

*Paper prepared for the Third Euroacademia International Conference
The European Union and the Politicization of Europe*

Lisbon, 26 – 27 September 2014

*This paper is a draft
Please do not cite*

Euregio or Convergence?

Crisis, Revised Economic Theory and Open Society:.

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According to more or less open comments in media, politics and sciences, Europe is in a Crisis.

Crisis, or better, the cycles of economic development, crossing and influencing the waves of social and political developments, since the seventies of the last century can be seen as a long building wave. To understand the metaphor, we can look at the ocean: Out in open sea, the tides, induced by the force of gravity by the moon, are not felt at all. Just at the shores of islands, like Madeira or the Azores, can the tides be noted. Instead, what we see out there from a low flying aeroplane are the waves. And who is on a boat, can not only watch the waves, but feel them: Depending on lengths and height of both wave and ship, we may feel just lifted and lowered, until we may no longer see the horizon, or we can feel shaken and turned back and forth around the thus no longer imaginary centre of gravity of the ship. Often, we experience both together. Waves in the water are the result of both Winds and other, older waves. Waves of different origin may be crossing each others in any angle. In most cases the difference of angle does not make it easier for those, who steer the ship. And also not for the passengers as observers, who may be disinterested, more or less fascinated or just suffering...

When waves approach the shores, their direction, but also their character, is altered by the ground below. With less and less depth of the sea, the waves become shorter and higher. In mathematical terms, what changes is both frequency and amplitude. And in some places, where the water remains deep until very short before the shore, the transformation is sudden. All the inherent energy is visible and erodes the shores. But it may be seen as attraction by surfers. But now imagine, what happens, which energies are freed, if a Tsunami hits such a place? Would you build or buy a house there? Would YOU surf there? Or play golf by the shore?

While these may be real problems to be taken seriously in the respective places, as a metaphor we can look at the surfers: Aren't they like speculators? Like so called "share holders", holding on to properties as long and as they don't decide to let go, for whatever reason? Comparing surfers needing the high and soon breaking waves for their excitement, with windsurfers and sailors, we can again use the metaphor for different characters: Windsurfing still may in part be Sport more related to bathing and swimming than to secure transportation of passengers and goods entrusted to a real sailor. While surfing only suits excitement and glory of who can stand up on the board longer and more beautifully than others, Windsurfing allows the surfer to direct his course, even reach distant locations. But on the way the windsurfer may fall into the water every now and then. For the sailor, instead, any person falling into the water is a grave accident which by no means is allowed to happen. Like all other accidents possible around sober and successful navigation, "man over board" is a situation to be proactively prevented.

And for people living at the shores, prevention of effects from winds and waves normally is a topic inherent to individual foresight and responsibility, but also of urbanisation and public planning. This

may stand in long traditions, like in Northern Europe, where even giant storms are perceived as something normal, perpetual, for which infrastructures like buildings and dikes are prepared. But the foreseeable arrival of which still claims all the attention of the good housekeeper checking once again all items around the house before retreating for a cosy couple of days and nights around the fireplace under the stable roof.

Across the Atlantic Ocean, where giant storms happen equally frequent, prevention against such "extreme" weather is regarded as "too costly." Houses there are built on their outside from plastified wood-shaped cardboard over light wooden "2x4" (inch) structures, and on their inside from "sheet-rock". Consequently, each time a storm appears, most home-owners, hoping that the homes themselves will not fly away altogether, nail their doors and windows and flee hundreds of miles inland, until the storm is over. Also, over there a "normality", all other public infrastructures, like electricity and communication lines and roads, are not designed to withhold such "exceptional" and "unforeseeable" "catastrophies". Blackouts and, with lack of electricity driving pumps, interrupted water supply are the "surprising" consequences of nature not respecting, less bowing to human short-sightedness.

Now, what do such metaphors tell us, when we project them on what happens in societies, their cultures – and their economies, which should afford them independent prosperity for all?

Where natural powers are less threatening, but also where education is lesser, the example of the cardboard houses measured in square meters and not in longevity, may impress, just like having can impress "havenots" and like brute force can impress the weak and uneducated lacking the civil courage to stand their ground. Such people, however can be impressed by greater and more lasting success stories, once they know about them in order to shift example.

But where education, culture and long standing experience used to provide, both, for proud conservation of the valid as well as for constant innovation providing better equally long lived solutions providing for constant employment and wealth: Why should there all of a sudden the substitution of values and diversity by egalitarian quantitative criteria, the reduction of all and everything to numbers, the substitution of Being by Having be allowed to sabotage self determined independent prosperity? Why shall speculators be more protected than suppliers?

Why should Europe's potentials as example for the world – an example of peace based on the riches of cultural diversity – be allowed to be further destroyed by the brain-wash of a supposed normality, which – thanks God – is not "normal" here – or has been overcome where it has been source of never ending conflicts...

In our metaphor, it is the sailors, who again and again rescue surfers and windsurfers after their "wonderful" experiences of adventure, when they are helpless out in the sea. In a renewed view on economy, it is the "real economy", which rescues speculators. Why? Should that not be ended? Should not, rather, real economy, free itself of the burdens of the speculators?

Moreover, should the societies not react and stand firm together, if the destructive forces seek to orchestrate, after the crash of 2008, another bigger one, possibly a real financial tsunami some time soon, in order to force all peoples under their reign? The concept is clear: Finance and energy are abused as "drugs" in order to make individuals, companies, regions, countries and continents dependent. Only thus can they constantly be "milked" - and those not eagerly delivering the milk be penalised and eventually crushed. Where is the difference, the distinction of what we observe, from mafioso-structures of power leading to milking of people, firms and regions?

The metaphors used in this paper shed a light on facts and causal relations explained to great detail in previous papers. But the metaphors also open the eyes for the importance of signs, of semiology not as theory, but as practice of seeing clearly what happens, without having to expect proof in "numbers" from never ending studies. More so, as the really important studies are not undertaken. They will not obtain the funding and support needed. But signs are there. Signs are there to be observed, with

cognitive openness rather than prejudice misled by paradigms, to be analysed and responded to, by sober judgement and effective actions as well as firm stances and non-actions, where that would help wrong trends delivering the world at the hands of those, who can't win – if not with the help of their victims.

The ongoing politicisation of Europe, thus, has to be seen as action and reaction. but, moreover, reactions have to be distinguished : On one hand are those, intentionally provoked by the enemies of Europe, with the assistance of internal agents acting for destructive interests, and with the assistance of those lacking own judgement, following the waves, like surfers.

On the other hand the reactions are those leading to lasting solid and sustainable development of Europe. A Europe which no longer can be fooled and weakened. A Europe serving as example for others, elsewhere, to also go their own ways, be themselves, rather than following wrong paradigms induced as part of hidden agendas aimed against self-determined prosperity and independence and founded in own distinct Being. An example of prosperity and peace.

An example, in which "Euregio" represents the good – and "convergence" the evil.

The concept of "convergence" is the EU-variant of the reduction of all to quantitative criteria. Convergence is the egalitarian concept of making all regions dependent on the world of finance and speculation. The concept fighting entrepreneurship, innovation and independence. The concept of making all milkable. But by whom? Is in democracy not every people its sovereign?

The concept "Euregio", although not yet called that way, is the concept prevailing, when I in a "sabbatical" dedicated to helping the reconversion of the Spanish Basque Country experienced and learnt about the incidental nature of borders cutting through ethnical and cultural coherence. An insight shared in a recent paper titled ...

Euregio is the concept which allows to revive initiative, creativity and innovation leading to unique offerings well grounded in local culture and identity, and, thus, to rewarding employment and stable prosperity. Euregio is the concept of democratic independence and self-determined prosperity based on locally rooted private initiative, entrepreneurship and its innovation and unique offerings.

Euregio, thus, is the concept of the "real economy", which needs to be defended and promoted in order to prevail and provide the stability to all of Europe, which this concept in fact does give since centuries to certain regions and their populations. From these we can learn. They exist everywhere, from the Southern Alps in N-Italy via Solingen and Remscheid in Germany to the Basque Country and Asturias to Portugal. And, similarly in many other regions, which of which I just know too little to name them and provide examples.

Addressing Basque entrepreneurs in the light of "Euregio", thus, reminding them of their own identity and culture as a source of distinction in order to develop unique offers, has been the key message helping to turn the Basque Region around from deep crisis. Different is better.

But how? Look into the mirror! Be yourself! Rely on your own concepts and ways of solving problems in order to come up with new ideas and be successful with them. Be Basque, just as well as people from the Baltics should be "Balts", and draw their unique ideas from there, rather than copying concepts of others, just trying to be cheaper. Numbers are Convergence. Poverty.

Prosperity is based on difference distinctly serving different people in their diversity.

Therefore, a politicisation of Europe must be a politicisation reinforcing open democratic societies and their many prerequisites: Education and Consciousness of Identity are among them, because these allow for the development of the senses in order to value distinction.

Distinction of values, attitudes, preferences, not just of numbers.

In how far numbers and the focus upon them is part of a set of paradigms paralysing the world, has also been subject of papers and presentations already given. Here it may therefore be sufficient to redirect attention to those papers and to the fact, that these paradigms, which can be regarded as outright sabotage of societies and their economies as well as politics, are rooted in erroneous elements of theory of science stemming from Hegel and Marx. As result and part of an ideology, moreover, of an ideology proven as destructive and ill fated by its own inherent errors of thought, the theory of science continues to paralyse also the sciences in "capitalist" countries. Namely the fields regarded as "economy". This however, has not only been subject of previous papers from my side, but also of often quoted authors, such as Karl Popper, Thomas Kuhn, Jakob and Thure von Uexkuell, Barbara Tuchman and so forth.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, is already achieved, if the hint on the much repeated priority of qualitative distinction of diversity over quantitative criteria is seen in relation with the two obviously in part contradictory concepts of "Euregio" and "Convergence" are understood.

Euregio, if finally fully understood, wholeheartedly supported and fully implemented is the key to Europe's Identity of shared values. Convergence may have some positive aspects.

But, when "convergence" a technicality, and other "urgent" aspects, which – like pea-counting – can be delegated, is allowed out of its secondary role of assisting the "important", it logically can not but ruin it all. Convergence, like "objectivity, quantification and reproducibility" in science, is one of the most limiting paradigms and, thus, of the most important roots of Europe's problems. But: The more Europeans, as a result, will be poor; and the more Europeans, thus, will be more focused upon their own "having" or "not having" rather than upon their own "being" as source of unique ideas; the more "havenots" will be impressable – again – by simplistic arguments and a "having" they lack, and thus follow the misleading paradigms of quantitative criteria rather than qualitative distinction. Also who they are and what they want or prefer.

This is a danger, because it affords the misleading paradigms increasing power over societies.

To use another metaphor, this time not from hydro-dynamics, but from Near East politics:

Ever since the only prevailing group of emigrants to Israel are "orthodox" Jews from Russia etc., is the peace process in danger. After Oslo, a few well aimed provocations, namely the march on the temple-hill by Arioel Sharon, on purpose provoking the Entifada, without which he would otherwise not have been able to win the Israeli elections and halt the peace process, after all this, normal "decent" moderate Jews increasingly leave the country again. With the orthodox as the only and growing flow of immigrants, little hope remains, that Israel will ever make peace with the original inhabitants of Palaestina, who have the same right of an independent state as the jews, because the land had been promised to both in order to make them cooperate in the war against Germany. Such a situation could also arise in Europe, if the paralysing paradigms, actually in fact an outright a sabotage of Europe's strenghts, will be allowed to prevail any longer. The European Union has the right tool in hand: The Eurogio-programme. It just needs to be tuned and reinforced, with the new findings on economic theory in mind. And with Karl Popper and the enemies of open society and true democracy in mind. They are both left and right.

Since the late seventies, the ill development is under way and undermining Europe's strenghts. With increasing speed. And the (artificially) provoked crash of 2008, easily predictable and thus predicted much earlier by myself in a conference on economy and management in Riga for "the weeks before the US presidential elections", has been a means to push Europe and the rest of world further into the wrong direction. The result have already been seen and will not be overcome, if the errors of prevailing economic theory are not understood. They have been explained, in the most ample form in my presentation in Riga 2008. And the remedies proven in the turnaround of the Spanish Basque Country have been even more closely analysed in the subsequent conference in

Ventspils 2009. Since, a few shorter papers have been presented in order to outline, what it means and what can be done, in various areas of life and society, to strengthen the ability of sensing, appreciating and nurturing qualitative diversity, and to counter the offensive of imposing a submission of all and everything under hollow quantitative criteria.

But where change can start the quickest, just as practised from Bilbao in the Basque country, is in entrepreneur managed industry. For my concepts, the US "small business act" has been the basis. Attempts to generate a European small business act have been aborted. Cui Bono?

Must not, apart from strengthening entrepreneurs and making them and their countries independent from international finance and, thus, paralysing influence and foreign "milking", also politicians and buerocrats learn about the importance of qualitative distinction and of the counterproductive effects of paradigms focused on quantitative criteria?

Just like in entrepreneurship, where detailed knowledge of technologies, processes and latent preferences of target groups are the single most important key to unique sales propositions, and, thus success, and, where, thus, prosperity is generated by generating different offers aimed at different preferences of different people and their "diverse" values, public administrations have gigantic potentials of success waiting to be turned into realities, in order to achieve and secure lasting general prosperity.

But like in Entrepreneurship, it all starts with understanding, that mere book-keeping, wherever it is allowed to "take over", is surely about to ruin all. Understanding, the politicisation of Europe will turn onto a constructive road. Not only, and across senseless borders, for each and every region, but for all of Europe, not just the EU, and for the whole world, which can see, how having, yes, is result of identity, of being, and thus of diversity. Numbers are the result, not the means to achieve other results. Otherwise, we act like surfers falling into the water again and again, but with no real progress. After all: Surfers, too, need the energy they disperse. Who is providing it, and ready to rescue them, if not those who generate work and direct the vessels soberly?

Literature:

The "surprising" results, and the question, why, what in parts contradicts prevailing paradigms, has worked so well, has led to the publication "Sustainable Management in times of potential Economic Downturns. That publication extensively analyses economic theory and adds conclusions so far unseen, while also criticising scientific theory overly focusing on quantitative aspects alone. while disregarding qualitative information. This being identified as the "key" promoting crisis rather than prosperity. That publication by the author is completed by a long list of recommended

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