the presidency of Traian Băsescu.

In the epoch-making year of 1989, Romania was the last country in Southeast Europe to liberate itself from Communist dictatorship – and it was the only one that did so violently. The national uprising that began in the Banat region of West Romania (near Timișoara) was used by a small “counter-elite” from the second ranks of the Communist Party under the leadership of later President Ion Iliescu to secure their own power by toppling the Ceaușescu regime.

Above all, this meant that, in the following years, the striving for “individual freedom, economic normality, a return to the values of civilisation and the country's development towards the Western system of economics, politics and security” (Ganneli Ute Gabanyi, 1971) that had taken place in the other transformation countries could only be observed to a limited extent in Romania. The fact that the three decisive traditional political movements (Christian Democracy, Liberalism and Social Democracy) remained in political opposition until 1996 also played a major role in determining the overall process of a democratic reorientation.²³⁴

²³⁴ Anneli, Gabanyi Ute, “Romania Libera”, 18 January 1997

The major political force, the Front for Saving the Nation (FSN), that had been founded by Ion Iliescu and other ex-Communists, played a more than ambivalent role in bringing the Ceaușescu regime to a fall. However, there is no disputing their success in the first parliamentary and presidential elections in 1990: Ion Iliescu was able to garner more than 85 percent of the votes cast; the FSN held 60 percent of the seats in the lower house and 67 percent in the Senate. Silviu Brucan (FSN) summed up the election programme succinctly: “Our ideology consists of five points: more food, more heat, more electricity and light, better transportation and better health care.”

The government’s activities were characterised by populist undertakings while structural reforms remained unattended to. The same as in Ceaușescu’s era, the Iliescu wing of the FSN resorted to the tried-and-true practices of nepotism, patronage and clientele networks.

The Romanian journalist Horia-Roman Patapievici made a summary of the five points that held the Iliescu regime together:

- 1) Reform meant adjustment, not change.
- 2) The structures of the Socialist state were good in essence but had been distorted by Ceaușescu.
- 3) Geopolitical orientation towards the West was risky, so Romania should basically stick with the East.
- 4) The competent people were those trained in the Communist style.
- 5) Patriotism necessarily presupposed nationalism.²³⁵

There were many discrepancies in the new constitution passed in 1991: it did include the institutional arrangements of a parliamentary democracy, but the fragmentation of the executive between the president (elected directly) and prime minister (nominated by the president but – once confirmed by the Parliament – almost impossible for the president to remove from office) has led to constant conflict up to today, as many examples from President Traian Băsescu’s post-2004 term in office show.

²³⁵ Cf. Abby Innes, *Party Competition in Post-Communist Europe: the great electoral lottery*, Center for European Studies/CEE, Working Papers Series 54 (June 2001), p. 22

The first post-Communist change of power in 1996, with the election of the bourgeois candidate Emil Constantinescu as president of Romania and the victory of the Romanian Democratic Convention (CDR) electoral alliance under the leadership of the Christian-democratic PNTCD (Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin Democrat), “... took place within a highly fragmented society where the values of democratic citizenship and of accountable governance gained only an uncertain foothold. Rampant corruption, state inefficiency, gutted private initiative, the weakness of civic action, and state-sponsored amnesia about the totalitarian experience made up the balance sheet of the first six years of transition in Romania.”²³⁶

That is why the implementation of “good governance”, the consolidation of the constitutional state and combating corruption assumed absolute priority – by those making the decisions in Brussels as well as the European partner parties – after Romania’s application for entry into the European Union in 1995.

The parties in the Romanian political system

It is clear that the events surrounding the overthrow of Nicolae Ceaușescu, the post-revolutionary stabilisation of the country and the preservation of the bureaucratic apparatus could not fail to have an effect on the development of the Romanian party system in the years following 1989.

In general, the transformation societies in Central, East and Southeast Europe equated the term “party” with the omnipresent Communist Party, as most of the inhabitants had hardly had any experience with multi-party systems or any form of competition between parties. The many newly created party groups that came into being after 1989 often presented themselves not as “parties” but as “forums”, “movements”, “centres”, “unions”, “alliances”, etc.; for example, the Czech Civic Forum used “Parties are for party members, Civic Forum is for everybody” as its slogan in 1990.²³⁷

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Søren Riishøj, *Development of Parties and Party Systems in Central Europe 1989-2007*, 2007

Anneli U. Gabanyi's evaluation is especially applicable to Romania: "The organization and dynamics of the party system and certain typical behavioural patterns of the post-1989 political actors such as "leader mania" (lideromania) and "schizophrenia" (scizionita) display parallels to the situation in the period before the Communist takeover of power."²³⁸

Some specific characteristics must be mentioned regarding the development of the political parties in Romania. The foundation usually occurred

- top down,
- as small "sofa parties", and
- without any organisational experience or an institutional core from the period in exile.
- The foundation of the parties not only occurred in a period of far-reaching economic and social transformation, but also – and above all – in the face of the public's widespread lack of faith in parties.
- Charismatic personalities had to compensate for a weak organisational basis.
- Nolens volens, intense strategic discussions rarely took place before the parties were founded.
- The "catch-all profile" – the aim of representing the "entire population" – was widespread.

Lavinia Stan²³⁹ described "10 myths" of post-1989 opposition parties that give an impression of the self-image of many parties, not least in the uncompromising confrontation with the FSN, which was infiltrated by many ex-Communists.

²³⁸ Gabanyi, Anneli Ute: Das Parteiensystem Rumäniens, in Dieter Segert / Richard Stöss / Oskar Niedermayer (eds.): Parteiensysteme in postkommunistischen Gesellschaften Osteuropas, Opladen, 1997, pp. 181-236

²³⁹ Lavinia Stan, Democratic Delusions: Ten Myths Accepted by the Romanian Democratic Opposition, Problems of Post-Communism, vol. 50, no. 6 (Nov/Dec. 2003), pp. 51-60

Myth 1: *The party chairman is "our party"*

This means nothing less than that working for the party leader is important for the membership as a whole.

Myth 2: *The party as an organisation is of lesser importance*

With the exception of the Socialists, this is a widespread concept. It includes the refusal to publish membership numbers (camouflaging the real strength of the party from the opponents). This framework of a weak organisation and strong leadership makes it understandable that parliamentarians also play a minor role (a change of party affiliation is easy if an attractive offer is made).

Myth 3: *Powerful parties are controlled from above*

The centralism of Romanian parties corresponds with their generally weak local anchoring. In addition: "Communication between leaders and ordinary members is so lax that members often learn about a policy position from the local newspaper."²⁴⁰

Myth 4: *Alliances are the key to political survival*

This is the only way to compete with the Socialist opponent. Due to the lack of inner cohesion, these kinds of alliances usually functioned for a short time only, as shown in the experience made with the CDR government led by the Christian Democrats from 1996 to 2000.

Myth 5: *Taking office is seen as a sign of political success*

As practice shows, loyalty to the party was usually more important than expertise.

Myth 6: *The main enemy is the Communist successor party*

This leads to

Myth 7: *"We are better than the Social Democrats"*

Our errors are insignificant compared with those made by the ex-Communists: this results in a widespread exaggerated opinion of one's own abilities and ultimately to a misinterpretation of one's own chance of being successful at elections. The never-ending subject of corruption proved to be a ticklish matter for the democratic opposition parties on account of their own offences.

²⁴⁰ Lavinia Stan, p. 55

Myth 8: *Self-criticism is dangerous*
It only helps the political opponent.

Myth 9: *A good image is all important*
“The democrats prize a good public image far more than clear programmatic goals or efficient governmental performance.”²⁴¹

Myth 10: *“We know what the people need”*
This attitude leads to many behavioural patterns that damage, more than help, the democratic opposition parties.

Here, it is necessary to mention some specific aspects of the Romanian party system: the legal basis for a multi-party system was created immediately after the period of upheaval in 1989. The minimum demands that needed to be satisfied in the new party legislation benefited the establishment of countless new groups: in 1991, 128 parties were registered; this had increased to 151 by 1992 and reached 200 in 1996. Later amendments attempted to limit this growth by drastically increasing the minimum number of founding members (25,000 today) as well as through the introduction of a three-percent hurdle at elections (today, this is five percent, and eight percent for electoral alliances).

Under Romanian circumstances, the valid system of proportional representation has encouraged political-programmatic fragmentation. Stabilisation of the party landscape has actually only been observed since 2004 with the crystallisation of two major blocs: centre-left around the PSD and its alliance partner the Conservative Party (PC), and centre-right around the PD (now PDL), PNL and UMDR. The electoral law that has been in force since 2008 (a combination of a “first past the post” electoral system and proportional representation) even increased the tendency towards bipolarisation, so that small parties had only limited chances of entering parliament.

The degree of the electorate’s volatility is generally extremely high in the post-Communist transition countries – much above the level in the democracies of West Europe – and this is especially the case in Romania. It definitely does not pose a threat to the political system,

²⁴¹ Lavinia Stan, p. 58

but is a challenge that political parties will have to confront in future election campaigns.

The “Europeanisation” of the party activities is no smaller challenge: here, Europeanisation must be understood as the totality of all of the answers the parties (must) provide on the effects of European integration. Since the early 1990s, the European Christian Democrats have attempted to establish contacts and offered to collaborate with those parties that had been founded on a Christian-democratic basis. Permanent contacts were also established with the prospective Romanian membership parties. According to Wilfried Martens, these activities were a first step towards their gradual integration within the European perspective and structures. The so-called roadmap, or the stages of admission, for the parties from Central, East and South-east Europe was established at the EPP congress held in Madrid in 1995.

On the centre-right parties in Romania

The PDL (Liberal Democratic Party)

Its origins can be traced back to the Front for National Salvation (FSN) that was founded immediately after the end of the Ceaușescu regime by members of the Romanian Communist Party under the leadership of Ion Iliescu.

The split of the reform wing of the Front under Petre Roman in 1993 led to the foundation of the Democratic Party (PD). It defines itself as a centre-left party with a social-democratic doctrine in explicit confrontation of an aggressive laissez-faire form of liberalism; its programmatic buzzwords were democracy, human dignity, social justice, equal opportunities, etc. This social-democratic orientation remained in force until 2004.

The first amalgamation of large and small social-democratic groups took place in 2005 in the form of the Social-Democratic Union (USD), which also became a member of the government coalition under the leadership of the Christian Democratic National Rural Party (PNTCD) in 1996.

The debacle of the Romanian Democratic Convention (CDR) alliance in the 2000 elections subsequently led to a change in leadership in the PD from Petre Roman to today's President Traian Băsescu (2001), who was lord mayor of Romania's capital, Bucharest, at the time.

Since 1992, the party has uncompromisingly refused any kind of cooperation with the other party around Ion Iliescu that calls itself "social democratic". On the other hand, the electoral alliance (Justice and Truth/DA) established between the PD and National Liberal Party (PNL) in 2003 was able to help their joint candidate Traian Băsescu to victory (albeit a close one) over the favoured opponent from the left in the 2004 presidential elections. This was followed by the – unexpected – formation of a government based on a parliamentary majority of the PD, PNL, the Hungarian Union UDMR, the Humanist Party (PUR, now Conservative Party/PC) and 18 independent representatives of the minority groups living in Romania.

From the very beginning, the coalition suffered from the divergent positions of the participating actors. The PD implemented its new ideological and programmatic orientation at its "national convention" in June 2005.

The policy statement "Prosperous Romania, Democratic Romania" marked the definitive departure from its social-democratic past and its turn towards the programme of a "people's party" to the right of the centre. The real surprise, however, came from the clear majority of the number of votes received in favour of the new programme at the convention.

In spite of the clear-cut result of the votes, it is easy to overlook the fact that in the run-up to the party convention, leading personalities such as Cezar Preda and Radu Berceanu insisted on the validity of the old policy document *Strong Romania – Social-Democratic Romania* with which President Băsescu had run his campaign for the party chairmanship in 2001. And the new party chairman, Emil Bloc, had even confirmed the continuance of the social-democratic doctrine at the beginning of 2005.

In his programmatic policy speech, Emil Bloc described the development of the PD as being in no way a rupture with the past: "Let us

legalize what has long become a fact of life!" "Whether consciously or not – the PD has continuously undergone a development towards the political centre", where the new attribute of "popular" had nothing to do with "populist", let alone "demagogic", but is aimed at all strata of society for whom the prerequisites for wealth and prosperity should be created.

The fundamental values of the new programme with which the Romanian PD applied for membership in the EPP were freedom, responsibility, solidarity, the rule of law, and subsidiarity.

In addition, the basic options for cooperating in a government alliance with the Liberals (PNL) were the consolidation of the constitutional state and democracy in Romania, a new definition of the role of the state (less intervention in the economy; strengthening the security of the citizens and families; realisation of a market economy and stimulation of entrepreneurial activities; promotion of equal opportunities and economic and social cohesion; respecting the rights of minority groups; and the integration of Romania within the Euro-Atlantic economic and security structures, etc., etc.).

In a political statement made by Romania's President Traian Băsescu, who was not permitted to participate in the party convention for constitutional reasons, he stated that the party "... was far removed from being a Christian-democratic party; the process that the PD is currently going through is much more of a repositioning away from the centre-left of the political spectrum towards the centre, in order to be able to harmonize the government programme with the doctrine."

The 2005 opinion polls provide a clear impression of the irritation felt by many voters regarding the PD's reorientation process. This becomes particularly noticeable when one looks at the difference between the unanimous rejection of the social-democratic past by the convention on the one hand and the poll results published shortly before, showing that many voters believed in the continued validity of a social-democratic ideology in the PD on the other.

The repositioning of the PD was also something quite novel for the EPP leadership. To quote Wilfried Martens: "It is the first time that a party decides to leave the Socialist family to become one of our members."

However, this repositioning had not come about all of a sudden, but had its origin in the phase of cooperation with the PNTCD within the framework of the CDR government that was in office between 1996 and 2000, and after 2001, decisive impulses emanated from the PD Chairman Traian Băsescu.²⁴²

The role played by President Băsescu therefore deserves closer attention. As the last electoral campaign showed, he is a politician who polarises more than integrates. In many respects, his profile seems to be somewhat out of place when compared with other Romanian politicians:

- Not only because of his popularity, but also through his long-term, above-average basis of trust among the population.
- It is believed that he can eradicate many of the taboo subjects of the post-Communist era, drive the struggle against corruption forwards, combat the gap between the poor and the rich, put the political caste in their place, and strengthen the structures and programmes of the civil society, in this way supporting increased political participation.
- He also vehemently criticises the parties for being influenced by local “oligarchs” who in no way, have the public welfare in mind, but are only interested in safeguarding their personal interests.

Apart from the rumours about his past under the Ceaușescu regime that keep cropping up and personal offences (accusations of corruption), the following can be considered accurate:

- The installation of the DA-Alliance’s coalition government in 2004 would not have been possible without his election as Romania’s president.

²⁴² Some critics believe that the PD is simply an instrument in the hands of the populist Băsescu; the party is only a motley collection of people who would not survive the political career of their figurehead. Edward Maxfield (2008, p. 5) sees other reasons as being more important than the person Băsescu for the success of the PD. “The party was formed by ambitious young reformers in the wake of the 1989 revolution and even its most surprising manoeuvre – abandoning social democracy to affiliate with the centre-right European People’s Party bloc – can be seen as fitting to an evolutionary pattern that has been consistent since its beginnings.”

- The failure to have him removed from office in May 2007, driven by the parliamentary opposition with the inclusion of the former liberal coalition party, the PNL, actually damaged the initiators and resulted in a major show of confidence in Băsescu.
- He provided considerable impulses for the development of the centre-right spectrum in Romania. The former minister of culture, Theodor Paleologu, who called Băsescu’s plebiscitary style a kind of “Romanian-style Gaullism”, described his influence on the development of the party in the following manner: “Structurally, he is not a man of the right but – paradoxically – he has become a hero of the right.”
- He propelled the discussions on appraising the past forward, although the success in this area must be considered modest.
- In his shirt-sleeve manner, he has bluntly criticised all of the political parties and, in this way – nolens, volens – contributed to discussions in Romanian society and within the party, and repeatedly stimulated the debates on the reform of Romania’s political culture, which had frequently come to a standstill.

However, the most recent presidential elections in November/December 2009 also made it apparent that his supporters – a comparatively wide range of social groups: women, students, academics and urban people, as well as “the man in the street” with a limited income – have become increasingly distanced from Băsescu because of the reforms that are either being implemented too sluggishly or not at all, and the social costs of the economic and financial crisis, which has hit Romania especially harshly. The “benefits” of EU membership that the political class propagated are also only slowly making themselves felt and – after the often exaggerated expectations – have led to increasing frustration.

The further development of the centre-right spectrum after 2005

The ideological reorientation of the PD had repercussions for the entire Romanian party system. Not only was the liberal coalition party, the PNL, surprised by the speed of the changes in the PD, a lively discussion on the consequences also started within the party. The former party

chairman and ex-Minister of Justice Valeriu Stoica called for the PNL to quickly position itself because “... at the moment, there is the risk of the centre-right spectrum being monopolized by other parties and the PNL remaining isolated.” In this vein, he also came out in favour of a speedy merger with the PD. He stressed the importance of a common centre-right party as a strong counterpart to the left PSD, which led to heated discussions within the PNL over the survival of the party’s liberal identity.

In the course of these conflicts, a platform was constituted within the PNL that defined a form of liberalism, founded on responsibility and justice, in keeping with the times as a bourgeois political orientation in its manifesto, rejected oligarchies, and favoured a serious competitive economy. In addition, tradition, religion, the family and national identity were regarded as other important elements of liberal politics.

This platform’s expulsion from the PNL at the end of 2006 led to the foundation of a liberal democratic party (PDL) that merged with the PD at the end of 2007 to form today’s PDL.

The political programme of the new PDL includes some isolated, not systematically developed, references to Christian-democratic ideology such as support:

- for a market economy adjusted to the spirit of liberty, responsibility and justice (Art. 1.2.3);
- for the principles of pluralism (Chapter I Values and Principles of the Democrat-Liberal Party, and Art. 1.2.4), personalism (“A new party” – the introductory part of the document) and solidarity (Art. 1.1.4);
- for strengthening civil society (Art. 1.2.7);
- for an active involvement of Romania in the European construction (Art. 1.2.1).²⁴³

²⁴³ Cf. Nicolae Paun / Georgiana Ciceo / Dorin Domuta, Religious Interactions of the Romanian Political Parties. A Case Study: The Christian-democratic Connection, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 8, 24 (Winter 2009): pp. 104-132, here p. 117

The weight of the PDL in the country

Similarly to the former PD, the PDL is also organisationally anchored in all districts of the country. After the communal elections in July 2004, 376 mayors came from the PD, which had received 16 percent of the votes for the regional assemblies and 15 percent for the local councils.

The PDL asserted its position as the strongest force in communal politics in the June 2008 elections: it provided 14 of the 41 regional presidents (elected directly for the first time), 908 mayors (33.58 percent of the votes cast), 11,129 local council representatives (27.70 percent of the votes) and 458 representatives to the regional assemblies (28.92 percent of the votes). In comparison, a mere 11 of the more than 3,000 mayors and only 326 local council representatives (from a total of more than 40,000 positions) came from the Christian-democratic PNTCD that had dominated the 1990s.

Little is known about the membership of the Romanian parties. We only have the information for the year 2003 from the official Bucharest register that the PD had 86,461 members (with local organisations in only 21 of the 42 districts in the country); in comparison, the liberal PDL had 116,134 members (in 39 districts). The left-wing PSD had 290,116 members at the time and was represented in all of the 42 districts, which explains its success to a certain degree.

There can be no doubt that the intensity of organisational consultation, programme instruction and member training to help in the development of democratic and efficient political parties must be considered among the strong points in the transformation of the former Communist states. In the 20 years since the revolution, the works of many national and international NGOs (including the German political foundations) and representatives of local civic initiatives to assist the parties have also played a role in consolidating the democratic system in Romania – and continue to do so.

The UDMR (Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania)

The Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) was founded by the writer Domokos Géza in December 1989, immediately

after the fall of the Communist dictatorship, and represents the Hungarian minority in the country; with approximately 1.4 million citizens, this is the largest national minority in Europe.

It is not coincidental that it is registered as an “alliance” and not as a “party”: However, according to Romanian legislation, political organisations that represent ethnic minorities and take part in political elections enjoy the same status as political parties. The number of political movements and the diversity of the ideological platforms make it even more difficult to characterise the programmatic status of the UDMR. Its heterogeneous membership structure makes it actually impossible to talk about an original doctrine.

However, one can only speak very roughly about the Alliance having a centre-right orientation. The statements that have a Christian-democratic context include the commitment to subsidiarity, autonomy in personal and cultural affairs, stressing the importance of the church, the commitment to the social market economy, and emphasising solidarity on the one hand and individual responsibility on the other.

The UDMR was granted observer status in the EPP in 1998 and became a member in 1999. Its basically anti-Communist position proved to be beneficial to its collaboration with the other traditional parties (Christian Democrats, Liberals and Social Democrats), for example with the foundation of the “Romanian Democratic Convention” (CDR) in 1991. It has participated in practically all the Romanian governments since 1996 (the exception: the grand coalition between the PDL and PSD in 2008-2009), although not always in a formal union. In general, the presence of the UDMR in a government is considered to be advantageous for Romania’s image and is regarded as a factor in the country’s political stability. Marko Bela has been chairman of the party since 1992. The UDMR is particularly strongly entrenched in Transylvania.

The PNTCD (The National Christian Democrat Peasant Party)

Question: Why does the national Christian Democrat Party not reconstruct itself?

Answer: Because it has not yet destroyed itself completely.
(*Romanian political joke*)

The National Peasant Party (PNT) was established in 1926 and was a dominating factor – along with Liberals and Social Democrats – in the Romanian political landscape in the years between the wars. After the Second World War, the party chairman Iuliu Maniu formulated an option for Christian-democratic goals (such as the importance of Christian moral standards in politics, enlightened patriotism, democracy and social justice).

While still illegal, the PNT joined the European Christian Democratic Union in 1987 and, after its new foundation in 1989, demonstrated its commitment to the Christian-democratic “family” by changing its name to PNTCD. The party has been a member of the EPP since 1996.

The central elements of the PNTCD’s programme were upholding the principles of Christian moral standards, freedom, social justice, democracy, solidarity and subsidiarity.

However, the public perceived the party more as an uncompromising opponent to the Communists and their successor organisation, the FSN.

In the 1990s, anti-Communism – this was an essential criterion for membership in the party for many years after 1989 – led farsighted party members to the realisation that “We do not have capable party members to promote. At the beginning, only former political prisoners were accepted as members. In those days, the dominant criterion for acceptance was non-membership in the Communist Party, not skills or social status. Because of that, the party lost many qualified individuals.”²⁴⁴

The development undertaken in the early 1990s reached its peak in the success of the CDR electoral alliance, which was dominated by the party, in the 1996 elections. The bourgeois government experiment ended in a debacle in the 2000 elections because of its poor performance as well as a number of scandals and internal strife within the PNTCD. Since then, the party has not been represented in parliament.

²⁴⁴ Lavinia Stan, *From Riches to Rags: The Romanian Christian Democrat Peasant Party*, *East European Quarterly* (online), 22 June 2005

In the communal, as well as parliamentary and presidential, elections held in 2004, the party was once again confronted with high losses. There were several reasons why the party fared so badly: in spite of the new formation of the leadership under the mayor of Timișoara, Gheorghe Ciuhandu, at the beginning of August 2004, the party was still suffering from the burdens of the 1996-2000 legislative period and the decline resulting from splits in the party and battles over leadership. In addition, the hoped-for broad support from the Romanian Orthodox Church, the trade unions, entrepreneurs, professional groups, artists and intellectuals failed to materialise.

The party, which is now split into two groups that both dispute the other's legitimacy to lead it, has now been reduced to insignificance and has not been able to reposition itself in the Romanian party landscape. It only managed to draw attention to itself once again – and this time, ingloriously: by entering into an agreement with the PSD (sic!!) before the second round of the presidential elections in 2009 “to bring the Romanian society back to the path of normality, the truth, dialogue and national reconciliation”. The PNTCD (Ciuhandu wing) connected the recommendation to elect the social-democratic candidate for the presidency, Mircea Geoană, with its acceptance of the “reconciliation course” of the PSD, and this led to angry protests throughout the country.

Conclusion and outlook

While the PDL, which once again assumed government responsibility in December 2009, as well as other Romanian groups that can be counted as belonging to the centre-right spectrum or explicitly to the Christian-democratic camp, are having difficulties in dealing soundly with Christian-democratic principles and programmes, and using them to provide answers to the challenges of the twenty-first century, an interdisciplinary group of scientists has undertaken the attempt to conceive fundamental standards and instruments as a contribution to the reorganisation of the Romanian state and society in the Christian-democratic sense.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ Cf. Radu Carp / Dacian Gratiian Gal / Sorin Muresan / Radu Preda, *Principles of Popular Thought. Christian Democratic Doctrine and Social Action*, Cluj-Napoca: Eikon, 2006

The starting point is the realisation that while many Romanian parties (PDL, PNTCD, UDMR, etc) consider themselves “people’s parties”, most have merely endeavoured to become EPP members in order to have their programmatic “orthodoxy” confirmed. And their political programmes are correspondingly diverse.

However, professors Radu Carp, Radu Preda and others set different standards in their quest for premises for the indispensable moral reform of Romania and the modernisation of the state. From the Christian-democratic perspective, the state should be capable – even under the conditions of a globalised world – of guaranteeing the balance between the market and social security, and of doing this efficiently, with a minimum of bureaucracy, decentrally, and guided by the principle of subsidiarity.

The first priority appears to be a reform of the judiciary to meet European standards, without which a fundamental reform of the Romanian society is absolutely inconceivable, not least in view of the essential distinction between right and wrong, between “just” and “unjust”.

That is why the Christian-democratic focus on the intermediary level between the state and the citizen also means strengthening Romania's civil society and active partnership with various interest groups and NGOs.

As a result of the successful foundation of the Liberal Democratic Party, the PDL vice-chairman, Valeriu Stoica, sees himself justified in having voted in favour of the establishment of a large centre-right bloc in Romania: “The PDL is the party with the strongest programmatic identity in today's Romania” (2009).

The project of forming such a bloc to the right of the centre is certainly an ambitious undertaking, but at the same time, it is made absolutely essential by the situation in the twenty-first century. According to Stoica, one can not assume that something like a single, universal “just” doctrine will exist, “... a set of principles that would be abstractly valid and have an eternal function”. In the case of Romania, it is important to understand that the country is standing on a historical threshold: for the first time in its history, the country at the gateway to the East identifies itself absolutely with the West and its traditions. This identification

was strengthened even further through Romania's integration into the European structures. Romania has now become part of the "tradition of Western modernity" – capitalism, liberalism and democracy – that sets the West apart from other regions of the world.

This is where the Institute for Popular Studies (ISP), the Liberal Democrats' think tank, can play an outstanding role.

In its prognosis for Romania for 2010, the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) sees signs of stabilisation – especially for the Romanian party landscape – including the decision to elect the district presidents directly, hold the parliamentary and presidential elections at separate times and – last but not least – the reform of the voting laws. "[They] have increased incentives to create broadly based parties rather than political parties dependent on a single or only a few leaders. Voting reforms changed the electoral procedure from proportional voting to a mixture of proportional and absolute-majority systems."²⁴⁶

At the same time, the fact that the rigid positions between the ex-Communists and democratic parties are gradually being overcome and that – with the PDL, PSD-PC and PNL – while a Western-style party spectrum has come into being, marginalising the extreme groups on the left and right is regarded as positive. It is also highlighted that, despite the many corruption scandals and the resulting lack of faith in the institutions, this has not resulted in an increase in extreme anti-system parties.

²⁴⁶ Bertelsmann Transformation Index/BTI 2010 – Romania Country Report, Gütersloh, 2009

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Great Britain: The Tories in Europe

Till Kinzel

Summary

In July 2009, the Conservative Party withdrew from the European People's Party Parliamentary Group. This is only the most recent expression of the ambivalent attitudes of British Conservatives towards the process of European unification, from the Common Market to the European Union of the Lisbon Treaty. Whereas in earlier years, it was the Conservative Party which was in favour of joining the EEC, this pro-European attitude never included any kind of extended federalism or supranationalism. The tensions among the British Tories exemplify Britain's struggle for its proper role in Europe, as well as for the appropriate spheres reserved for state activities and market forces in a good society. The British Conservatives' scepticism towards European unification in terms of federalism is thus linked to concern for the rule of law in a national context and to a rejection of more extensive welfare-state policies.

After the Tories had been defeated by Tony Blair in 1997, many years in the political wilderness followed, as one luckless leader followed the other and the party concentrated more on fostering Euroscepticism than winning elections.²⁴⁷ The Conservative Party was unsure of its aims and did not offer an electable alternative to New Labour. This was a major throwback for a party that, in earlier years, had been famous for its "appetite for power" (John Ramsden) and takes pride in being "the oldest political party in the world".²⁴⁸ Only recently, under the

²⁴⁷ See Ian Gilmour, "Vote for the Beast", London Review of Books, 20 October 2005, online: http://www.lrb.co.uk/v27/n20/gilm01_.html (accessed 13 September 2009).

²⁴⁸ "A Party of Change," The Conservative Party, http://www.conservatives.com/People/The_History_of_the_Conservatives.aspx (accessed 31 August 2009). On the origins of the Conservative Party see John Charmley, *A History of Conservative Politics Since 1830*, Second Edition, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pp. 4-15.

leadership of David Cameron, have the Tories managed to regroup and develop constructive political strategies that make them electable again.

The Tories and Europe: Sir Winston Churchill to Edward Heath

The Tories exemplify the special relationship Britain has with Europe. Europe, understood as the continent, appears to be a serious problem for British Conservatives. Not all of them, of course. In the history of the Conservative Party, attitudes towards Europe, or more precisely, the Common Market, which was later to evolve into the European Union, changed over time. After the Second World War, the war prime minister, Winston Churchill, was defeated in elections that brought in a Labour government. Churchill was generally pro-European; in his famous speech at Zurich University in 1946, he urged a re-creation of the European family after a war that could have brought the “Dark Ages” again. Churchill proposed the following remedy to the dangers of war and deprivation: “We must build a kind of United States of Europe.”²⁴⁹ However, at the time, Churchill did not envisage Great Britain as part of this organisation, as is evident from his concluding remarks that Great Britain and the British Commonwealth, together with the United States and, perhaps, the Soviet Union, “must be friends and sponsors of the new Europe...”²⁵⁰ He urged France and Germany to cooperate in creating the United States of Europe. But there is no indication that Churchill actually wished Britain to join this new Europe, since Britain already had its own international organisation, the Commonwealth. There are, however, uncertainties, as the former President of the European Commission, Roy Jenkins, writes: “Did he intend Britain to be in or out? Was he merely telling others to unite, or was he willing to do so?”²⁵¹ The ambivalence inherent in Churchill’s attitude towards Europe was to stay with the Tories for the following decades.

²⁴⁹ Winston S. Churchill, “A Speech at Zurich University,” in *The Sinews of Peace. Post-war Speeches*, ed. by Randolph S. Churchill, London: Cassel, 1948, p. 199.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

²⁵¹ Roy Jenkins, *Churchill*, London: Pan, 2002, p. 815; cf. 813-819. Cf. also John Turner, *The Tories and Europe*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, p. 43.

Margaret Thatcher and Thatcherism

The ambivalence of the British Conservatives with regard to Europe can be seen in the wide spectrum of positions taken on the subject of entry into the Common Market. Important politicians, including the former party chairman Edward Heath, were fiercely pro-European in the early 1970s, claiming (in a White Paper) that there was “no question of Britain losing essential national sovereignty; what is proposed is a sharing and an enlargement of individual national sovereignties in the common interest.”²⁵²

At the time, opposition to European unification – or rather to Britain’s integration into Europe – came mostly from the Labour Party, which had opted for a referendum on the question of entry into the Common Market. This stance had led J. Enoch Powell, one of the most prominent Tories critical of European integration, to recommend voting for Labour. Powell, a free-market conservative, would later be a harsh critic of the Maastricht Treaty as well – and express the concerns of those in the Conservative Party who wanted to preserve national sovereignty against the encroachments of international organisations.²⁵³

In the further course of events, Margaret Thatcher would become a vocal critic of the way Europe was developing. Her views became so influential that it is necessary to look at the essentials of her position on Europe. As the Heathite Chris Patten – a former minister in Thatcher’s cabinet, who thinks that the effect she had was, in general, “a good thing” – said: “The figure and views of Margaret Thatcher infuse every part of the European debate in the Conservative Party and in Britain.”²⁵⁴ It is, therefore, essential to take a closer look at Thatcher’s understanding of the relationship between Britain and Europe.

²⁵² Quoted in Alan Clark, *The Tories. Conservatives and the Nation State 1922-1997*, London: Phoenix, 1999, p. 420.

²⁵³ Cf. Richard Ritchie (ed.), *Enoch Powell on 1992*, London, 1989; Simon Heffer, *Like the Roman. The Life of Enoch Powell*, London: Phoenix, 1999, pp. 926-927.

²⁵⁴ Chris Patten, *Cousins and Strangers. America, Britain, and Europe in a New Century*, New York: Times Books, 2006, p. 91, 88.

Margaret Thatcher's critical view of European integration was most clearly expressed in her speech at Bruges.²⁵⁵ This speech became famous – or infamous, as the case may be – for its emphatic affirmation of Britain's balance of power politics.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, Thatcher famously argued that “We have not rolled back the frontiers of the state of Britain, only to see them re-imposed at a European level with a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels.” Thatcher expanded upon her criticism of “Europe” in her last book, *Statecraft*, in which she pours scorn on those “Euro-enthusiasts” who speak of a “United States of Europe.”²⁵⁷

It is important to understand that opposition to a dominant influence of legislation originating from Brussels has a lot to do with the Tories' strong emphasis on the rule of law and parliamentary government. Margaret Thatcher was particularly “adamant about the importance of adhering to the rule of law, of supporting individual rights over collective rights, and of an almost unqualified support of the police.”²⁵⁸ There can be no doubt that David Cameron, the current leader of the Conservative Party, follows Thatcher in this, stressing the importance of community action to fight lawlessness in the streets. However, in contrast to Thatcher's famous view that there is “no such thing as society”, Cameron most emphatically stresses that, in fact, there is.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁵ The speech can be found online: “Address given by Margaret Thatcher” (Bruges, 20 September 1988), <http://www.brugesgroup.com/mediacentre/index.live?article=92#britain> (last accessed 21 August 2009); see Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, London: HarperCollins, 1993, pp. 742-746. Cf. also Claire Berlinski, “There Is No Alternative.” *Why Margaret Thatcher Matters*, New York: Basic Books, 2008, pp. 307-342.

²⁵⁶ See Claire Berlinski, “There Is No Alternative.” *Why Margaret Thatcher Matters*, New York: Basic Books, 2008, p. 321.

²⁵⁷ Margaret Thatcher, *Statecraft. Strategies for a Changing World*, New York: HarperCollins, 2002, p. 358. In her critical judgment of the European idea, Thatcher is guided by John Laughland's book *The Tainted Source. The Undemocratic Origins of the European Idea*, London: Little, Brown, & Co., 1997, in which the author seeks to tar the European idea with its alleged origins in Nazi political visions.

²⁵⁸ Richard J. Terrill, “Margaret Thatcher's Law and Order Agenda,” in *American Journal of Comparative Law* 37/3 (1989), p. 456.

²⁵⁹ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, London: HarperCollins, 1993, p. 626. See also John Campbell, *Margaret Thatcher. Volume Two: The Iron Lady*, London:

The pro-market ideas of Margaret Thatcher were strongly influenced by economists such as Friedrich von Hayek²⁶⁰ and think tanks including the Institute of Economic Affairs²⁶¹ and the Centre for Policy Studies (where Hayek was a member of the advisory board²⁶²). According to these ideas, Europe should be conceived mainly as a framework ensuring open access to the market in order to facilitate competition. Thatcher opposed “an inclination towards bureaucratic, rather than market, solutions to economic problems and the re-emergence of a Franco-German axis with its own covert federalist and protectionist agenda.”²⁶³

When Thatcher was ousted from power in 1990, her successor as prime minister, John Major, faced the task of negotiating the Maastricht Treaty. He tried to work out a compromise that would be acceptable to all Tories, claiming that the Maastricht Treaty had actually put a stop to the expansion of federalism. Major further claimed that he had secured an opt-out for Britain from the Social Charter.²⁶⁴ In the late 1990s, Norman Lamont, former chancellor of the exchequer under John Major and a staunch opponent of the single European currency, pointed out that the Conservative Party “had only supported Maastricht because it did not commit Britain to monetary union.”²⁶⁵

Vintage Books, 2008. p. 529-534.

²⁶⁰ See the study on Hayek and Thatcher by Hans-Jörg Hennecke, Friedrich August von Hayek. *Die Tradition der Freiheit*, Düsseldorf: Verlag Wirtschaft und Finanzen, 2000, pp. 325-334.

²⁶¹ See the thorough study on the major “neoliberal” strands of thought after 1945 in Philip Plickert, *Wandlungen des Neoliberalismus. Eine Studie zu Entwicklung und Ausstrahlung der “Mont Pèlerin Society”*, Stuttgart: Lucius & Lucius, 2008, pp. 389-415, esp. 393-397.

²⁶² Hans-Jörg Hennecke, Friedrich August von Hayek. *Die Tradition der Freiheit*, Düsseldorf: Verlag Wirtschaft und Finanzen, 2000, p. 325.

²⁶³ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, London: HarperCollins, 1993, p. 727.

²⁶⁴ John Turner, *The Tories and Europe*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. 152-156; cf. Alan Clark, *The Tories. Conservatives and the Nation State 1922-1997*, London: Phoenix, 1999, pp. 501-505; Chris Patten, *Cousins and Strangers. America, Britain, and Europe in a New Century*, New York: Times Books, 2006, pp. 99-100.

²⁶⁵ Norman Lamont, *In Office*, London: Warner Books, 2000, p. 448. In the early 1990s, Cameron had been an advisor to Lamont. See Philip Lynch, “The Conservatives and the European Union: The Lull Before the Storm?,” in Simon Lee and Matt Beech (eds.), ▷

Although the party took a serious beating in the 1997 general election (dropping from 41.9 percent in 1992 to an almost all-time low of 30.7 percent²⁶⁶), Lamont claimed that, at the time, the party “was far less divided than it appeared. The real story was the party’s uneven but successful transformation from being the party of Europe to being the party of Euroscepticism.”²⁶⁷ In October 1994 Lamont had indeed gone so far as to suggest that Britain “could survive outside the EU”, which was widely interpreted as an argument for Britain’s withdrawal from the European Union.²⁶⁸ The ideological split in the party on the question of Europe, however, would also lead to insecurity among those voters who cherished national sovereignty and abhorred the alleged danger of a European super-state.²⁶⁹ However, the conservatives could not capitalise on the existing unease among Britons about Europe – consecutive party leaders, from William Hague²⁷⁰ to Iain Duncan Smith and Michael Howard, all politically to the right of David Cameron, were unable to stem the tide of Labour election successes.²⁷¹

David Cameron and the Conservatives

Under David Cameron’s leadership of the Conservative Party, so-called Euroscepticism clearly had come to stay. As early as in 2005, Cameron

▷ The Conservatives under David Cameron. *Built to Last?*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 187.

²⁶⁶ See Thomas Mergel, *Großbritannien seit 1945*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005, p. 43.

²⁶⁷ Norman Lamont, *In Office*, London: Warner Books, 2000, p. 448.

²⁶⁸ Geoffrey Wheatcroft, *The Strange Death of Tory England*, London: Penguin, 2005, p. 213; cf. Norman Lamont, *In Office*, London: Warner Books, 2000, pp. 415-418.

²⁶⁹ Cf. Heinz-Joachim Müllenbrock, “Der ‘mitfühlende Konservatismus’ der britischen Tories - Anpassung an den Zeitgeist?,” in *Junge Freiheit*, no. 06/09, 30 January 2009. Online: http://www.jungefreiheit.de/Anpassung-an-den-Zei.144.98.html?&cHash=45d5177c10&tx_tnewspercent5BbackPidpercent5D=432&tx_tnewspercent5Btt_newspercent5D=80303 (accessed 22 August 2009).

²⁷⁰ Thomas Kielinger, “Wo der Tory-Hase hinrennt, ist der Labour-Igel schon da. Gegen Tony Blair hat der Konservative Parteichef William Hague keinerlei Chancen,” *Die Welt*, 21 May 2001.

²⁷¹ Cf. Geoffrey Wheatcroft, *The Strange Death of Tory England*, London: Penguin, 2005, pp. 247-284.

had promised to withdraw from the European People’s Party in the European Parliament – a promise he fulfilled in June 2009 when the results of the election to the European Parliament made this possible. Cameron’s move was clearly motivated by the Conservatives’ unease about “a federalist vision of deepening European Union” attributed to the other member parties in the EEP.²⁷² The Tories under Cameron do not, however, wish to withdraw from the European Union; that Cameron included the former chancellor of the exchequer and staunch pro-European Kenneth Clarke in his shadow cabinet indicates a willingness for expertise in the economic field even if there are still disagreements about the EU.²⁷³ Against an extension of supranationalism, the British Tories argue for more subsidiarity, i.e. “the transfer of decision-making from the European to the national level.”²⁷⁴

Cameron’s task is to find a way to combine the various strands of conservative political ideas in order to create some substantial opposition to the New Labour approach to politics, which had already incorporated some Thatcherite elements.²⁷⁵ Even though Cameron was clearly influenced by the Thatcherite “new right”, he also integrates the old Tory approach of One Nation Conservatism that goes back to Benjamin Disraeli. In his novel *Sybil*, Disraeli criticises the split between the rich and the poor in the first half of the nineteenth century.²⁷⁶ Drawing on the findings of a recent report on Crime and the Poor, the Tories claim that Britain is “heading rapidly back to being a country

²⁷² Kieron O’Hara, *After Blair. David Cameron and the Conservative Tradition*, Cambridge: Icon, 2007, p. 251.

²⁷³ See Sebastian Borger, “Comeback des Tory-Dinos. Der pro-europäische Ex-Schatzkanzler Kenneth Clarke ist zurück in der ersten Reihe,” *Die Welt*, 20 January 2009, online: http://www.welt.de/welt_print/article3056827/Comeback-des-Tory-Dinos.html (accessed 1 September 2009).

²⁷⁴ Philip Lynch, “The Conservatives and the European Union: The Lull Before the Storm?,” in Simon Lee and Matt Beech (eds.), *The Conservatives under David Cameron. Built to Last?*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 192.

²⁷⁵ See e.g. Simon Jenkins, *Thatcher and Sons. A Revolution in Three Acts*, London: Penguin, 2007, especially pp. 235-344. Jenkins uses the term “Blatcherism” to express this fact.

²⁷⁶ See Matt Beech, “Cameron and Conservative Ideology”, in Simon Lee and Matt Beech (eds.), *The Conservatives under David Cameron. Built to Last?*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, pp. 20-25; cf. Hans-Christof Kraus, “Benjamin Disraeli”, ▷

of ‘two nations’.²⁷⁷ “Building one nation” is the Tory response to the challenge of the “broken society” Britain has become.²⁷⁸ Building one nation also includes the rejection of the “state-driven multiculturalism and uncontrolled immigration” attributed to the Labour government; the Conservatives claim that these policies “have led to an increase in distrust and segregation, and left us with divided communities”. The politics of inclusion advocated by the Tories tries to combine an appreciation, and even celebration, of diversity with shared “common civic values and national pride”.²⁷⁹

Even though he is a “dyed-in-the-wool Thatcherite himself”,²⁸⁰ Cameron moved the Conservative Party to the left of the centre. He stresses what he calls (following George W. Bush) “compassionate conservatism” or else “liberal conservatism”, thus trying to shed the image of the Conservatives as the “nasty party”.²⁸¹ Although working to install some kind of affirmative-action procedures to ensure that women and ethnic candidates are selected, he nevertheless claims to speak in the language of meritocracy associated with Thatcherite conservatism.²⁸²

Currently, a fascinating discussion about the appropriate orientation of the Conservative Party in terms of both ideology and policies is taking place. In his attempt to pursue conservative policies in a moderate way,

▷ in *Lexikon des Konservatismus*, Caspar von Schrenck-Notzing (ed.), Graz: Stocker, 1996, pp. 134-136.

²⁷⁷ See Jon Swaine and Tom Whitehead, “Britain is now two nations, Tories say”, *The Telegraph*, No. 944, August 26-September 1, 2009, p. 3.

²⁷⁸ Dylan Jones, *Cameron on Cameron. Conversations with Dylan Jones*, London: Fourth Estate, 2008, p. 136.

²⁷⁹ The Conservative Party, “Community Relations”, online: http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where_we_stand/Community_Relations.aspx (accessed 13 September 2009). See also e.g. Melanie Phillips, *Londonistan. How Britain is Creating a Terror State Within*, London: Gibson Square, 2006.

²⁸⁰ Francis Elliott and James Hanning, *Cameron. The Rise of the New Conservative*, London: Harper Press, 2007, p. 83, here quoted in Simon Lee, “David Cameron and the Renewal of Policy”, in *The Conservatives under David Cameron. Built to Last?* Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 51.

²⁸¹ Cf. Simon Lee, “David Cameron and the Renewal of Policy”, p. 58.

²⁸² Simon Lee and Matt Beech, eds., *The Conservatives under David Cameron. Built to Last?* Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 8.

David Cameron seems to welcome new ideas about how this can be achieved. Phillip Blond, a former theology lecturer, has managed to propose a variant of conservatism that tries to combine the social concerns of older conservatives with a form of market liberalism that is not libertarianism. Blond’s critical stance towards value relativism includes the concern for what Cameron has called the “broken society”. He argues that a “recovery of a national virtue culture is required”.²⁸³ Blond introduced his radical criticism of an unethical capitalism under the slogan of “Red Toryism”. This has not become official Conservative doctrine, but it did foster debate and helped to give Cameron the image of someone who cares about ideas and thinking things through.²⁸⁴

Cameron explicitly claims that a “progressive legacy” drives the Conservative Party and that he would not shy away from instigating necessary changes to bring about a better country: “We want a country that is safer, fairer, greener and where opportunity is more equal. And we have said that we will achieve it through Conservative means – decentralising power and strengthening the institutions of civil society like the family.”²⁸⁵

At present, the British Conservatives have chosen to adopt a fundamentally Eurosceptic attitude in important fields of policy. In fact,

²⁸³ Phillip Blond, “Rise of the red Tories”, *Prospect Magazine*, No 155, February 2009, online: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/blog/ourkingdom/2008/09/19/red-tory> (accessed 13 September 2009); see also Carsten Volkery, “Blond lockt Tories nach links”, *Spiegel Online*, 24 February 2009, online: <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,609322,00.html> (accessed 13 September 2009); John Harris, “Phillip Blond: The man who wrote Cameron’s mood music”, *The Guardian*, 8 August 2009, online: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2009/aug/08/phillip-blond-conservatives-david-cameron> (accessed 13 September 2009); and Phillip Blond, “The new Conservatism can create a capitalism that works for the poor”, *The Guardian*, 2 July 2009, online: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/jul/02/new-conservatism-cameron> (accessed 13 September).

²⁸⁴ Cf. e.g. Franz Walter, “Konservative ohne Ideen: Merkels CDU steuert ins Vakuum”, *Der Spiegel*, 21 August 2009, online: <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,644067,00.html> (last accessed 3 September 2009).

²⁸⁵ David Cameron, “The past, present and future of the Conservative Party”, *Monday*, 7 September 2009, online: http://www.conservatives.com/News/Blogs/The_past_present_and_future_of_the_Conservative_Party.aspx (accessed on 7 September 2009).

Conservative MPs are at present overwhelmingly Eurosceptic – more than ever before.²⁸⁶ Britain under a Conservative government would not, they promise, introduce the euro, ever.²⁸⁷ They regard giving up their own currency as “losing a vital tool for running the British economy in the interests of the people of Britain – and that means an unacceptable loss of the independence of this country.”²⁸⁸ Perhaps ironically, in view of the Tories’ pronounced Euroscepticism, they are fully in favour of Turkish EU membership, with David Cameron disregarding the problems this might entail: “If Turkey wants to be a Western-facing, secular democracy that’s part of NATO, then they should be allowed to join the European Union. It’s simple.”²⁸⁹ British geostrategic thinking thus appears to be at cross purposes with those conservative parties on the continent that oppose full EU membership for Turkey.²⁹⁰ On another note, Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague openly affirmed British realpolitik approaches to foreign policy in the service of British national interests, also deeming refusal of Turkey’s membership an “immense strategic error.”²⁹¹ In addition, further expansion of the European Union has long been regarded by British conservatives as a means to hinder a “deepening” of the Union.²⁹²

²⁸⁶ Philip Lynch, “The Conservatives and the European Union: The Lull Before the Storm?”, p. 196.

²⁸⁷ William Hague, “Why Britain will never join the euro”, http://www.conservatives.com/News/Articles/2009/01/William_Hague_Why_Britain_will_never_join_the_euro_under_the_Tories.aspx (accessed 14 September 2009).

²⁸⁸ “Where We Stand: Europe”, http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Where_we_stand/Europe.aspx (accessed 22 August 2009).

²⁸⁹ Dylan Jones, *Cameron on Cameron*. Conversations with Dylan Jones, London: Fourth Estate, 2008, p. 265; see also *Vote for Change. European Election Manifesto for 2009*, pp. 2, 24, online: http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/European_Election_Manifesto.aspx (accessed 14 September 2009).

²⁹⁰ See for the Tory argument on this issue “Fox: Turkey could be a beacon to the Islamic world”, online: http://www.conservatives.com/News/Articles/2006/09/Fox_Turkey_could_be_a_beacon_to_the_Islamic_world.aspx (accessed 1 September 2009).

²⁹¹ William Hague, “The Future of British Foreign Policy with a Conservative Government”, *The International Institute for Strategic Studies*, 21 July 2009, online as PDF: <http://www.iiss.org/recent-key-addresses/william-hague-address-jul-09/> (accessed 7 September 2009).

²⁹² Cf. Margaret Thatcher, *Statecraft. Strategies for a Changing World*, New York: HarperCollins, 2002, pp. 338-340.

The Tories clearly show no signs of moving in the direction of post-national ideologies because, as conservatives, they believe “strongly in the continued relevance of the nation state and are sceptical of grand utopian schemes to re-make the world.”²⁹³

If a future Conservative government can implement these policies successfully, it will have set a limit to further European integration for all member states of the European Union. What this will mean for the future development of Europe is an open question. Among pro-European politicians on the continent, however, the pronounced Euroscepticism of the British Tories has given rise to serious concerns.²⁹⁴ The European Conservatives and Reformist Group in the European Parliament have expressed their views in the Prague Declaration of Principles, which stresses free enterprise and free trade, the “sovereign integrity of the nation state, opposition to EU federalism and a renewed respect for true subsidiarity.”²⁹⁵

There is reason to believe that leaving the EEP-ED was not a wise move strategically, since it brings the Tories together with continental right-wingers who are widely regarded, and with reason, as “a loony lot on the whole.”²⁹⁶ This fact alone makes it hard to predict whether the new group will be more than a temporary expedient, its fate largely depending on the British Conservatives’ future electoral success. However, British opposition to federalist tendencies may prove not to be overly disruptive in the European Parliament, since the Tories do have some

²⁹³ William Hague, “The Future of British Foreign Policy with a Conservative Government”, p. 8.

²⁹⁴ See e.g. Wolfgang Böhm, “Großbritannien im Wandel: Europas neuer Spaltpilz”, *Die Presse*, 7 September 2009, online: http://diepresse.com/home/politik/aussenpolitik/506516/index.do?v_l_backlink=/home/index.do (accessed 11 September 2009).

²⁹⁵ “The Prague Declaration of Principles of the European Conservatives and Reformist Group in the European Parliament”, online: <http://www.conservatives.com/~media/Files/Downloadablepercent20Files/Praguepercent20Declarationpercent20andpercent20Principles.ashx?dl=true> (accessed 13 September 2009).

²⁹⁶ Kieron O’Hara, *After Blair. David Cameron and the Conservative Tradition*, Cambridge: Icon, 2007, p. 251; cf. Wolfgang Tucek, “Rechtes Schlaglicht auf Neofraktion”, *Wiener Zeitung*, 17 July 2009, online: <http://www.wienerzeitung.at/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=4498&Alias=eu&cob=425963&Page14708=2> (last accessed 13 September 2009).

common ground in a number of policy areas with their Christian-democratic counterparts on the continent. The Tories might even find a way back to the European People's Party if they become disillusioned enough with the company of the more unsavoury EU sceptics on the continent. A sober cost-benefit analysis on the side of the Tories might lead them to the recognition that leaving the EEP-ED comes with a price. It is clear, though, that the major differences of opinion concerning the European Union's future between the mainstream conservative parties on the Continent and the British Conservatives will not go away, even if there should be another rapprochement between them.

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Section III

Quotations

The conservative does not argue against the modern world in the hope of conquering it but to prevent the rights of the soul from losing validity.

Nicolás Gómez Dávila, philosopher

Being conservative means having a profound vision.

Vincent Gallo, actor and director

Socialism is described as that enormous effort for the benefit of mankind that consumes itself so totally that ultimately everybody has everything – the nothing that is left.

Heimito von Doderer, author

Socialism is a philosophy of failure, the creed of ignorance, and the gospel of envy, its inherent virtue is the equal sharing of misery.

Winston Churchill, statesman

Tradition means giving a vote to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, author

Holding on to tradition does not mean preserving the ashes but keeping the flame ablaze.

Joseph Cardinal Höffner

A person who marries the zeitgeist will soon be a widower.

Søren Kierkegaard, philosopher

The ideas a man stands up for are not important; it is how strongly he stands up for them.

Ezra Pound, author

Democrats want to come to power no matter what it costs, whereas Republicans give up their highly qualified, well-paid jobs to pursue their convictions.

Vincent Gallo, actor and director

I wasn't lucky. I deserved it.

Margaret Thatcher, stateswoman

All the great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honour, duty, mercy, hope.

Winston Churchill, statesman

The only thing Socialists understand about money is the fact that they want to get it from the others.

Konrad Adenauer, statesman

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