Inequality, Democracy, and Parliamentary Discourses

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In April 1997, Vaclav Havel gave an important and widely reported speech in the Deutscher Bundestag (German National Assembly). Marking a new phase in the process of European integration, his speech began thus:

> After some initial agonizing I decided not to think about what is expected of me, to set aside all lists of politically appropriate remarks, and not to experience this responsibility as a trauma but to make the most of this opportunity to concentrate on a single theme, one which to my mind is exceptionally significant and topical. This theme is nothing more nor less than our perception of one's homeland. I have made this choice for two reasons: the first is that the Czech Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany have one important thing in common. In their present form they are very young states that in many ways are still looking for their identity and are consequently redefining what makes them the homeland of their citizens. And yet, paradoxically enough, both our countries have a long tradition of investigating the nature of their national identity and of cultivating or criticizing different forms of their patriotism. The second reason is the ongoing, unprecedented process of European integration, which compels not only you and us but all Europeans to reflect again on what, in this new age, their homeland means or will mean to them, how their patriotism will coexist with the phenomenon of a united Europe and, principally, with the phenomenon of Europeanism. To what extent is it still true that our native land means simply the nation-state in the classic sense of the term and patriotism merely love for our nation?

In this speech, Havel alludes to the past, present, and future of the two countries and also of Europe. The tensions between the traditional nation-state and new supranational entities like the EU are mentioned as relevant for the discursive construction of identities. Havel also notes the most important strategy and component of identity construction: the question of being same, equal, or different than others. Third, the past is discussed, a most difficult past for the joint and individual histories of these two countries, implicating the Nazi past, the communist past, and the attempt of both states to face and confront these memories. Fourth, Havel discusses the tension between "homeland" and "global entities," which we find expressed today in globalization rhetoric on the one hand, homeland rhetoric on the other. All these topoi to which Havel refers are important in the attempt to construct a new European identity along the frontiers of a New Europe — which, of course, means Western Europe plus perhaps some of the former Eastern Bloc countries. New borders have been drawn, mainly on an economic level, and we hear the slogan "Fortress Europe" again and again.

Havel captured many of the themes that have since preoccupied leading European politicians such as Joschka Fischer, Jacques Delors, Jacques Chirac, and Romano Prodi, all of whom attempt to sketch a new model for the organization of Europe and for European values. This project is fueled, in part, by the debates on EU Enlargement; however, migration, racism, anti-Semitism, and the inclusion/exclusion of minorities and immigrants also play a significant role. In addition, as Prodi emphasized in his speeches throughout 2000, there is much concern about how to preserve traditional European values and Europe's distinctiveness vis-à-vis the United States and Japan. Prodi also stressed the distrust and discontent among "European citizens," who suspect that EU organizations are undemocratic and that decisions are made "behind closed doors." Moreover, with their individual economies, histories, citizenship laws, and attitudes toward EU Enlargement and the EU organizations, considerable ten-

sion exists between the European nation-states on all of these questions. Attempts to resolve some of these tensions were seen most recently at meetings of the European Council in Nizza 2000 and Stockholm 2001.

A discourse analysis and study of various genres — speeches, meetings in the EU organizations, national parliamentary debates, and interviews with EU officials — provide insight into the processes of constructing European identities, citizenship, and democracy in the European Union nation-states. Drawing on studies of this type conducted in the Discourse, Politics, Identity unit of the Austrian Academy of Sciences,[1] I will link research on national and European identities to research on immigration debates in six European Union countries.[2] Of particular importance here is the extent to which globalization trends and the associated coming together of nation-states have exposed new discourses of inclusion/exclusion, and, on the basis of these changes, the extent to which traditional values and institutions/organizations still have a role. Specifically, I will expand upon a large interdisciplinary study, *European Union Discourses on Un/Employment*,[3] and consider new developments in the EU organizations and in European nation-states that we have found striking in our ethnographic fieldwork and empirical research. In this study, we analyzed the recontextualization of certain arguments about employment policies evident in interviews, committee meetings, debates in the European Parliament, and also in written genres like policy papers, resolutions, and presidential decisions of the EU. Among many other significant results, we found the above-mentioned tensions to be very relevant and dominant. Secondly, we were able to track the development of various EU organizations from economic interest groups to value-oriented entities. The tension between globalization rhetoric and homeland rhetoric was a third major finding, manifested, *inter alia*, in debates about legal measures on immigration. Thus, I will also draw on another recent study, *Racism at the Top*.[4]

After some preliminary theoretical observations on supranational organizations and the discursive construction of identities in the EU, I will draw upon a sample of interviews with members of the EU Commission and the European Parliament, who were asked to define and discuss "European" and "European employment policies." Then, using the models and analysis that Peter Muntigl, Gilbert Weiss, and myself developed as an ethnographic approach in Critical Discourse Analysis,[5] I will explore the search for a new European identity in a typical EU network, the Competitiveness Advisory Group, and consider the functions of such new knowledge elites and networks.

Finally, to illustrate the tension between homeland rhetoric and globalization rhetoric, I will turn to parliamentary debates in six EU member states — the UK, France, Austria, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain — discussing the conflict management implemented by the EU after the installment of Austria's rightwing government in February 2000, the first official intervention into the governmental politics of a nation-state by the EU. This case exemplifies both the EU's attempt to craft "European" democratic values and the role of expert com - mittees in such a process.[6] Like the attempts to cope with immigration, the confrontation with right-wing populist parties represents a test case for European democracies.

Networks, Globalization, and Homeland Rhetoric

The first thesis is that discourses of inclusion and exclusion have remained a constitutive element of political communication, of a politics of identity and difference. At the same time, dynamic borders have been and are being created, in both time and space, a process described by Anthony Giddens as "time and space/time-space distanciation."[7] David Harvey has also demonstrated these tensions empirically in a number of areas of politics and culture.[8] The sense of unsettlement generated by

different types of globalization gives rise to a yearning for simple answers, and these in turn lead to ever more fragmentation and insecurity, contradictions and dichotomies (well described by Stuart Hall some years ago). Concepts such as time, space, border, dichotomies such as "us" and "them" need to be thoroughly reviewed in light of new public spaces and the loss of traditional political values.

Over the past four decades, a complex set of institutions has evolved at the European level. These often were designed to manage growing interdependencies and to coordinate cross-national policy making. Political sovereignty may still rest with states, but in important areas, policy making is also the responsibility of European institutions. How the proliferation and deepening of European institutions have affected the political identities of people living in Europe is unclear. Certainly, the history of some nations begins with the state and its cultivation of national sentiment. Are European institutions having a similar effect on political conceptions in Europe? Are they producing a perception of common fate and unified political identity? The process of institutionalizing Europe might also heighten state and national fears and produce backlash movements to defend state sovereignty and cultural autonomy. Moreover, the debate about a European constitution and restructuring the EU is dominant nowadays. Thus, it is important to study the role of suborganizational systems, the development of new public spaces and networks, and the debate about the aims and goals of the EU, which began life as an economic entity (and, of course, still is) but is now also discussing values and ideals.

The second thesis is that experts, using knowledge management and networking strategies, have replaced older decision-making structures in organizations, governments, and nation-states. This is an immediate consequence of globalization: supranational dynamic and flexible commissions and committees are supplanting cumbersome national institutions to an ever greater extent. In this way, in many areas of life, rapid decisions and judgments that in static bureaucratic systems took too long and were beset with too many obstacles have become both vital and possible. Time has accelerated, and now transcends borders. Problems have become more complex, and so knowledge and expertise are more relevant than ever before. Old-style bureaucrats cannot maintain an overview of this complexity. We therefore speak of new elites, of elites of knowledge.

Let me briefly tie these comments to research on organizations. The study of organizational discourses and practices has always centered around the parameters of time and space. In this work, organizational meanings have been considered both diachronic or logo-genetic, and synchronic or intertextual.[9] More recently, as mentioned above, the notions time-space distanciation and time-space compression have been used to describe both organizations in general and organizational interactions specifically. Time-space distanciation enables the extension of social, organizational, and spatial relations over time, mainly through the storage of both meanings and resources (in, for example, databanks, expert practices and procedures, but also interior spaces and buildings). Time-space compression is mainly that which results from the newly emerging communications technologies, and concerns the effects of these technologies on situated interaction.[10]

The Politics of Identity and Difference

Let us now turn to our main subject, the discursive construction of identities in the EU organizations. The politics of identity and difference has become decisive in our globalized world: globalization rhetoric and homeland rhetoric are in a state of dialectical opposition that is manifest in the conflicts between supranational identities (such as the EU) and national (nationalist) and populist movements. Seyla Benhabib has the following to say on this matter:

> Since every search for identity includes differentiating oneself from what one is not, identity politics is always and necessarily a politics of the creation of difference. One is a Bosnian Serb to the degree to which one is not a Bosnian Moslem or a Croat... What is shocking about these developments, is not the inevitable dialectic of identity/ difference that they display but rather the atavistic belief that identities can be maintained and secured only by eliminating difference and otherness. The negotiation of identity/difference is the political problem facing democracies on a global scale[11]

The dichotomization of this complex world into such simple categories is truly the constitutive feature of political linguistic usage, persuasive communication, and political action, but in particular of populist rhetoric, even when viewed from a historical perspective. I should like to turn to this feature by exploring this kind of rhetoric as a response to globalization phenomena.

One of the uses of the division between "us" and "them," between globalization rhetoric and homeland rhetoric, is to present one's own actions positively and, conversely, the actions of others negatively. This is a phenomenon that may be given a clear social-psychological explanation, and which researchers like Gordon Allport and Henri Tajfel spoke of many years ago.[12] "We-and-the-other" discourses have several functions, and in particular that of constituting identity but thereby also that of delimiting and excluding.

The work of constituting, delimiting, and excluding is evident in all the examples taken from our study of EU organizations and presented here. In the first example, European Commission employees and members of the European Parliament (MEPs)[13] were asked "Do you consider yourself to be European and, if so, what are the characteristics of being European?" This question required rather direct self-labeling. The characteristics of "European" most frequently mentioned by all interviewees, grouped according to EU organizational affiliation, are summarized in Table 1.

Although no definitive comparison among groups is possible, it appears that MEPs and EC officials, while overlapping in the mention of several characteristics, place different emphasis on certain features. Note, for example, that more than half of the Commission officials (6 of 10) stress the "added value" of the member states being united in the European Union. In the words of one official (EC8), it is necessary to "capture Europe's diversity in an economic way," that "Europe's strength is its diversity." In other words, this economic characteristic underscores the legitimacy of the EU. Working together under "one roof," member states can prosper more than if they were to act independently. Among MEPs, on the other hand, no single cluster of characteristics stands out.

When we combine the responses of all three groups, however, we see that certain characteristics of "European" are somewhat more prominent than others: (1) the "added value" of a united Europe; (2) generally shared cultural, historical, and linguistic traditions, differences notwithstanding; (3) the European social model, one that is emphatically not the same as that of the US or many Asian countries; and (4) Europe as a direction or model for the future. Examining these attributes more closely, we could reasonably argue that they resemble the "matrix of contents" that captures themes relevant to the discursive construction of a nation in the linguistic construction of the *homo Austriacus*: a common culture, a common political present and future, a national body, and the "narration and confabulation of a common political past."[14] Among the characteristics of "European" highlighted by the interviewees, there are repeated references to a common culture and past (i.e., shared cultural, historical, linguistic traditions; similar social models) and a common present and future (i.e., European social model; "added value" of being united; a way for the future). Moreover, if identity is to some

extent "based on the formation of sameness and difference," we see this in the frequent assertion that Europe is different from the US and Asia (most prominently, Japan), especially in terms of its social model(s).

Let us now turn to my second example, the Competitiveness Advisory Group (CAG) and its discourse of identity and difference, as well as its functions. The CAG, was set up by Jacques Santer, former president of the European Commission, in order to prepare specific drafts and proposals for the Council of Ministers. The group consists of twelve members, two women and ten men, who represent industry, politics, and the trade unions; the European Commission itself is also represented by one member. These representatives discuss highly sensitive issues and draft semi-annual reports. The CAG is chaired by Jean-Claude Paye, former secretary-general of the OECD, whom I interviewed in Paris in September 1998. CAG meetings are audiotaped, and there are handwritten minutes as well as resolution papers.

The CAG is an example of an "epistemic community" or "transnational knowledge community" which "proposes problem definitions, argumentations, and policies."[15] In November 1997, the CAG was asked to draw up an employment policy paper for the Council of Ministers. The final paper manifests clearly the conflicts between employers and trade unions on many levels. It is an attempt to outline a European employment policy, a policy that would change the social welfare states but nevertheless retain European values.

In the interview with Paye, I asked about the decision-making process and his impressions about it as well as about the impact of the CAG's policy papers. The CAG must serve some important function, otherwise such busy and influential people would not take the trouble to meet and spend time together. As already mentioned, networking is one of the main characteristics of such transnational bodies. The second important function is most certainly legitimation: the policy paper serves as a legitimation tool for politicians should they need it. The chairperson himself is well aware of these functions:

I: What happens with these reports. Who reads them?

P: This is this is uh this is a problem I um spoke about with uh with President Santer, because — my impression is that uh uh the agenda of uh of uh the [European] Council — according to what I read in — in the [laughs] press communique is so: — heavy, so heterogeneous so diverse, that they cannot — devote uh uh much time to to every subject. — I don't know how it is going now, um — let me take the example of this uh report in November [coughs] — there were — two reports to the European Council, coming from a wide variety of uh of institutions and I've been told that the European Parliament made a report, the [Hungarian Social Council] made a report, uh the — there were — two or three other reports in addition to ours. — of course — the the heads of [state and government] haven't been able to to read all all that stuff, and not even their aides. I have been able — therefore I don't know. — I don't know what the the real impact uh uh is, — which uh of course is a bit uh — well discouraging.

As is evident, Paye himself is pessimistic about the influence of a group such as the GAG. Nevertheless, he is committed to the work and believes that the debates are important. The papers are circulated widely and — as Paye argues — might have an impact somewhere at some time.

So, we are left with the question of what functions such a group serves and why so much work is invested in a policy paper that may or may not be read by its intended audience. I believe that the main function lies in the establishing of solidarity and networks, of having discussion fora in which Euro-

pean citizens can meet. Only in such a way, at many different places and times, is the construction of a new European identity possible. And at the same time, only through extended debates between the social partners are new economic policies developed. The GAG provides a stage for such ideological debates, a public space where different ideologies and opinions can be aired and negotiated. This, in my view, is the most important function of such advisory groups.

Before turning to the perspective of the nation-states, I would like to illustrate the ideological debates on the new European identity from inside this small group of experts:

M3: … And my last point is, which you have already mentioned, the high level of education and the professionalism in the European countries. These all are positive. [Et mon dernier point c'était, mais vous l'avez déjà mentionné, le niveau élevé de l'éducation et de la formation professionnel dans la plupart des pays Européens. Ca sont des atouts.]

M9: I think, another strong point which we're just beginning to see is in the context of a global marketplace. Europe's historical positioning around the world. And the fact that uniquely in terms of the main blocks of economic activity — the United States, Europe, and Japan — we in Europe are best positioned to cover the world with cultural and commercial links. And if I can turn to my left, you take Spain, I mean, Spain has rediscovered an Hispanic market which extends not just throughout most of Latin America but also of course in[to] the United States. And we're beginning to find in other parts of the world that we have links, which are old links, which have been dormant and which can come forth, and in terms of, you know, Europe in a global marketplace, that inheritance is very very strong. But we got to capitalize it, and use it.

Paye: Just, a, a sentence adding to that point. European is more international than, than other ones, and …

M9: Exactly, and it's very much easier as a European to develop commercial partnerships outside your domestic country than it is for Americans, or Japanese. And that's partly because of our inheritance and history.

M4: … maybe, our diversity …

M9: … that too …

M3: Diversity is a richness, not a weakness, to a large extent.

M9: There are two layers to it: I mean, the, the, there is the diversity and that in one sense or another we cover the globe, but there is also the, the history and the way in which we have operated. We do have a more global view of the world than the Americans, far more so.

M3: Exactly, it is the long-term favor of fallout of our colonial past. Yeah, after thirty years of independence of all our former colonies we can say that now, today. Without being accused of neo-, neocolonialism. Yeah.

F1: In a more friendly way, in our entrepreneurship. Our ancestors went out sailing, to do business.

M6: Well, American multinationals have done well but, I mean you, I mean the, the, the, many sectors, I'm not saying your sector, but I mean, one cannot forget that …

M9: I, I, I'm not … the Americans, in that sense, and all I'm saying is that they do have a blind spot. And their blind spot is often their inability to make partnerships outside their domestic base. And they have significant blind spots within Europe, in, Europe is Europe is Europe, except there is an English-speaking bit in the UK, and they have difficulty in sensing the differences between countries, and it, it's much tougher for them. Whereas we have something which we haven't used for a long time, but is, is, is coming forward here, and, I, I, I do take the Hispanic point is very strong as you know and me too well, in all sorts of businesses, telecommunications, financial services, you name it, they've found a new market.

Paye: Alright, do you see any other strong points, or should we move to the next session?

This sequence is one of the few in which spontaneous discussion occurs. It is like a brainstorming session where everyone contributes to the characteristics of a new European identity, one which stands in contrast to the US and Japan. One might have the impression that committee members are trying to convince each other that specific European aspects should be viewed as positive and not negative. This sequence also functions to emphasize group solidarity. Without analyzing it in detail, I would like to point out two main linguistic strategies employed here: legitimation and difference. All the characteristics mentioned in this short dialogue point to Europe's traditions in justice and welfare, education and professional expertise. Specifically, Europe's internationalism is mentioned, its history of "contact" with other parts of the world (colonialism!), in contrast to the US. Other characteristics are added during the session. Unlike racist discourse on immigration,[16] diversity is here defined in a positive way, as richness of cultures and traditions and languages. All the positive characteristics reassure committee members that Europe has a chance in the world market even though taxes are higher and labor laws stricter. Specific Europeanness is constructed interactively. Another strategy, typical in discourses on identity, consists of constructing uniqueness by distinguishing oneself from others, in this case the US and Japan. The entire exchange is very significant in the meeting. It creates optimism and confirms for committee members that there are indeed solutions to European economic problems. A positive self-assessment makes everyone feel stronger. Thus, this passage also constructs the identities of the committee members. Note that a national identity, namely Spain, is held up as an exemplar, *pars pro toto*. The "Hispanic example" provides an illustration of what Europe could achieve.

To summarize: Europe is in search of a new employment policy because of global structural changes, but this new policy should be different from that of the US and Japan. The politics of identity and difference — to return to our topos — becomes very visible as well as the impact of regional, national, and supranational identities. Secondly, it must also be emphasized that such a debate can occur even in a committee dealing with pure economics, with un/employment defined as an economic not a social problem.

Discourse and Politics: Us and Them

In the final examples, I would like to turn to homeland rhetoric, illustrating the tensions between the EU and its member states.

First, let me summarize some of the aims of our study *Racism at the Top*, in which we compared six member states on immigration issues, thus illustrating the tensions between the values of tolerance/diversity and racism/exclusion. Our main research questions can be condensed as follows: How do elite politicians from all parties in six EU countries speak about immigration and immigrants? How are immigration laws discussed and which arguments are brought into parliamentary debates by which

parties? We chose two years, 1996 and 1997, for our quantitative analysis; however, for the interpretation and context description, the sociopolitical developments of the last three decades were included.

Parliamentary debates are a genre of political discourse and of the political arena as such; no specific features distinguish parliamentary debates from other genres of persuasive discourse. The distinction lies in the functions of parliamentary discourse: lawmaking, legitimation, and social control. It is reasonable to ask why we should bother to study parliamentary debates if they are not the "real" arena of decision making and official politics. We believe that in democracies, parliamentary debates are the forum of public space in which citizens have access to lawmaking and to political conflicts and controversies. As long as parliaments function, democracies are alive! Moreover, debates are often televised and thus reach millions of viewers who gain insight into policy making.

We could not analyze entire debates, as these were very long and ultimatel not significant for our research aims. Thus, we chose case studies for each country and analyzed these qualitatively, focusing on topoi, metaphors, argumentation, fallacies, self-presentation, and actors-description. This selection of linguistic indicators is justified because it is precisely in the argumentation, in the applied strategies and topoi, as well as in the use of referential terms that the distinction between "us" and "them," and the nature of that distinction, becomes most transparent. The quantitative analysis, in which we coded debate topics as well as the parties and persons involved, was done for comparative purposes.

Generally, as our discourse analysis shows, parties of the Left and Right in most of the countries, despite socioeconomic differences, are extremely polarized on immigration issues. The Western European democratic tradition demands tolerance and acceptance of refugees; the extreme Right and some rightist parties openly violate this principle, using the topoi of threat, criminality, and job loss in debates to block liberal immigration policies. The Right uses much more rhetorical devices and metaphors as well as legitimation strategies. They "turn the tables": the victims are not the refugees but the population at "home," which is spending too much money to support immigrants, and meanwhile is exploited and at risk of losing jobs and political rights. However, with the exception of the inflammatory discourse of the extreme Right, these arguments are coded and legitimized via a number of linguistic devices along lexical, semantic, syntactic, and textual dimensions. Parties in most of the countries present themselves as "tolerant and democratic," while simultaneously disparaging immigrants. Thus, groups of actors are constructed discursively, which allows presentation of the in-group as positive and the out-group as negative. Also, in all countries, there is a classification of types of foreigners into "good" and "bad," more threatening and less threatening.

Numbers and statistics play a central role in all countries as well: an economic discourse is employed and functionalized to mask racist attitudes. Secondly, a discourse of "security" evolves: the government must protect voters and the in-group against criminality, unemployment, and various other threats. A very important strategy is the generalization of singular experiences with "bad" foreigners, which thus are used to characterize the entire group. The opposition may counter these claims with a "discourse of solidarity": everyone has a moral duty to assist those who are at risk of poverty. Or it may deploy a discourse of "positive diversity": the European countries need diversity and are multicultural, not monocultural; they are all countries of immigration. When faced with such arguments, the extreme Right sometimes presents foreigners as "nonhumans," thereby dehumanizing people and robbing them of their rights.

In France, the discussion is polarized between the political Right and Left, and implicit and more-or-less explicit racism is restricted to the Right and extreme Right. Antiracist movements in France are very strong, compared to Austria for example. Discussions on immigration and nationality seem to reflect a more general political crisis related to the decline of the nation-state and the perceived need to preserve historically constituted identities. In the Netherlands, which has a very long history of relative tolerance, the taboo against explicit racism is even stronger, thus a coded language is used. Policy making is thus much more consensual, and discursive consciousness seems relatively highly developed. The evolution toward stricter immigration policies is justified with positive self-presentation drawing upon the tradition of tolerance and a self-image of a "civilized country using careful procedures."

The discussion in Great Britain is polarized between left and right parties, and the topoi of "illegal immigrants" and "criminality" is quite prominent. The same holds true for Italy, where, however, these topoi are counterbalanced by a discourse on solidarity and human rights, along with argumentation aimed at legitimizing immigration. The majority center-left coalition has succeeded in maintaining these positive themes — whether symbolically or substantively — as constitutive parts of the debate. The history of immigration is invoked, however, not just to support antiracist positions, but also for positive in-group representation of the "good" immigrants of the past versus the "bad" ones of today.

The fact that immigration in Spain is more recent and has not yet reached a large scale is explained by the history of Spain itself as an emigration country. Thus, parliamentary debates on immigration are rare. The identification with emigrants prohibits explicitly racist statements. Moreover, there are no extreme right-wing parties in parliament which clearly would oppose immigration. Nevertheless, as illustrated in our research, implicit racist utterances are to be found. Spain is seen as the entrance to the "European fortress" and the main focus here is the demand for preemptive policies to control future immigration.

In Austria, we also find the polarization between Left and Right in discussions on asylum and residence of foreigners. In contrast to the other countries, the extreme Right is very strong and seems to lead the discussion. Antiracist movements are rather weak. Explicit racism is not taboo and is openly expressed in parliament. The discourse of the mainstream parties reflects the arguments of the Right, in an attempt to appropriate the Right's popularity and win voters. In the debates, it is presupposed that foreigners are criminal. Foreigners are categorized into three groups: legal residents, asylum seekers, and new immigrants, which are more or less welcome dependent on their home country.

To summarize, anti-immigration parties use the following arguments: (1) Immigrants and asylum seekers abuse the system; they live on taxpayer money. (2) Immigrants are a danger to society (criminality). (3) Lax immigration policies encourage illegal immigration. (4) Significant numbers of immigrants work illegally; they are a threat to employment. (5) Asylum seekers cost too much (topos of numbers). (6) "Firm" but "fair" immigration policies are necessary (topos of positive self-presentation). The opposition argues that: (1) Harsh immigration and asylum laws violate human rights. (2) Tighter asylum and immigration rules encourage illegal immigration. (3) "Civilized" and "tolerant' countries are obliged to assist people in need. (4) People will lose their jobs (the "race card" is functionalized to win voters by the topos of threat). (5) Harsh anti-immigration laws encourage racism and hurt ethnic minorities. (6) Diversity is important for Europe.

Racism is produced and reproduced through discourse. Antiracist discourse the same! The results of our research thus hold practical implications for public discourse about the Other. The detailed analysis in the case studies of each of the six countries reveals the specific quality and dynamic of these

discourses when manifested in debate and makes political interests and ideologies transparent. This, ultimately, will allow for the development of alternative strategies of argumentation and conflict.

Conclusions

Summarizing, I would like to conclude this talk with a discussion of the EU's first attempt to "punish" a member state for not acting according to the values of the *dispositif ideal*. I refer to the case of the "Three Wise Men" who judged the behavior of Austria's right-wing coalition government, which assumed power in February 2000. The fourteen other member states immediately implemented "measures against the new government," which were recontexualized as "sanctions against Austria" in official discourse. Offended by the EU's actions, Austrians rallied to support the government. The sanctions had Inequality, *Democracy, and Parliamentary Discourses 165* precisely the opposite effect intended by the EU (strengthening the coalition rather than weakening it), prompting member states to come up with an exit strategy. This is when the Three Wise Men were called upon: the former Finnish president, the Spanish chancellor, and a prominent German political scientist, who visited Austria twice, spoke to many delegates, officials, and NGOs, and issued an extensive report in September 2000. Among other things, the report assessed the populist discourse of the FPÖ (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs — Austrian Freedom Party) and came to the conclusion that the FPÖ is a rightwing populist party with extremist elements.

What functions does such an expert committee fulfill? First, there is the critical question concerning the status of "experts" and "knowledge management." It is common these days for commissions to have a transnational brief: recall the Waldheim Commission and the Historians' Report, or the moratorium on the *Wehrmacht* exhibition. The case of the Three Wise Men does not fit into this schema, because here it was not only a question of scientific experts but of "elder statesmen" who, under considerable time pressure, had to exercise diplomatic and political conflict management and legitimize the "exit strategy" upon which member states had already informally agreed. As Romano Prodi, president of the EU Commission, declared in June 2000 when the Three Wise Men were put to work, they should be "quick, quick, quick." Diplomacy is reflected in the language they used, a language that is not scientific but vague. In their report, this vagueness is particularly evident in statements based on documents and testimony from NGOs, thus on reported speech.[17]

The usurping of political action by such political entrepreneurs, as Paul Krugman has described them, is a characteristic of the globalized society.[18] Both Krugman and Ulrich Beck even speak of a "committee regime," referring to Van Schendelen's research.[19] Static national organizations are, to an ever greater extent, being replaced by such transnational networks. This was already apparent in the decision-making mechanisms of the EU and the CAG.[20] The intervention of such international committees of experts demonstrates, however, that traditional national borders are no longer valid, that is to say, that "abroad" and "home" are becoming blurred, that foreign policy is becoming internal policy, and that the language of experts has assumed a dominant role. Professional roles and definitions are changing: in our EU research, it was quite evident that we are approaching a politicization of the bureaucracy and a depoliticization of politics. An entire register of competencies is expected and used: bureaucrats must be able to negotiate like diplomats, they are often experts in a particular subject, and they develop policies. Politicians administer these policies and attempt to "sell them." And it is at this point that political rhetoric takes over. We are dealing here with an example — even in the case of the Three Wise Men — of those *epistemic communities* or transnational communities of knowledge and expertise that, as Ulrich Beck says, "develop, own, and provide common definitions of problems, causal assumptions, and political recommendations."[21] International organizations increasingly depend on this kind of transnational expert rationale, which, conversely, is invading ever more arenas

of social practice. What is characteristic of such communities is that the border between reflective-distanced expertise on the one hand, and political action on the other (or "policy making" as we call it today) is disappearing. In fact, it is no longer possible to determine clearly who is the politician and who the expert.

This case of conflict management also has enormous implications for the formulation of new European values and identities. It was the first time that "measures" were taken against a nation-state and EU member for violating the values of democracy, justice, and equality. The action taken by the fourteen member states clearly shows that the EU organizations, in their search for a European identity, have evolved from purely economic interest groups into something else — purveyors of a system of values. This is what makes the Austrian example so pertinent to the development of Europe, which Tony Judt calls "an idea" not "a region."[22] Of course, many questions remain. What will be the EU's response to other, more powerful member states with populist parties in the government (a question discussed at Nizza and likely to be formalized after the Italian elections)? Is national sovereignty still respected? The political models presented for Austria are not, of course, restricted to that country or to the present day. Globalization and homeland rhetoric, as well as right-wing populism, are on the increase throughout Western Europe, a fact powerfully demonstrated in a number of election campaigns, such as the recent one in Belgium by the Vlaams Blok. Although the specifically Austrian stimulus for the EU's actions was the "sloppy handling of its National Socialist past," the measures taken against the new Austrian government must also be evaluated in this larger context.

In Brussels and Strasbourg, home to the EU organizations, one is struck by the semiotics of the buildings: they are like fortresses or churches, big stable structures where entrance is controlled by many passwords, guards, and X-rays. Everyone busily runs around through endless corridors, eleven languages are to be heard, and many intercultural gestures and misunderstandings can be perceived. In these complex organizations, where gender, age, ideologies, political parties, lobbies, national, regional, and European interests clash, consensus is nevertheless achieved. These slow, bureaucratic organizations have created small, flexible, and dynamic networks to enable rapid decision-making and consensus-building, bypassing all the possible hurdles. But it is precisely these networks that are untransparent, inaccessible to European citizens. Members of these networks are occasionally interviewed and their work reported on, such as the case of the Three Wise Men; or prominent elites make decisions without even listening to them, as in the CAG. These transnational networks of experts — the new knowledge society — are supplanting all our well-established forms of institutional action and knowledge.

This takes us back to our beginning, to Vaclav Havel and his observations on the functioning of new globalizing processes and the search for patriotism and supranational identities. Our perceptions of national identities and of political organizations have changed. Parliamentary discourses and their analysis have illustrated aspects of legal decision making in the nation-states and the prevailing prejudices and beliefs related to "immigrants" and "foreigners." How will these problems be resolved on the transnational scale? And in what ways will European citizens have access to decision making and information? What impact will antidiscrimination guidelines have? And how to cope with antidemocratic movements and ideology, with discrimination, racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism? The European Union is confronted with the monumental task of constructing European values of tolerance and diversity. The answers to all of these questions lie in the future. And, I believe, these questions lie at the heart of the EU's future.

It is appropriate to end with Tony Judt's succinct statement on the European problem, found in his book *A Grand Illusion? An Essay on Europe*:

If we look to European Union as a solution for everything, chanting "Europe" like a mantra, waving the banner of "Europe" in the face of recalcitrant "nationalist" heretics and screaming "Abjure, abjure," we shall wake up one day to find that far from solving the problems of our continent, the myth of "Europe" has become an impediment to our recognizing them. We shall discover that it has become little more than the politically correct way to paper over local difficulties, as though the mere invocation of the promise of Europe could substitute for solving problems and crises that really affect the place. Few would wish to deny the ontological existence of Europe, so to speak. And there IS a certain self-fulfilling advantage in speaking of it as though it existed in some strong collective sense. … "Europe" is more than a geographical notion but less than an answer.[23]

Ruth Wodak. Inequality, Democracy, and Parliamentary Discourses. In: Okwui Enwezor, Carlos Basualdo, Ute Meta Bauer, Susanne Ghez, Sarat Maharaj, Mark Nash, Octavio Zaya (ed.) Democracy Unrealized Documenta11_Platform1. Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern-Ruit. 2002, pp. 151-168.

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14 Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl, and Karin Liebhart, The Discursive Construction of National Identity (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), pp. 57-60.

15 Ulrich Beck, "Wie wird Demokratie im Zeitalter der Globalisierung möglich?," in Politik der Globalisierung, ed. Ulrich Beck (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998), p. 39.

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