

*Paper prepared for the Euroacademia International Conference*

*Re-Inventing Eastern Europe*

*Vienna, 17 – 19 May 2012*

*This paper is a draft*

*Please do not cite*

# East - West Reflections on the Shared Values

By Dr. Liliya Sazonova

Assistant Professor at the Institute for the Studies of Societies and Knowledge

Key words: European values, European identity, Eastern Europeans, Others

## Introduction

When reflecting on the European values we will proceed from the assumption that they have a constitutive meaning for the European Union and its borders. This position is in compliance with the statement of Olli Rehn who defined the EU borders not only as a geographical concept but also as marking the virtual community of states that are ready to share certain values. In his capacity of being the European Commissioner for Enlargement he stated: "...the borders are defined by the consciousness of the Europeans. Geografy demarcate the framework but fundamentally – values outline the borders of Europe. The enlarging is a process of spreading out of the European values zone, among them the most important are freedom, solidarity, tolerance, human rights, democracy and the rule of law." (Ren 2005)

Accepting the above-mentioned fundamental role of the integrated moral regulative for the EU Member States the paper *aims* at examining the specificities of the process of consolidation of the so called "New Europe" and "Old Europe" around common European values. In order to achieve this aim the paper is thematically developed in three chapters.

On a theoretical level, the main questions that will lead and structure the proposed research encompass the character of the European values – do they present a Western concept or they come as a result of the common East-European and West-European efforts to identify with a supranational community? How East and West traditions and historical experiences meet with regard to the common values?

As a *result* of the research we *expect* to both offer a deep understanding of the process of the European values construction and to articulate some potential conflict zones at the meeting point of their "East" and "West" readings.

In methodological respect the research will apply interdisciplinary approach. The complicated and multilayer nature of the object of the analysis – European identity in relation to the European public sphere implies exploration on different levels and from various perspectives. That is why research techniques from different social sciences will be applied: the philosophical reflection (phenomenology and semiotics) will be combined with political analysis and historical deconstruction of the concepts.

## I

### Attitude towards Others in the EU

The point of departure of the first chapter is the understanding that the opposition "we-they" can be traced back to the medieval projects of European unification which aimed at

protection of the Christian world from the “Muslim enemy”. Following this early antagonistic sample, the European identity was constructed around certain contradictions - between Europe and Asia, Christianity and Islam, East and West, etc for many centuries. In this context the official politics towards difference in the EU manifested in its slogan “United in Diversity” presents a new paradigm - the European identity as a supranational project implies a new type of perception and openness for coexistence with and recognition of the difference of the others.

Thus if the traditional premodern society *does not allow* authentic communication with the alien and in order to become open to the Other the individual had to break his/her connection with the community as the only real world, that controls his/her perception and relationship with the different agents, modernity *allows* the individual to overcome the collective prejudices and to encounter the Other without the need for a dramatical escape from the socium. EU, in its turn, comes with the ambition to create such a social and political context so that citizens are *encouraged* to participate in multicultural interaction.

However, Guild’s investigation of the legal aspects of the European identity and more specifically of the restricted policy towards immigrants in the Union demonstrates how the “other” in terms of the immigrant delimits the officially proclaimed recognition of the diversity in the Community.

Before going into details it is interesting to introduce at this point of the investigation the differentiation between two types of integration proposed by Habermas in his book *The Postnational Constellation* (Хабермас 2004, 122-123). The first is the “functional” one – it realizes a horizontal relation of exchanging and circulation of goods, information, people etc. with the purpose of achieving certain pragmatic results. Characteristic for this type of integration is that the others are not anymore aliens (like in the premodern times) but they are still perceived anonymously.

Completely different is the concept behind the second type of integration Habermas discusses. According to him, the “social integration” is possible because of the inter-subjective sharing of common values and norms and it posses existential density, that comes from the common collective identity of the members of the particular group. When designing policies promoting common identity and shared values construction the European project aims to provide such an existential meaning of the integration in the Community – from the functional exchange (of capitals, goods, people, information) in the economic and political sphere to the authentic organic (non mechanical) solidarity and interaction between the European citizens. Habermas states that succession of these two models of integration can be observed on the Old Continent since the Late Medieval Times.

The German philosopher concludes that the recognition of the “Others in their difference” could be one of the key aspects of the European identity (Habermas and Derrida 2005, 9). This would be a model identity construction that does not ignore or assimilate the aliens but respects their difference and shapes ones self-identification in a constant dialogue with the Others.

After presenting the two levels of integration we can come back to Guild’s analysis of the relation “we- the others” in the context of the normative documents of the EU and observe their legal implication (Guild 2004, 82-94). Discussing the legal aspects of the European identity, she argues that giving a legal status of the immigrants in the EU in the mid 1990s of XX century transformed them into citizens of the Union. This in its essence was an act of transforming the otherness into ourness. Eliminating the differences between the immigrants, the citizens of other member-states and the citizens of the host country there is no need to apply strategies for integrating the difference within the “our” space.

According to Guild, the acceptance of the difference at the EU level is not yet a universal norm but it is rather limited to respect towards diversity *in the framework of the European space* (thus excluding the non-European other). She continues that one can notice implicit understanding of the other as a dangerous one standing behind certain EU provisions. According to Art. 5 of the Council Directive concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents of November 2003 “Member States may require third-country nationals to comply with integration conditions, in accordance with national law” (Council Directive 2003). Guild interprets this requirement as authorising member-states to execute towards third-country nationals obligations to integrate in the host country before recognizing their long-term status of residents. In other words, before the representative of the third-country to be allowed to enjoy the European law and his/her right to undertake economic and social actions, he or she has to prove to the member-state that he or she is not the dangerous other. This way the EU principle for cultural diversity do not concern third-countries’ cultures even if their representatives have been long-term residents in the EU. (Guild 2004, 234)

This raises the question if such requirements posed before third-country nationals who are not (yet) part of the Union do not endanger the multicultural principle. Guild states that the EU integration concept that motivates the “integration tests” for foreigners has the purpose to provide indications to what degree foreign citizens are “civilized”. This way certain vision of society tends to dominate any other possible definitions of its organization. Such an approach aspires for “domestication” of the difference so that it becomes “ourness” before it is accepted.

From this perspective Guild differentiates three levels of the EU “otherness” – the “other” citizen of the West European countries that remained out of the EU, the East European “other” and the “others” coming from the developing world. According to her, the representatives of Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland are not treated as “others” but as “a little bit unsuccessful EU citizens”. The reason for this is because in these countries either the population refused to become part of the union through a referendum or such did not take place as the result of it would have been negative.

The second group is the one with immigrants from Turkey, Central and Eastern Europe. While there are more restrictions for them than for the representatives of the first one, it is still more favoured than the last group with the representatives of the Third world.

The gradual transformation to more accepting attitude towards the difference within the EU could be observed through the legal term “discrimination” and some limitations of the anti-discrimination policy of the EU. Unlike the Council of Europe, the EU applies more limited definition of the term “anti-discrimination” as it allows discrimination on the basis of Nationality in particular cases. The latter translated into the issue of the otherness means the EU policies provide limited tolerance toward difference in its National identity modus. As Guild puts it, the discrimination on the basis of the National belonging is justifying the immigration control that treats citizens differently based on their National identity. (Ibid, 202)

Guild claims that although it is not directly stated, from the EU visa policy one can conclude that there is a discriminatory approach on the basis of race and religion. The argument for such a view comes from the fact that all countries from Africa and the Middle East (except Israel) as well as the majority of the Asia are included in the so called “Black list”. Unlike them, citizens of the USA and Australia enjoy more comfortable regime.

Other researchers express even more radical arguments for the EU openness towards foreign citizens. For example, Amin assume that “the non-white residents and citizens of the EU have no relation to the *Idea for Europe*”, which remains a unification ideal, based on the Christianity and Englishment, that aims at bridging the diversity of the European National cultures (Amin, 2001, 280-301). In the same line of reasoning, Guild argues that until 1999 the legal system of the EU

reflects a more narrow understanding of the Idea for Europe as the one for the white and Christians. A possible reason for this is that until then the Union is perceived as a predominantly economic alliance and consequently member-states do not consider as necessary to include in the legislation provisions prohibiting racial discrimination, because that is not among the goals of the Union. During that period racial discrimination was perceived as a problem within the domain of the human rights and hence in the competence of the Council of Europe or the National Law. Guild interprets this in a way that at that time it was considered that the Community embodies the idea of Europe as a white Christian club and that is why it was not necessary to be engaged with anti-discrimination when it comes to “coloured” people or Muslims, as they do not comply with such idea by definition.

Alternative approach toward the issue is also possible – if put in a wider historical context it becomes apparent that the above-mentioned negative limitations refer to separate periods of the development of the Community policy and are not representative for the EU as a whole. Despite the critics of Guild, Amin and other researches towards the EU anti-discrimination politics,<sup>1</sup> it has to be noted that making this policy more precise as well as the transformation in the attitude towards different is a process in time and not a single decision. The struggle against discrimination was legally regulated (although in a very narrow way) already in 1957 in the Treaty of Rome and it has had to walk its way to June 2000 when the Council Directive 2000/43/EC was adopted implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin (Council Directive 2000/43/EC). The case with the preparation of the anti-discrimination law in the EU demonstrates that the speed of changes in the various social spheres is different. Several decades passed before the legal reglamentation of the acceptance of the other became possible in the Law. But the transformation of the collective consciousness towards otherness takes place much slower and some kinds of discrimination remain a part of the cultural sphere and a fact of the everyday life of the European citizens.

## II

### East Europe and the European values

The second chapter develops further the reflection on the EU attitude towards Others by focusing on the East European Other. It explores the two-fold relation between European values and East Europe. On the one hand, it discusses the distinction “we-they” perceived by some “old” Europeans towards the “new” Europeans. It is argued in the paper that such exclusion of East European citizens violates principles and values proclaimed in the EU. On the other hand, it articulates the possibility to consolidate the different cultural traditions of the member states around common values. More particularly, the way East and West Europeans meet when discussing common moral norms is analysed in the chapter.

The negative stereotyping of the East Europeans practiced by political subjects in the “Old” Europe puts at danger fundamental European values and rights. There is substantial literature on the subject of the production of negative images of East Europe and the Balkans as a specific region in the South-East Europe (for example, Maria Todorova’s *Imagining the Balkans*). Although this is a very important area for research it is not the main object of our analysis and that is why here we will mention only one concrete case. We choose to illustrate this damaging discourse through the right-wing Dutch Freedom Party’s website inviting Dutch citizens to denounce nuisance caused by European citizens coming from Poland, Romania and Bulgaria as it had a clear response from the European values perspective. The website was launched on 10 February 2012 with the purpose to collect complaints against East European nationals who cause pollution, problems related to housing or simply competition on the job market. It received thousands of such reports only during the first days. At the same time, it created numerous

counter-responses – from citizens, on the National and EU level. Ambassadors from the 10 Central and Eastern European countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) sent a letter to parliamentary leaders in the Netherlands asking them to distance themselves from this ‘regrettable initiative’. The Dutch parliament also officially stated on 27 March that the website “characterises an entire category of people - those from Central and Eastern Europe”<sup>2</sup> and as such is undesirable.

Importantly, the “othering” of the Eastern Europeans website was confronted with the common values and principles rhetoric by the major political parties in the EP. Guy Verhofstadt, President of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Group, the leaders of the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (Netherlands) and Democrats 66 political party (Netherlands) issued a joint statement that condemns the Dutch website and demands its “immediate closure”: “The website, as stated by commissioner Reding, goes against all European values of dignity and liberty. Furthermore it risks destroying the very basis of the Union, which is non-discrimination and free movement ”<sup>3</sup>. Hannes Swoboda, the Leader of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats, also condemned the initiative: “The questions put on the website are a discrimination and stigmatisation of people from Central and Eastern Europe. This is opposed to the values we promote within our Community” (Ibid).

Such a response shows the intrinsic link between the attitude towards the Other – in this case the Eastern European Other and the conformity with the European values. The website producing negative stereotypes suggests that such values are still in the normative EU realm and not yet always applied in the everyday practice in the Member States. It is an indication that the European model is uncertain if European mentality is consent to the stigmatization, discrimination and exclusion of whole groups of people from “its” European society. Remarkably, the initiative turning Eastern nationals into second-class citizens happened in the Netherlands – one of the six founders of the European Coal and Steel Community who in 1950 united economically and politically in order to end violence between neighbours and to secure lasting peace. Therefore, it could be stated that in the Western as well as in the Eastern part of Europe the understanding and application of the democratic values and EU principles is an ongoing process.

There are also particular cases illustrating the dynamics of the diffusion of ideas between the EU level and the local structures that might be interesting to explore. Such points of resistance and even conflict can be observed between Christian, Muslim and secular cultural traditions, but also within the Christian world itself that was among the first factors giving birth to the European idea. An example for such a clash is the specific position of a group of member-states led by the Catholic Poland towards the issue of abortion, who has given their own, contradictory the official EU secularized interpretation of the value “right to life”. In November 2005 an anti-abortion exhibition at the European Parliament in Strasbourg presented by the Polish MEP Maciej Giertych compared the abortion with the Holocaust. After some negative reactions on an EU level, the Parliament analysed the exhibition and decided to dismantle it.

It can be expected that such inconsistency between the official EU level and the National responses will continue as after the introduction of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy position following the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, EU has to unify over a common foreign and security policy, which often requires decisions over moral dilemmas. In this regard, Cathleen Kantner argues that shared values are the necessary common ground for consensus and solidarity in areas such as social policy, security and defence, immigration, internal security etc. where national diversity clashes with European ambitions (Kanter 206, 504).

She illustrates the importance of the shared values for the European governance in an ethically sensitive policy field like *Foreign and Defence Policy* by reminding the dissimilar

perception of the US-led intervention in Iraq in 2003 in the EU Member states. Kartner summarises that regardless of the fact that public opinion across Europe was clearly against the war European institutions could not speak with one voice: "A deep – identity-related – split between (most of the) old and (some of the) new members seemed to emerge. (...) ... in countries like Poland strong moral arguments in favour of the intervention were put forward by politicians and even civil society actors. In Germany such a position was almost unthinkable. This illustrates that national views on foreign policy, especially questions of war and peace, are deeply shaped by collective experiences. It makes a difference whether a political community has been the target of aggressions or the aggressor in the past. It matters whether our ancestors were colonialists who exploited other countries, but at the same time perhaps learned to pay more attention to very distant parts of the world and the 'ways of life' of the local populations" (Ibid).

And while this discrepancy between the official EU attitude towards certain values and their response in the domestic cultural settings can be observed in each of the Member states, some researchers focus their attention on the applicability of the European values in "New Europe" in particular.

For example, Harmstone argues that as a result of the transition from communist to "western" values the latter are perceived mainly instrumentally, "as the means to reach the desired goals" in Central Europe ( Rakowska-Harmstone 2006, 123). The challenge is that while European values are recognized as non-negotiable European standards, the representatives of the various member states have often different economic, political and cultural background and consequently readiness to apply them.

Teresa Harmstone puts the stress on the Polish perspective towards the issue of the applicability of the European values to the Eastern (Central European) mentality. According to her in the 1970s and 1980s of the 20th century began the erosion of communist values system and its replacement by Western values such as democracy and market economy. However, the new values have been perceived primarily instrumentally - as a means to achieve certain objectives. With the change in the environment during and after the transitional period, Harmstone distinguishes three types of mentality - "the good and obedient worker" who remains politically passive and economically routinized, the "thieving-begging" mentality of the seekers after personal profit, and the "autonomous-entreprising" mentality that is characteristic for socially productive individualists. According to the author, the latter type, unlike the first two is not a legacy of the previous regime and arose with the emergence of new experiences after the changes (Ibid).

For instance, the rule of law is a fundamental value of the Western European worldview and serves as a fundamental value for the European Community. According to her, although formally this principle is accepted, in practice in many Eastern countries who are already EU members, the law is understood instrumentally, and sometimes attempts can be observed to ignore or change it if inconsistent with national or personal interests. By contrast with this Eastern model, the western concept for "the rule of law" implies restrictions both regarding to those who are governed and those who are governing.

Nevertheless, she recognizes the possibility for a slow change of mentalities - the existence of the the third type itself demonstrates it. Harmstone concludes that there is possibility for creating common ground between "Eastern" and "Western" experiences that would determine the success of the interiorization of the European values. In an attempt to examine the question of the possibility of "East" and "West" citizens to become "united" and to create common meanings and identity the history of this discrepancy has to be recalled. Francois Roth summarizes the general fundamentals of the European culture: the Greco-Roman culture as well as the religious basis of the Christianity (Франсоа 2008, 12-13). But already here the differences start: "The share of Rome and Latin is determining for Western

Europe, while Greco-Byzantine culture has influenced Eastern Europe " (Ibid, 12). The East-West Schism of 1054 led to the political division of the Christian Church to Roman Catholic Church and to Orthodox Church. As Roth notes, religion is not just about faith but it creates institutions, "it enters into symbiosis with existing cultures"<sup>4</sup> and therefore the Church Schism in the 11th century has become a rupture also between the East and the West (Ibid). This division continued after the 20th century, but this time on the axis "Communist – Capitalist" world.

After the fall of the Iron Curtain a process of integrating Central and Eastern Europe in the Western European political and economic system has begun. However, the East-West equality can be questioned, since it occurs in a scheme where "West" is requesting, while the "East" has the obligation to fulfil the formal criteria for the EU membership. The introduction of the predicates "old" and "new" Europe referring respectively to the Western and Eastern Europe, is a dividing indicator differentiating these two areas. Even once associated, the new accessed countries are faced with the challenge of the debate on the "two-speed Europe"<sup>5</sup>. According to Habermas, it is appropriate to form a "core" or an "avant-garde" and respectively a "periphery" or "rearguard" within the EU, suggesting differentiation of two groups of Member States. Meglena Kuneva in her capacity of being the Bulgarian Minister of European Affairs in 2004 expressed an official position that this idea and political reality, divides again the continent not letting it to finally unite.<sup>6</sup>

Such a perspective towards the "East-West" dissimilarities can be supported by the Koselleck's understanding of the historical transformations. According to the German theorist of history though on the level of the political agreement a unification decision can be taken over a relatively short period (a year in the case of the German reunification) the deeply rooted cultural structural layers of the social body require decades and sometimes even generations to pass in order to be transformed (Kozелек 2002). In this regard, the historically developed ideas in the Western European world that resulted in the creation of the EU in the XXth century have to be adapted in a larger context and to be communicated in the "New Europe" as well. Such a diffusion of ideas that concern the deep levels of the social body cannot be expected to happen instrumentally as a result of a political decision or legal obligation.

The possibility to meet and continually discuss the European diversity in a common public sphere seems to be vital in order to consolidate around a shared European identity and values.

### III

## Two approaches towards European values

The third chapter presents an attempt to answer the above-posed questions articulating two separate discourses framing the European values. The first one refers to the essentialist approach looking for a metaphysical reasoning of the universality of the values by developing the common culture, history and human nature rhetoric. The problem that remains to be answered by this perspective is how such inherited in the European tradition values would be coordinated with the principle of diversity proclaimed in the EU with its multicultural reality?

The second reading of the European values presents them in a more postmodern and debatable way and offers a mechanism of reconciling the heterogenic East-West European society. It refers to the existential moment implying that the European values should not be interpreted as framed by the dispositif of the unity (Foucault, Deleuze), as top-down invented concepts serving the purpose of fostering the European integration but they rather appear to be contextual and subject of public discussions (or communicative action in terms of Habermas).

On the conceptual level the idea of the European values refers to the hypothesis coming from the Enlightenment and culminating with the Kantian philosophy that there are universal human

values. According to Kant our minds have a common (universal) constitution that makes possible moral knowledge and ensures the objectivity of the ethics. He identifies the human being with his rational capacity thus putting the stress on the common for all people human nature at the expenses of their cultural specificities.

The EU continues this rational spirit developing its liberal policies and the universal rights and values discourse. The European discourse that supports the substantial character of the values is initiated with the Declaration on the European Identity from 1973 (Declaration on European identity 1973, 118-119). In the document the possibility for common values in the EU is justified with the understanding that all Member States belong to the European civilization. This way by referring to the common culture or history it is prescribed to certain values that they are European a priori without additional reflection and arguments. In the same line of reasoning, the Declaration speaks about the “unity” as a fundament that guarantees the survival of the European civilization. The issue about the “unity” and the “united” as two different approaches (essentialist and existential) towards European values will be elaborated further in this chapter.

A few decades later in 2007 the European values are included in the Lisbon Treaty and this act gives them a legally binding status. In the Treaty they replace the term “European principles” that was used previously. This terminological change symbolically indicates the transformation to a more emotional rhetoric in the EU (Lacroix 2009, 141-142). According to Article 1a of the Treaty: “The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”<sup>7</sup> The Lisbon Treaty continues the essentialist pathos about the universal values declaring that it draws inspiration from “...the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law”.<sup>8</sup>

In the academic sphere Habermas is one of the influential philosophers that in his later works insists for the integration of the European values in the European debate. He considers that they result from the historical roots and achievements of Europe. (Habermas and Derrida 2005, 8) However, there are a number of critical views on Habermas proposal. For example, Lacroix states that the attempts to define common values brings the risk to undermine the unique normative potential of the EU who has to organise specific National identities. In this respect she asks if indeed the European political project needs the support of the common values or rather of a group of principles of justice. (Lacroix, 142)

Castiglione is also skeptical about the historical reconstruction of the European values as to him this way the degree of similarity is exsagerated. He warns that the proposed by Habermas European identity based on “our” values tends to have an exclusive character. Given the multicultural reality in the Union and the mobility of the immigrants, to insist for universal values could lead to social and cultural division and does not create uniting links among citizens. In this respect, Castiglione states that Habermas puts too much credit on the achievement of a public consensus and underestimates the role of the political conflict. But even if such a consensus is accomplished the issue that remains to be answered is how it will be transformed into concrete policies. (Castiglione 2009, 44-47)

Therefore, even if the contemporary European discourse on the shared values is well-grounded in the European intellectual tradition the claim for universal validity of the values faces challenges from the multicultural reality of the Union. It was analysed in the previous chapter how the practical application of the European values (when they are essentially understood) is troubled by the dissimilar cultural realms that compose the Union.

Delanty proposes interesting arguments for the reflection on the dilemma between the discursive construction of the European values as universal on the basis of the European culture, history and civilization and the principle of respect for (cultural) diversity (Деланти 2004).<sup>9</sup> Firstly, he discusses the normative status of the Idea for Europe. He distinguishes the cultural sphere from the ethics and locates the Idea for Europe in the first one. Following Habermas' theory about the discourse ethics that separates norms from values, Delanty defines the cultural value as distinctive unlike the ethical principles and norms that pretend for universality. From here he deduces that the cultural value of of the European identity cannot have normative and universal character. He argues that the cultural Idea for Europe that has more limited cultural resources for creating meaning unreasonably pretends for universal ethical validity and evaluates (or defines) the non-European world.

He suggests alternative definition of the terms “universality” and “unity”. According to it universality does not necessarily imply unification and the intolerance of the European ethnoculturalism against the Other but could also be interpreted as pluralism and variety. From the understanding of the universality not as looking for common characteristics (or values) but as acceptance and inclusion of the other, one can deduce a new definition of the unity. From this point of view the ideal “European unity” is not based on the universal values but on the new model of postnational citizenship. Such a model of citizenship is founded on the participation and solidarity of the dissimilar Europeans who respect difference and could offer a basis for an inclusive European identity (Ibid, 13).

Therefore, the European values should not be interpreted as absolute as they will always present a subjective (even when if it is shared by the majority) perspective. In this regard, the European values are not to be understood as belonging to or a subgroup to the universal values but as an object for constant rational negotiation between citizens, the Member States and the European institutions. This does not change the status of the values as fundamental in the European identity construction but only desubstantiates them – from an absolute they become contextual concepts shaped in dialogue. In other words, the focus on them is shift –from their definition through the Kantian ethics as objective and necessary to their reading in the perspective of the postmodern contextual ethics.

It has to be noted that together with the discourse on the European values that describes them as universal there is an alternative tendency of discussing them on an EU level. This parallel discourse can be demonstrated through the historical development of the formulation of the EU logo. Initially it was accepted as "Unity in diversity" by the President of the European Parliament, Nicole Fontaine in 2000. After the ratification of the Constitution the motto was modified to "United in diversity".

The “unity” can be interpreted as definite because it obliges – the “common” is already a priori given in the difference. Unlike it, “united” is not engaged with metaphysical universalities and it indicates that the agreement can be aspired regardless of the difference. Through language and the ability of human beings to understand each other they “unite” without a need for a metaphysical foundation for the European “unity” be it based on the common culture, history or human nature. This transformation indicates greater desubstantiality on a conceptual level because overcoming the essentialism of the “united” one has more freedom for his existential choice and self-creation.

In this line of reasoning the existential moment should not be interpreted as framed by the dispositif of the unity that implies that no matter how much I create myself it has to be limited by my unity with the other Europeans. “United” can be understood as the above-mentioned perspective of Delanty – in the sense of making common efforts, capable for co-authorship in the writing of the common European narrative. Such an interpretation can be supported by the Latin translation of the motto: “In varietate concordia”. “Concordia” could be understood not only as

“unity” but also as “harmony”, “understanding” and even “peace” – in the Classical mythology Concordia is the goddess of the peace that comes after the battle. From such perspective the “unity” is not defined predicatively – there is no need one to abide to certain formally defined unification but it simply points to the fact of the joint efforts to take part in a common project despite the (predicative) difference. The de-substantialisation of the abstract category “unity” into the commitment of the “united” permits a reading of the European values not along certain universal validity that they would bring but in the sense of co-belonging of the European citizenship to a mutual project.

An indication how much the project for the “Future of Europe is being build according to the ideas for dialogue and communicative rationality that are implicitly suggested by the transformation of the motto can be the actual politics. The criterion is the degree to which it encourages real co-participation of the citizens in the project (that has to be open and not predefined). In other words – this is the space for a real action by the citizens that goes beyond the declarative promises as well as the public sphere where problems resulting from the coexistence in a single European space can be discussed and negotiated.

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the fight for an anti-discrimination legislation in the EU between European Council and European Parliament see Bell, M. 2002. *Anti-Discrimination Law and the European Union*. Oxford: OUP, pp.54-63.

<sup>2</sup> Euroactive. 2012. “Dutch MPs vote to condemn PVV website”. Accessed 28 March.

<http://www.euractiv.com/general/dutch-mps-vote-condemn-pvv-website-news-511803>

<sup>3</sup> Euractive. 2012. “EU slams Dutch website for instigating intolerance”. Accessed 13 February.

<http://www.euractiv.com/justice/eu-slams-dutch-website-instigating-intolerance-news-510749>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 12

<sup>5</sup> According to Habermas already the existence of the Eurozone indicates that Europe is moving on different speeds. See Habermas, J. 2006. *The Divided West*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the subject See Кунева, Меглена. 2004. *Изказване на министъра по европейските въпроси Меглена Кунева по въпросите на Европейската конституция и идеите за “Европа на две скорости”*, [http://www.evroportal.bg/article\\_view.php?id=673301](http://www.evroportal.bg/article_view.php?id=673301), as well as Куглан, Антъни. (2001). *Поредната битка за Европа*, [http://members.tripod.com/~NIE\\_MONTHLY/nie1\\_01/coughlan.htm](http://members.tripod.com/~NIE_MONTHLY/nie1_01/coughlan.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Lisbon Treaty amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, 13 December 2007 (2007/C 306/01). *Official Journal of the European Union*, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:EN:HTML>, Article 1a.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, Preamble, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:EN:HTML>.

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