NEW SOCIETIES OR SOCIAL ANOMIE IN THE EUROPE OF TOMORROW?*

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On May 28th, 1990, two Australian tourists, travelling in a car with an English registration number, were killed in the Dutch city of Roermond; terrorists of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had erroneously taken them for British soldiers. On June 1st, at the station of Lichfield in England, a young recruit was killed; the next day, the same thing happened to a British Major in Dortmund.

In June of the same year, a series of bomb attempts took place in the Basque province of Spain; on August 21st, a man was killed. On October 9th, six Spanish policemen fell victim to a terrorist attempt by the political underground organisation ETA; all in all, in the year 1990 the number of victims of this organisation was 22.

In mentioning these recent events, I want to show that the problem of ethnic and national tensions, conflict and riots, is far from having been truly "solved" in Western Europe at the beginning of the nineties. Even one of the oldest democracies in the world, the United Kingdom, has not been able to settle the Irish problem which has been rankling for nearly two centuries (Aberg n. d.).

If Western Europe has not been able to solve these problems, what are the prospects that the countries and states of post-communist Eastern Europe will be able to do so in the next decades? This is one of the most crucial questions Europe faces today; the answer will determine to a large degree the fate of Europe for the coming decades. Even today, after a century of restructuring of states and frontiers along ethnic-national lines, there still exist some fifty or more ethnic minorities in Europe (Krejci 1978; Stephens 1979).

At present, it seems that parts of Eastern Europe are finding a feasible way out of the highly critical stage after the breakdown of totalitarian regimes. In the Soviet Union, a reactionary coup d'état was put down and – nearly incredible only a few years ago – a peaceful way was found of dividing the last great empire of the world into independent states.

In former Yugoslavia, in the course of a bloody civil war, two new states have been fighting for their independence and for international recognition.

At the turn of the millennium, the map of Europe might look much more colourful than today, but will there be democracy and a more evenly distributed level of prosperity throughout the continent?

There are some reasonable doubts about such optimistic expectations of future developments in Europe. Let me give an example. If a Dutch family today wants to spend the summer holidays in Malaga, on the Spanish Costa del Sol, and decides to travel the 2300 kilometres towards the south by car, they have to cross three political borders. Travelling the comparable distance from Hamburg to Southern Italy, a second family must cross only two borders. Both families can use mostly motorways and if there are two persons alternating with each other in driving the car, they might easily cope with the distance in two days.

If, in a few years, a family from Berlin wants to undertake a journey of comparable distance to Greece, and decides to take the shortest street route, it might well have to pass through six nation states and cross seven political borderlines. I leave it to the reader to assess how many days such a journey would last. For the Berlin family there exists an easy way out of this dilemma by taking a plane. This solution does not exist for the drivers of trucks bringing goods to and from Albania, Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey – and perhaps Macedonia and Montenegro – to Central and North-Western Europe.

This is only an example for the thesis I would like to put forward: Over the long run, the disintegration of the former multinational East European countries into a large number of new, small states might not necessarily be the optimal solution to the demand for political and cultural autonomy, the justification for which is beyond doubt. Or, to state it in a different way, even after many provinces of former multinational communist states have gained political independence, we may not find ourselves automatically on the way to an open, peaceful and prosperous Europe.

The answer to the question, in what ways might the dissolution of the multinational states of Eastern Europe result in positive or negative consequences, depends on two factors: (1) on the ways in which and on the circumstances

under which these old states dissolve and the new nations are established; (2) on the course and shape which the process of European unification itself will take in the future.

To answer these questions, we have to ask: (1) what are the roots of ethnic and national conflicts and processes of identification, and (2) what are the implications of ethnic and national identification and activity for the formation of political states? We can also ask: what is the relationship between ethnic-cultural homogeneity and political autonomy and independence? Is ethnic homogeneity a prerequisite for the building of a state? Or conversely, can people with different languages, religions etc. live peacefully together within a single state?

1. Structural Bases of Ethnic Communities and Nations

Two years or so after the spectacular fall of the Iron Curtain between East and West Europe, opinion among politicians and social scientists seems to be unanimous: the breakdown of the "last empire", the Soviet Union, as well as the disintegration of the multinational state of Yugoslavia were inevitable processes. The deep internal, social, cultural, economic and political splits in these countries and the resulting conflicts of interests had only been "put on ice", if not suppressed by force, during the period of communism and Stalinism. It is no accident, therefore, that they should burst out again today in an explosive manner.

I think that this view is untenable and I would like to offer the following three arguments against it:

(1) There is no fundamental necessity whatsoever for ethnic and national conflicts to evolve wherever people with different languages, religions and so on are living together.
(2) It is not the overthrow of totalitarian communist systems, but rather the remnants of these political systems or the actions of new, authoritarian or quasi-authoritarian political systems, that are at the root of present day bloody ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe.
(3) The prospects for a successful integration of the new East European states into the process of European unification will remain gloomy as long as these remnants are still present and leading to new cleavages in regions which, by virtue of their geographical propinquity alone, cannot but interact peacefully with each other.

Let me elaborate on these themes, first, by looking at the *structural roots* of ethnicity and nationality, and second, by considering these phenomena as ongoing *processes* in the formation of consciousness and identity, of group conflict and collective action.

To begin with the first aspect, what can be considered as the *structural roots* of ethnic and national identification and action? A series of factors are mentioned in the vast literature on this topic; here I will discuss only three, namely, language, religion and economy.

a) Common Language

Language seems to be the most self-evident and fundamental dimension of ethnic identification and community formation. Nearly all ethnic minorities in Europe are distinguished as such on the basis of their language (see Stephens 1979).

From a sociological point of view, it is easy to understand why language plays a primary role in the formation of ethnic communities. Language is the fundamental medium for social interaction and social exchange; to speak with others is itself a basic form of social behaviour. The development of modern media of mass communication and increasing international communication and the related trend toward multi-lingualism certainly exert pressure towards the expansion of the larger "world languages" at the cost of smaller ones. Yet the rise in literacy and education, the increasing self-consciousness of smaller cultures and efforts to revive disappearing traditional languages have operated in favour of the continuing or even increasing importance of language as a basis for collective identification and action.

On closer inspection, however, it is not so evident why the affiliation to a specific language area or differences between languages should give rise to social conflict. Language as such hardly constitutes a basis for any systematic difference of interests between people speaking different languages. A look at the history and sociology of ethnic and national movements confirms this very clearly.

In a study of the use of native and new languages (particularly Spanish) among Indians in Latin America, it was found that language was used by them much more as a social resource for the solution of everyday problems than as a specific marker of cultural identity (Kummer 1990). As with any other commodity with a restricted practical value, people quickly gave up their native language if social pressure or economic necessity made it useful to acquire another language.

We can look at our own countries and regions and see similar phenomena at work. The perseverance of German in South Tyrol as well as the disappearance of Slovenian and Croatian in Carinthia and Styria certainly have much to do with the fact that it is essential for an Austrian citizen, for the purposes of occupational advancement, to speak perfect German, and with the fact that this language is one of the most frequently spoken in Europe.

On the other hand, it would be easy to show that in all those instances where language as such acquires a certain sacredness or "aura" and becomes the central marker of an ethnic or national community, this has happened only as a consequence of deliberate attacks from outside.

Such was the case, for instance, in South Tyrol in the nineteen twenties and thirties. At that time, Mussolini wanted to eliminate by force any remnant of Austrian-German cultural identity among the South Tyroleans (as among the French speaking inhabitants of the valley of Aosta); any use of German in schools, public offices etc. was forbidden. Even names of villages and proper names of families had to be translated to Italian. It is no accident that quite a powerful underground movement soon emerged against this forced "Italianisation". This counter-movement also took some of its strength from the fact that the centralised and atheistic Fascist government was quite alien to the traditionally minded, strongly catholic South Tyroleans. Therefore, the church (in particular the lower clergy) also played a pivotal role in the organisation of underground schools where children could learn at least the basics of writing and reading German.

I must confess that I am personally very proud that my own mother ran the risk of taking on the role of such an "underground teacher" of German in those days.

I would like to mention a third instance which proves that language differences as such need not necessarily be present for pervasive ethnic tensions and conflicts to arise. The example is the conflict, or rather the civil war, between Croatia and Serbia. I have asked several linguists at the University of Graz as well as Yugoslav colleagues what the difference between the Croatians and the Serbians is in terms of language. No one was able to give me proof of any pervasive split in this regard. I have the impression that the small number of words and expressions used by Croatians but not by Serbs, and vice versa, does not distinguish between these two peoples any more (perhaps even less) than, say, between the inhabitants of Styria and those of Vorarlberg in Austria.

b) Common Religion

Religion, too, especially in its organised and institutionalized forms, can become a very powerful base for ethnic and national identification and conflict. The thirty year war in Europe was only one of hundreds of "religious wars" in human history, many of which belonged to the most brutal and long-lasting of all wars. Even the birth of the idea of "Europe" as a cultural entity is due to such a war – the century long fight of Christian European powers against Islam in the late middle and early modern ages.

Religion is still highly relevant for ethnic identification today. It lies behind the long-lasting fight of Irish dissenters against Britain (Catholicism versus Anglicanism). The Jewish nation, the only "people" of the world that has been able to preserve its national identity over centuries without having its own territory, has been able to do so primarily on the basis of religion.

Yet, here also, we cannot say that religious identity or differences between religions as such must necessarily give rise to conflicts. Today, we can observe a strong tendency towards secularisation, particularly in Europe. Religions and churches increasingly lose their importance as institutions with which the wider population identifies. Furthermore, as in the case of language, it is very hard to see how differing religious commitments as such give rise to conflicting interests and social conflict.

The continuing relevance of religion for ethnic and national identification lies in its important potential as a device for the legitimation of strategies and actions which otherwise would appear simply as what they are, namely, brutal and immoral acts of violence.

In Austrian newspapers today, writers commenting on the ethnic conflicts within Yugoslavia often suggest that one of the main reasons for the conflict lies in the fundamental cultural-religious differences between the catholic Slovenes and Croatians on the one side and the orthodox Serbians on the other side. These, it is said, were also subjugated for centuries under Turkish-Islamic rule. If religion were really to lead to such fundamental splits, it is hard to understand why the conflict did not emerge *first* between the Islamic people of Yugoslavia and the other, Christian, nations. On the contrary, the conflict with Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina – this "little Yugoslavia" within Yugoslavia – seems to be a by-product of the main conflict between Christian nations.

As in the case of language, before religion can become a focus for ethnic and national identification, a central prerequisite is attack on it from outside.

Later, I will come back to at least one important mechanism which can lead to religion becoming a quasi-sacred basis for ethnic tensions and conflicts.

c) Economic Community

Two aspects are relevant when speaking about economic activity as a basis for ethnic and national identification and action. An ethnic group must exhibit, first, the character of a relatively integrated and homogeneous community, and second, a minimal degree of socio-economic comprehensiveness and strength.

Large, internal disparities in big states naturally lead to grievances and conflicts between the more highly developed, prosperous regions and the less developed, poor regions. The latter especially will exert pressure on the state to redistribute national resources in their favour. This, however, often gives rise to grievances among the former. They feel that the poor regions are a handicap to their own development, that much of the redistributive action by the state is a waste of resources since most of this money oozes away through illegal actions and corruption.

Looked at from such a point of view, it is not very surprising to find that most collective actions in favour of the devolution of regional sub-units from larger states did not originate among the poorer but among the *richer* regions of these states.

This fact has been observed in Europe time and time again in recent decades. It is evident in the long-standing fight of the Basques and Catalans for autonomy from the Spanish central government; in the successful fight for independence of the Baltic Republics against the central Soviet government (which paved the way for many other similar movements in the Soviet Union); in the increasing support for regional and separatist movements in one of the most developed Italian regions, the Lombardia (*Lega Lombarda*); and also in the fight for independence of the Slovenes and Croatians against central Yugoslav government. In all these cases, collective action originated in regions and among ethnic sub-groups whose level of economic development was clearly above the general level of the whole nation and who wanted to become more autonomous or even independent. It is no accident that in Yugoslavia, for instance, in the first stages of the conflict between the centralised government and the dissenting Northern republics of Slovenia and Croatia, the advocates for the preservation of the unity of the Yugoslav state were not only the centrally minded Serbians but also the poor Southern republics of Bosnia, Montenegro and Macedonia.

There is a second factor regarding the socio-economic structure of ethnic and national minorities that is important here, that is the internal socio-economic structure of these groups. The more an ethnic group approaches the characteristics of a relatively comprehensive "full" (even if small) society, containing a more or less "complete" economic and occupational structure and, in particular, considerable proportions of qualified and higher status groups, classes and elites, the more powerful and successful its ethnic mobilisation will be. (A. Smith speaks here of "lateral ethnics"). Certainly, this also presupposes a minimal demographic size of the group.

The striking difference in the persistence of ethnic and cultural consciousness between the Croatian and the Slovene minorities in east and south Austria on the one hand, and the German speaking Austrian minority of the south Tyroleans in Northern Italy on the other, is closely related to this fact. Austrian Croatians and Slovenes for the most part are descendants of farm workers and servants. (Inequality in the size of farms was traditionally much higher in east and south Austria than in the more mountainous west). A typical south Tyrolean only one or two generations ago was the small, but independent and quite self-conscious "mountain farmer".

Looking at the history of ethnic and national movements in Europe, one could probably detect the same factor in all cases of failure or even total loss of identity as an ethnic group (e. g. when their language disappeared). The weakness of the socio-economic structure of the population (indicated, for instance, in high levels of unemployment and emigration) seems to have played a central role in the weakness or even disappearance of the Gaelic language and culture in Scotland, of German in Alsace, of Corsican in France, of the French speaking population in the Valle d'Aosta and in many other examples.

In most of these cases, as also in the case of the many small Raeto-Roman populations spread over various sub-regions of the Alps, the small numeric size of the population has contributed to the lack of cultural self-consciousness and political powerlessness of the group as a whole.

2.   Events, Actors and Strategies in the Making of Ethnic Communities and Nations

Summarising the facts discussed in the foregoing section, I would like to restate my central thesis: no structural dimension or factor *per se* is sufficient to explain the emergence of ethnic groups or nations as well defined, self-conscious, culturally and politically active social entities. We have to look,

therefore, at the *processes* by which this has come about, at the crucial *historical events*, and at the *strategies* pursued by different social actors towards these aims.

Following well known experts in the field (Breton 1965; Deutsch 1968; Francis 1976; Smith 1991, 20 ff.), I start with the distinction between the concepts of "ethnic categories" and "ethnic communities" or "nations". "*Ethnic categories*" are populations which have some characteristic in common but are not aware of this communality; an "*ethnic community*" emerges when this consciousness begins to develop; a "*nation*" is understood as an ethnic community aiming at full political autonomy, culminating in the development of its own state.

Behind this distinction is the fundamental assumption that the emergence of ethnic groups and nations is not a "natural" or automatic process, but a process deliberately aimed at by individual and collective social actors. It has rightly been said that nations in a sense are "made" by politics.

I would like to discuss – very briefly for reasons of space – three aspects of this process: (1) the act of foundation, (2) the role of cultural and political leaders and (3) the self-perpetuating momentum and determination that such processes can assume.

a) Acts of Foundation

One highly critical and important element in the emergence of an ethnic community or nation is why and how it came into full "existence" for the first time. The way in which this happened determines for generations and centuries the self-image of the nation, how it's several sub-groups interact with each other, and the relationship of the new nation with its neighbouring countries.

Two different forms of founding a new nation may be distinguished. In the first case pressure from outside or domination of one group by another within a nation is involved; this is often connected with force and suppression. In the second case, the nation is founded in a spontaneous, autonomous and democratic way.

Let me illustrate the point with a few concrete cases. As examples of the latter type, I would cite Switzerland and the United States of America. In both cases, the foundation of the new nation was the free and deliberate act of a number of smaller political units. Corresponding to this fact, the constitutions of these states were designed in such way as to give very strong rights to all the sub-units involved (states, cantons etc.).

I am well aware that in practice, both in the United States and Switzerland, the process of foundation was in no way wholly democratic by our present day understanding. In the American case, citizenship rights were granted to the black population only after a civil war; in the Swiss case, several modifications of the original constitution became necessary. Nevertheless, it is a matter of fact that especially in Switzerland four different ethnic communities or sub-nations have lived together relatively peacefully for centuries; I have never heard that the French or Italian speaking Swiss population would prefer to join the states of France or Italy.

The high level of social and political integration of this multinational state contrasts sharply with the case of Belgium. This nation was more or less created from outside. During its history, internal and external borderlines (such as those between Belgium and the Netherlands) were frequently changed. What is even more important, during the 19th century, the French speaking Wallonic language group clearly dominated the nation, whereas in recent decades the faster demographic growth and stronger economic power of the Flemish group has led the French speaking population to feel that they are losing out.

Thus, we can observe – as in many other similar cases – that an initial asymmetric relation between two groups leads to continuing and long-lasting distrust and conflict between them.

Many other examples from European history could be mentioned here. For instance, the deep seated distrust felt by many countries of the aggressive states of Russia and the Soviet Union, and of the German Reich after the war of 1870 and the First World War; the distrust between the successor states to the Hapsburg monarchy created by the victorious powers in 1919. One can also imagine the consequence that the terrible war between Croatia and Serbia will have for the relationship between them for generations to come.

Thus, the way in which a nation state comes into existence has important consequences for its future course: Only a peaceful and democratic act of foundation creates a basic trust both among its own several sub-groups and with its neighbours, a factor which is indispensable for peaceful integration and development.

b) Religious, Intellectual and Political Leaders

The importance of the role of historical personalities who act as leaders in the process of definition and organisation of ethnic communities and nations can hardly be overestimated. Intellectual and political leaders can be considered as

entrepreneurs without whom feelings of belonging to a nation could hardly develop. Only through their actions do ethnic and national sentiments and feelings become awakened and strengthened in a way that enables them to play a fundamental role in the overthrowing of regimes and the emergence of new states. Intellectuals and politicians systematically further this awakening since it gives them personal influence and power and promotes their aim of becoming spiritual and political leaders of historical stature.

This fact has a positive as well as a negative side. A certain level of national identification is essential for the integration and functioning of modern democracies. Especially in post-communist East European countries, nationalism now has a significant role to play since a vacuum exists after the breakdown of the totalitarian system and the subsequent lack of fully developed structures of a "civil society" (Staniszkis 1991).

Three groups of such leaders might be distinguished. The first are *intellectuals* – historians, literary scientists and others – who play important roles in the early stages of ethnic and national movements. They "invent", so to speak, the idea of a nation by bringing to light history and myths, by creating literary languages and literatures, by giving self-consciousness to their cultures as a whole. Their activities are far from being purely of a scientific character; very often they pursue openly political aims.

Such men played important roles in the 19th century, during the first wave of nationalism in Europe, especially in Germany and Italy. Likewise today, we can hardly overestimate their influence in Eastern Europe. The political careers of former literary men like Vaclav Havel, Vytautas Landsbergis, Swiad Gamsachurdia, and also Franjo Tudjman and Vuk Draskovic are proof that the borderline between the cultural and political fight for national autonomy, independence and greatness is often blurred.

In this context one has to mention also the role of *churches and religious leaders*. Typically, religious leaders do not intervene openly in ethnic and national conflicts. Nevertheless, it is often the case, directly and indirectly, that their actions and comments on such conflicts carry great weight. It is no accident that the catholic church in Europe today has a very strong anchorage among the population in those countries and ethnic groups where it played an important and active role against threats and force from outside as, for instance, in Ireland, Poland and South Tyrol. One is reminded here of the role Polish Pope John Paul II played in the resistance of unions and people against the communist government in his country.

Also, in former Yugoslavia, the role of the churches seems highly relevant. The fact that, in the forties, high officials of the catholic church in the Fascist state of Croatia seem to have participated actively in terrible massacres is certainly still a problem today. At the present time, one reads that the orthodox church of Serbia is blaming its own political leaders not for their aggressive actions but – on the contrary – because their behaviour is too *compliant*. Again, I can not emphasise too strongly how fatal such actions can be for future peaceful co-existence.

c)   *Spirals of Distrust, Hostility and Violence*

After the last statements it is not necessary to say very much on this point. The central argument is simple: as with social behaviour in general, nationalistic feelings and actions in particular often take a course and have outcomes that are very different from those that the participants initially intended or foresaw.

Let me give a simple example (quoted from Thomas Schelling 1960, 207 f.):

If I go downstairs to investigate a noise at night, with a gun in my hand, and find myself face to face with a burglar who has a gun in his hand, there is the danger of an outcome that neither of us desires. Even if he prefers just to leave quietly, and I wish him to, there is a danger that he may think I want to shoot, and shoot first.

Mutual distrust between two persons, groups and other collectivities leads to a fear of becoming attacked by the other. Actions might be taken to prevent this, which – as a consequence – reinforce distrust and hostility. Altogether, this leads to a "spiral" of reciprocal, hostile acts and ultimately to open force and violence.

The central point is that it is not only the personal characteristics of irresponsible political leaders or unbridgeable differences between ethnic and national groups that may be most crucial in unchaining bloody ethnic conflicts. Rather, it is the nature of the process itself as it slips from the control of the participating parties. Thus, even many of the present day political leaders in the former Yugoslavia, as well as those in other post-communist East European nations, might have acted differently and would have used the dangerous instrument of aggressive nationalism more cautiously if they had fully foreseen the consequences of their actions.

3. European Unification and Small Nations

I would like to draw some conclusions on the role of small nations in the process of European unification. The first question is, what can small nations expect to gain from this process?

a) What Small Nations can Gain (and Lose) from European Unification

I would like to present a few simple but basic data indicating the role and influence of small nations in Europe today. *Table 1* gives a first estimate of the relative influence of small compared with large nations.

Table 1
A first estimate of the relative power and influence of small nations in Europe
(groups of states by size)
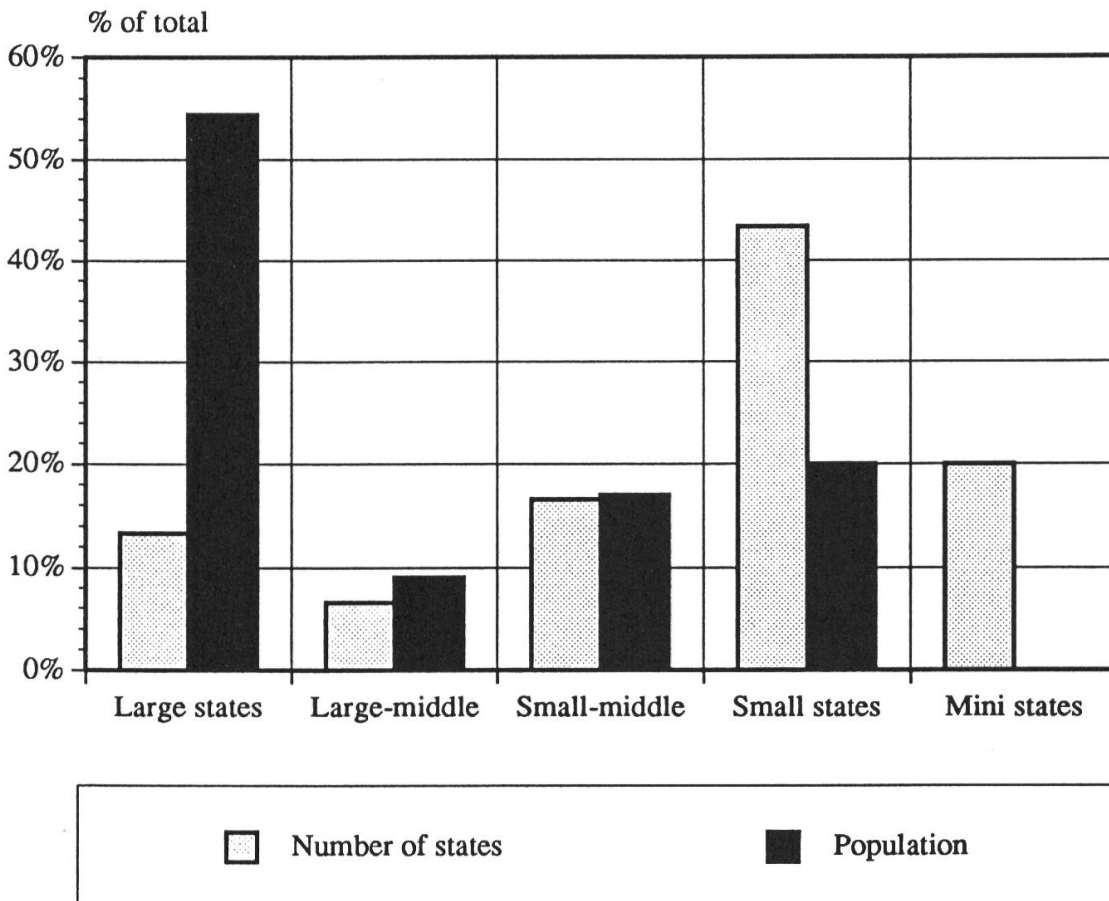
Source: Länder der Erde (1986)

The facts are quite clear. Without the former Soviet Union, which I consider as belonging to another "macro-region" (see Haller 1990 and Haller and Hollinger 1987 for a discussion of this concept), Europe today, in terms of sheer *numbers*, is clearly dominated by small nations. As against four large nations with more than 50 million inhabitants and two larger middle-sized nations (with around 35 million), there are five smaller middle-sized states (with around 15–20 million inhabitants), thirteen small nations (each with under 10 million) and six mini-states (less than half a million) in Europe today.

Facts look very different in terms of *population*. Here, the four large states alone comprise more than 50% of the total European population; the nineteen small and mini-states together comprise a fifth or less of all Europeans.

Do these relationships look different from the point of view of economic power and political influence? *Table 2* shows the contrary: both in terms of economic strength and military force the dominance of the large over the small nations is even more pronounced. Comparing 28 nations, the four largest comprise about half of the population but 65% of total economic product (GNP) and 62% of all defence expenditure.
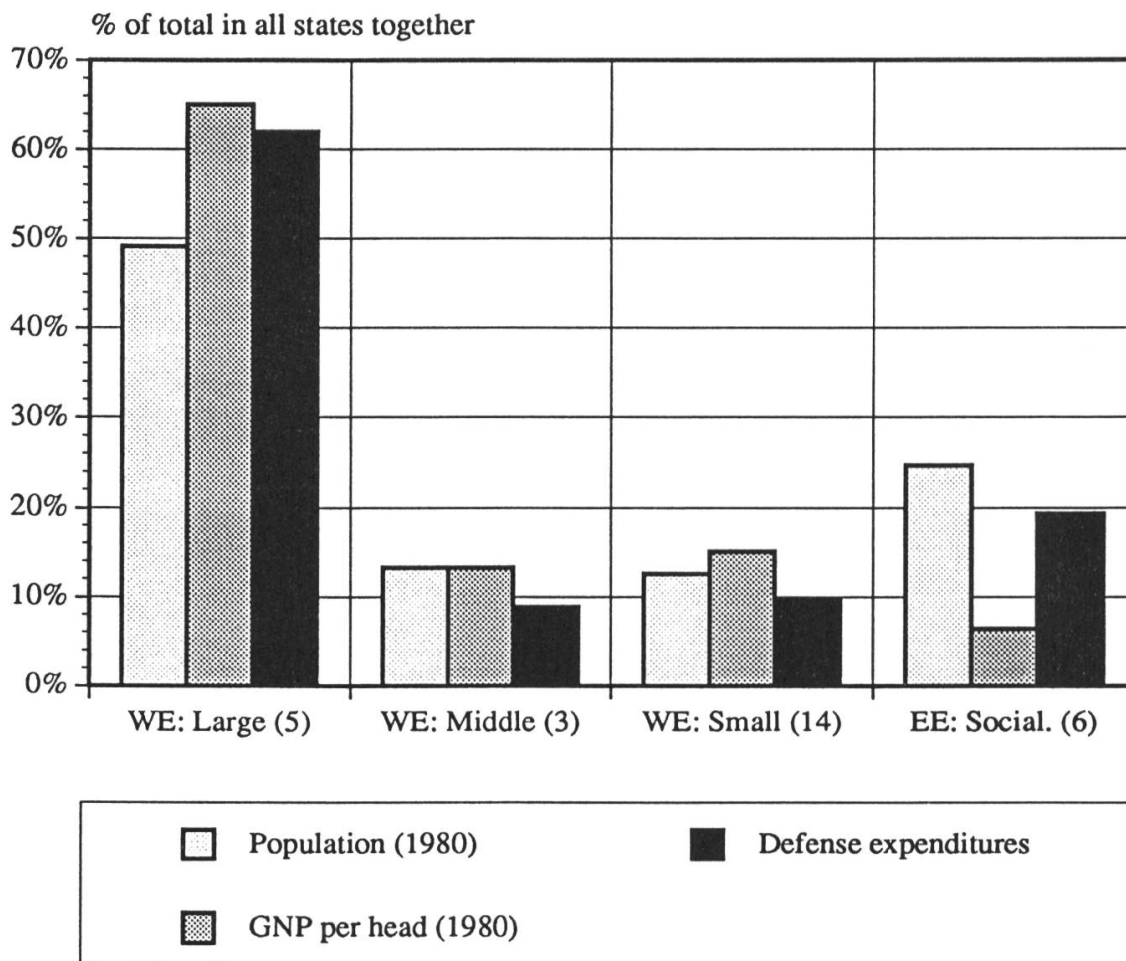
Thus, we must draw the conclusion that the relative influence and power of any one of the small nations in Europe today is probably extremely modest. A close look at the realities of international relations, diplomacy and military relations would certainly confirm this thesis. Small nations in Europe have been, and today still are, subjected frequently to the decisions and pressures of larger nations, both European and also world powers.

Primarily one tends to think of the suppression of the smaller East European nations by the Soviet Union over the last half a century. But in the West, also, large powers have frequently intervened more or less directly if small nations seemed to act in ways which threatened their presumed interests. A case in point was the intervention of the United States and NATO against the formation of an independent defence alliance by the Nordic countries in the early fifties (Gantzel 1976).

In Austria today, we often hear arguments in favour of joining the European Community which state that only by doing so will Austria be in a position to influence directly the decisions taken in Brussels. Because these decisions are extremely important for all West European countries, we would also be affected by the consequences of remaining outside the EEC.

Is there any real benefit for small nations in joining larger, supra-national units like the EEC? Let us consider briefly the economic aspects. In Austria,

Table 2

Demographic, economic and military power of European states by size and system

% of total in all states together

	WE: Large (5)	WE: Middle (3)	WE: Small (14)	EE: Social. (6)

☐ Population (1980)   ■ Defense expenditures

▨ GNP per head (1980)

Sources: Länder der Erde (1986); Groeninck (1988)

and in most other countries that intend joining the EEC, it is here that large gains are expected. Are these expectations well-founded?

I have quite serious doubts in this regard. *Table 3* gives a simple cross-classification of West European states by size and economic affluence. The facts are quite clear: First, size as such is practically unrelated to economic wealth. Small nations are both among the richest and among the poorest nations in Europe. (Indeed, we find only small nations among the most well-to-do). The large nations lie mostly in the middle. Second, interest in membership and citizenship in the EEC does not seem to be related to the wealth of a nation. On the one hand, two of the richest nations in Europe (Switzerland and Sweden)

Table 3

The Distribution of West European States by Classes of
Size and Economic Affluence

| Economic affluence (GDP/head in Ecu's 1984)	Size (in Millions of inhabitants)	
	Middle-sized and large states (35 and more)	Small States (under 15)
25% and more above average (14.000 +)		Luxemburg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland
10–15% above average (12.000–13.999)	France, Germany (FRG)	Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands
Around average (9.000–11.999)	Italy, United Kingdom	Austria, Belgium
25% and more below average (5.000–8.500)	Spain	Greece, Irland, Portugal

Source of data: Sinclair (1988).

are not EEC members; on the other hand, the three poorest nations are. Thus, being a member of the EEC is hardly related to the wealth of a nation – if at all. On the contrary, there might even exist a reverse effect, as *Table 4*, in fact, indicates.

Here we can see that *interest* in a "European citizenship" is significantly higher among the four poorest EEC member nations than among the rest (an outstanding case is Italy with its very high level of EEC support). I suppose that support for joining the EEC would be even higher in the small states of East Europe.

What was, and is, the main motive and driving force behind the powerful process of integration that we can observe in Western Europe since the sixties? I think this is quite clear. It was not in the first instance the wish to realise a new, culturally and politically unified "European nation"; rather it was primarily pressure from the world economy and national competition. The large European multinational corporations were and still are the main supporters of economic

Table 4
European citizenship – a "good thing" by size of nation

% agree "European Citizenship - a good thing"

|	Large states				Middel-sized/small states							
	UK	F	FRG	I	DK	LUX	B	NL	IRL	GR	E	POR
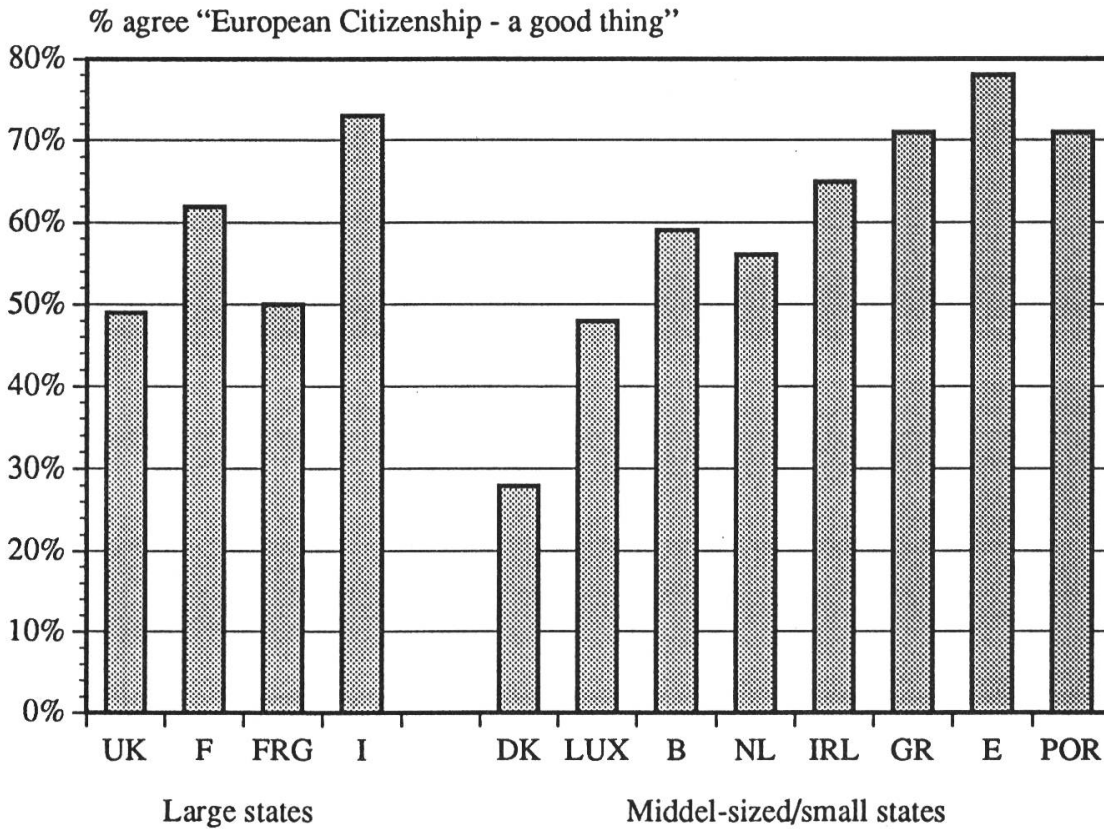
Source: Eurobarometer 1990.

integration (Galtung 1973, Holland 1980, Narr 1989). By creating a huge unified internal market, better use can be made by large enterprises of economies of scale and American and Japanese competition can be counterbalanced more effectively.

From this point of view it is hardly surprising that the larger European nations are quite strong supporters of the Common Market, since they have the largest and most powerful firms. A closer look at their behaviour in several other respects, however, would probably show that they are supporters of European integration only in those instances and areas where they can profit from integration.

I would like to give a small, recent example of this. I was personally involved in the organisation of the First European Conference of Sociology which took place in August 1992 in Vienna. Here, the number of fee-paying

participants can be seen as a good indicator of social scientists' perceptions of the relevance of the exchange of ideas on a European as against a purely national level. What we see in *Table 5* is exactly the reverse of the relative position of the different nations in terms of economic and military power shown earlier. Sociologists from smaller nations seem to be much more interested in a European wide exchange of ideas than sociologists from larger nations. In the case of the latter, it might even be more prestigious and useful to present a paper at a large national conference than at an international one.

Table 5
Participants at the first European conference of sociology 1992

% of total population/participants (N = 602)
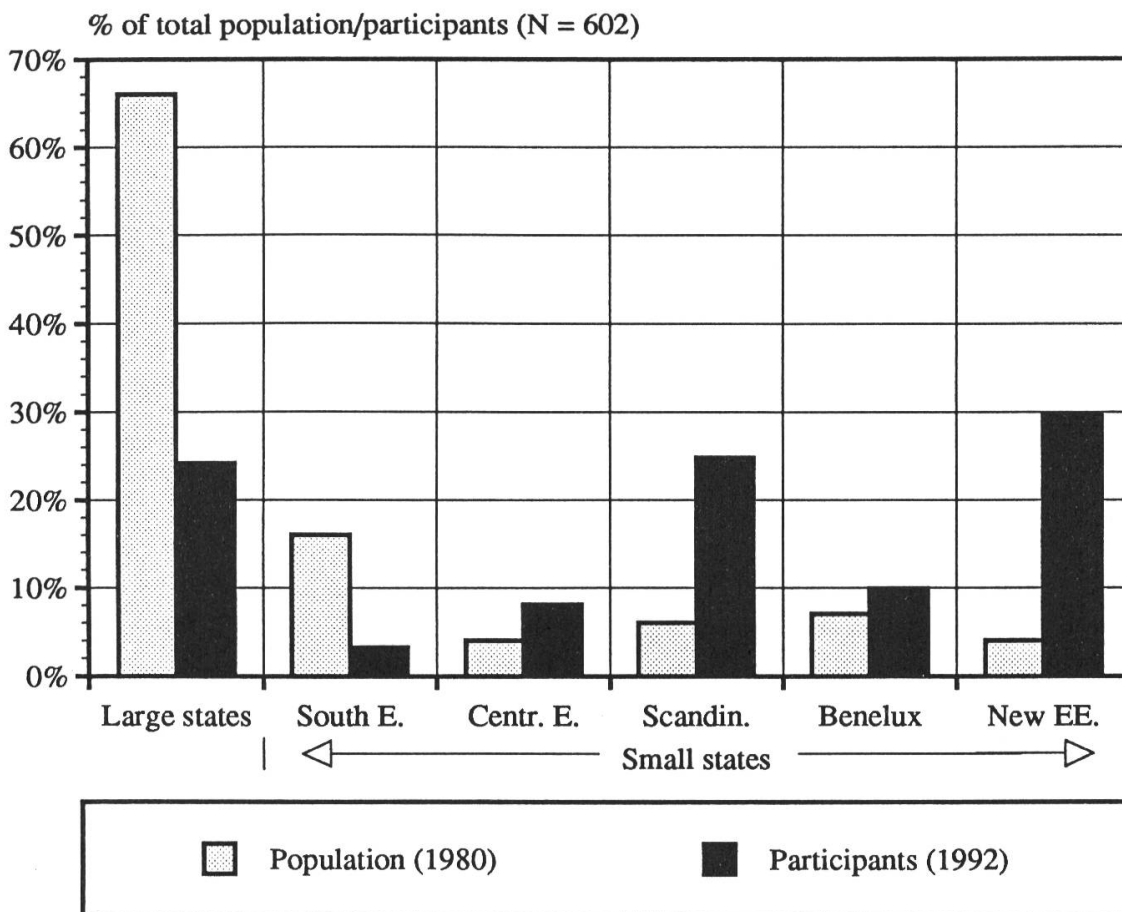
Source: Austrian Sociological Association/Organization Committee for the 1st European
        Conference of Sociology, Vienna 1992.

I do not see these facts about the forces driving European integration as purely negative. Certainly, the economic integration of Europe might bring several benefits to all participants involved. We should not forget, however, that there will also be considerable costs involved in this process.

For some years there has been a debate about the role of large and small social units in society. Authors like Leopold Kohr (1986) and E. F. Schumacher (1977) have pointed rightly to the fact that there are clear limits to the optimal size of all social units, whether organisations, cities or states. Beyond the limits of their optimal size, these units become overburdened with administrative, military and other costs necessary only for maintaining the functioning of the unit itself. Moreover, it is a matter of fact that many social problems, like criminality, increase over-proportionally with the increasing size of cities and nations. Contrary to this, social and political integration and participation, economic efficacy and scientific and cultural creativity are proportionately higher in well-developed small nations.

From these arguments, I can now draw the two remaining general conclusions.

b) The Relation between Ethnicity and Citizenship in True Democratic Nations

The first concerns the relationship between ethnicity and citizenship *within* the old and new, the large and small nations in Europe.

I have argued that no structural criterion of ethnic affiliation as such is able to constitute a sufficient basis for the emergence of a political unit. This makes a deliberate act of foundation necessary. It necessitates, furthermore, the elaboration of a political constitution whose general principles have nothing to do with ethnic and cultural characteristics and divisions as such. Rather, a true democratic state must be one that grants full rights of participation to all its citizens, irrespective of their personal ("innate") characteristics. In the case of ethnic and national minorities, however, this also implies granting additional, *positive rights* or even privileges.

To give just one example: even in the case of quite a small ethnic-linguistic minority, its members must be provided with schools in their own language; if they live in a linguistically mixed area, even people speaking the main language of the state should be able to understand the language of the minority! It is quite clear than many West European countries – including Austria – have not yet met these demands fully.

Thus, what is needed *within* all European nations, is a strict distinction between the concepts of an ethnically or culturally defined, homogeneous "nation" and the political-democratic idea of the "state" (Lepsius, 1988). What is needed is full adherence to the second concept of the state. Given the continuing internal ethnic-cultural heterogeneity of many, even quite small, European states, only an understanding of the state in the latter sense guarantees peaceful co-existence within states, as well as peaceful relations between states. Austrians can identify with German culture, and equally with the state of Austria and Austrian variations of German culture. Similar considerations apply to French and Italian speaking Swiss citizens and to many other national groups in Europe.

c) How European Integration Should be Shaped in Order to Meet the Interests of Small Nations

My main conclusion concerning the strict distinction between ethnicity and citizenship applies also to the process of integration at the European level. Given the high level of historical, cultural, political and social integration of most present-day nation states in Europe, I agree with Lepsius (1988) that the new, integrated European Community cannot become something other than a multi-cultural or "multi-people unit" (*Vielvölkerstaat*). The European Community will be not only multi-ethnic in its composition, but also multinational. European unification can exist only in the development of a "state of many nationalities", but not of a national state in the sense of the United States with its high level of cultural and political integration.

This idea, that "*nationalities*" (that is relatively sovereign cultural and political units) must remain the basis for Europe, has several consequences (see also Francis 1965).

The first is that there must be some form of *corporate representation* of the interests of the single nations. I fully agree with many critical observers (as, for instance, Ralf Dahrendorf) that the European Community as it presently exists is clearly deficient in the extent of its democratic legitimation. Yet, even if the idea of direct election to the European Parliament were fully realised, it would not correspond to the requirement of a "state of nationalities".

In a directly elected European Parliament, small nations are very weakly represented compared to the demographically much larger nations. It is no accident that the extension of the rights of the European Parliament is, therefore, not favoured by some small members of the EEC, such as Portugal. Only in the Council of Ministers, which is a corporate representation, do small countries have – at least theoretically – an equal chance of participating in the common

decision-making. Moreover, behind the idea of direct elections to the European Parliament by the citizens of all nations, lies the idea of a truly integrated "nation state".

The second requirement for the process of European unification concerns, thus, the question of what this corporate representation would look like. In fact, small nations may have to play a very crucial role in this regard. They should not, as is presently the case, look on the Community only as a "Garden of Eden" which will guarantee them economic prosperity for all time to come. Rather, they would have to define the constitution of the Community and its role in the world in a new way.

I think that in this respect a new Europe of tomorrow could play a positive role and provide an example to the world. One could even make the apparent weakness of present-day Europe – with its internal political fragmentation – into a strength. As the Gulf war has shown, for instance, in such a situation it is very difficult to take quick decisions which can affect other nations very badly – in this case, to intervene massively with military forces. Human history probably shows quite clearly that most wars have been initiated by large, highly armed nations. The Europe of tomorrow could develop a model of a large, multinational and peaceful nation which deliberately rejects the transfer of its economic and cultural power to aggressive military power.

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