Thinking Europe: European identity and the enmity

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Abstract

One part of my dissertation has dealt with the enemy images which two Italian weekly magazines called Oggi and Tempo created about communism at the beginning 1950s. The detailed analyses revealed systematic and uniform practice which these two weekly magazines used to generate variety of enemy images about communism in Italy and in the world. Besides generating enemy images, the weeklies told narratives through which the idea of communists as enemies was endorsed.

Through the examples of my dissertation, it is possible to identify the general practice about the means through which enemy images have been built in the history of mankind, and what is still widespread practice taken advantage by the media and political power groups. In addition, the enemy images have been used to form identities of different social groups, a sense of togetherness, since the identity bases on idea of hostility of other. From this perspective is possible also to survey the question of European identity.

Key words: European identity- enemy- Russia-Media- National identity

About European Identity

In the eighteenth century, some intellectual thinkers started to define themselves as Europeans claiming that Europe represented a new world, united by a common religion, laws and customs possessing a set of values superiors to others. The others were typically defined backward or barbaric.[1] More specifically, European identity rooted from the ideals from French Revolutionary legacies like popular sovereignty and equality.[2] The idea of common identity was not obvious because the religion in Europe has been historically more dividing factor than unifying component and European states had been for centuries arguing and waged wars with each other, for which the peace in Europe is rather recent condition. It has been more likely that people in Europe identify with their own nations or according to language they speak and the locality they live, so that the nationalist interests have exceeded idea of common Europe. In addition, the fact that European identity has based on ideals, rather than on concrete borders, or on common language or past, or other tangible references, has caused that European identity has been fragile preventing the emerge of universal European identity.

European Union has been considered often artificial, bureaucratic, and hostile institution rather than organization which serves people's needs. Overall, the identification with European Union has been inconsistent because people accept some EU institutions, like common foreign policy and environmental policy, while other EU institution, such as education or health policy, are not considered trustworthy.[3] The unneglectable truth is that majority of people in Europe considers European Union only as an economic, external and even arrogant organization disregarding the economic and political co-operation and the resulting benefits. In fact, only 10-15%, a small minority of Europeans, are unambiguously committed Europeans. As a result, the low identification with Europe is an important concern for the political, economic and academic elites, because for most of the people Europe means just the geographic location.[4] Due to the fact that rather few people identify themselves primarily as Europeans, the lack of common European identity has been recognised to be important problems as Helin has stated in 1996: "The sense of togetherness is a crucial question among Europeans for the future of the Union. If the integration does not lead to a common political and cultural identity the integration process will be just elitistic program."[5] Despite the problem has been acknowledged various years, the common European identity has remained the main obstruction of unity of Europe as European Union has not been able to endorse it. Even the efforts to renew European Union such as common currency or enlargement of European Union, have not consolidated Europe.

On the other hand, according to Kaelbe "the identification with Europe is thought to be weak because it differs from what we know about national identities, and therefore the European identification should be understood as a transnational identification which differs from national ones. Moreover, the identification with Europe should not be considered as a primordial identification, which challenges to displace regional and local identities, but a part of an ensemble of multiple identities and thus complementary rather than competing."[6] As well, Cases has stated, "being European is not compatible with being national but instead a constituent element of national identity."[7]

Nonetheless, the European identity's history has had one common factor, the common consideration of other. The history of the Western self belongs to the Antic period when the political and social ideas developed by the idea that person had his inner life for which he had also general rights and duties. Later Hegel has further developed the idea of self, specially indicating that the self was constituted by the recognition the existence of the other.[8] When the idea of

the other was further discussed and developed in later centuries it was strongly related to the idea of difference of other, that is to say, the characteristics of the other were considered different and conflict with one's own characteristics.[9] By defining the nations outside different people in Europe became to develop their own identity. In fact, often the people or group who are outsiders become adversaries because they act differently and have different goals.[10] Some theorists have even stated, that Europe has, instead of defining itself by what it is, it has defined itself by defining what it is not, using idea of other and enemy.[11] In the past when the Iberian peninsula was under Islamic regime and later when the Ottomans had conquered parts of Europe, Europe has jointly responded to these threats from outsiders. Likewise, still today the sense of belonging increases when Europeans encounter threats or challenges by others, such as Islamist fundamentalism, US unilateralism or East Asian competition. Then Europe is perceived as community of shared values by majority.[12] Thus the enmity of outsiders has been crucial element that has formed the European identity.

Otherness represented by Russia in European history

As said, despite the weak sense of belonging among European, there has always been something that commons all Europeans and that is the common consideration of other. According to the dominant version, during the centuries Russia has been regarded as Europe's main common enemy for its different form of regime and for its barbarian or uncivil character.[13] The initial fraction of Europe to east and west was due to division of Roman catholic and Orthodox church. Later Russia's enemy image emerged from Russia's search of regional growth.[14] In 1800 century, it was claimed that the diversity of Russia was due to its reactionary regime and to its lack of a substantial middleclass. At the same time however, Russia has been considered a land of the future i.e. the land of possible social changes.[15] There was indeed a conception, which existed along enemy image that Russia was as a learner, which was supposed to take a model of European states and become more like Europeans, and less different.[16] Therefore, the enemy image of Russia has not been definite as there has been an aspiration that Russia could become one of the European countries.

As a matter of fact, Neumann has criticized the dominant version which have seen Russia longstanding enemy of Europe, claiming that also other significant enemies have formed European identity, like the enmity what Turkey has represented. In addition, Neumann has remarked that "in several occasions Russia has been considered to be part of Europe and European politics, more than Great Britain has ever been, and also Russia has considered itself part of Europe."[17] There has been in fact been inconsistency regarding the enemy image of Russia, because while Russians represented barbarians, on the other hand, Russia has been also considered part of civil world defending Europe from uncivil and unchristian Asian or Turkey.[18] For instance, Peter the Great was considered barbarian but who at the same time was seeking to learn from Europe and consequently Russia was considered a newcomer among the great nations and entitled to play a role in European politics. Not to forget that the Napoleonic wars brought Russian soldiers to Paris and Alliance with Great Britain Austria and Prussia made Russia part of European politics.[19] That is why, for centuries, Russia has been counted as part of the European nations because it has fought against other European countries and alongside them.

Neumann has also criticized the dominant version's claim according to which Russia's communist revolution and its transformation to the socialist nation further reinforced its enmity. According to Neumann, "during the interwar period Soviet Russia was still considered legitimate player in European politics and it was seen only as a military treat despite its revolutionary character."[20] Only, after Second World War, Russia was transformed to evil enemy of Western World. Particularly, the merit of original enemy image of Russia belongs to George F. Kennan who had developed the doctrine, which influenced the United States-Soviet relations until the end of Cold War. This Kennan's doctrine defined how the Occident considered Russia for decades by claiming that Russia was always attempting to cause conflicts and wars in order to achieve the world revolution.[21] Neumann in turn has claimed that "the Russian position changed only during 1944-46, when Russian were considered barbarians, not Europeans, who had intruded into Europe by military means." [22] Thus, only after the Second World War, Russia became equally common enemy of all Western European nations.

Certainly, the fact that communism was spreading in the World, particularly in Asia and many Eastern European countries, transformed the communism real and potential danger what threatened to change political system in European nations. As a result, European nations wanted to protect their economic and political interests by launching cooperation while Soviet Russia was represented as an adversary of civil, democratic and welfare Europe. Hence, the sense of cohesion and partnering to Western Europe has been sustained by anti-communist alliance that believes in capitalism and democratic values. Consequently, this has motivated the emergence of the European union. It is noteworthy that the Soviet Russia was defined as an enemy also for the pragmatic purposes to focus the attention from internal problems or to justify the military expenses and to have approval for the participation in NATO. In fact, according to Sharp, "the sense of danger of enemy can be advanced in domestic affairs as well as used to justify the foreign policy."[23]

On the other hand, should not be ignored the fact, that also Russia has generated its national identity by otherness which Europe has represented. The romantic nationalists in Russia have for centuries outlined the difference from Europe being strongly xenophobic towards Europe, which they considered morally inferior and claiming that Russia must defend itself from European enemy.[24] As a result, over the years the Russian identity has been formed by the

relationship with Europe and second to how Western Europe has defined itself in relation to Russia.[25] Even after the communism had collapsed, still today the traditional enemy image of Russia determinate the way how Russia is considered as the narrative of greedy and aggressive Russia is practical, since Russia is a central component of ongoing discourse on the European security order; about expansion of EU and NATO.[26] And at the same time, Russia continues its own nationalistic identifications as an opponent of Europe, who needs to protect its interest from European enemy. Thus, the question of enmity is also mutual process for which, the enemy image and identities are significant questions which should not be overlooked.

The characteristics of Enemy

The core issue of my dissertation was to indicate the methods by which two weeklies called Oggi and Tempo produced enemy images about communism, and consequently about Russia, and recognize the narrative structures by which enemy images were further endorsed. Overall, Oggi and Tempo followed the propaganda manuscript of Cold War providing concrete examples of numerous ways how the enemy image of the Soviet Union was formed during the Cold War in Europe. Sam Keen has listed the common characteristic of enemy saying that "the enemy is considered an atheist and barbarian, a denier of God and the destroyer of culture. Enemy is also considered rude crude and uncivilized, irrational, barbarian."[27] Harle in turn has said that "the enemy implies disorder, injustice, transgression, while we represent justice, right, law and morality."[28] As well according to Heikki Luostarinen, who has studied the attitude of Finland's right-wing regarding Russia has noted that" Russia embodied disorder, atheism, anarchy and evilness."[29] All these same characterization of enemy emerged during my research, but I discovered also other characteristics by which communists were defined.

The key features of Russian enemy image

One evident characteristic of communists, which emerged clearly from the research material was their tendency to aggressivity. Communists were described anarchistic, who were planning to achieve revolutions in Italy and elsewhere. Especially Russia represented the evil force, who was secretively working to implement the communist revolution in the world and generally cause chaos in the world. Russia was the main evil, who sought to rule insidiously the world by plotting and planning the outbreak of the Third World War being ready for human sacrifices in order to achieve its goals.

Everywhere, the communist parties were considered severe and controlling organizations and the communist nations were defined authorial, and tyrannical, and once again Russia was the principal example as the both weeklies emphasized the anti-democratic nature of Russia. In addition, the weeklies repeatedly told that in communist countries people were governed ruthlessly and unfairly and Russia was hold as an example of authoritarian communist ruling, where people lived under the fear. Another manner to define communist countries was to describe them enigmatic and especially Russian political culture was described to be secretive, what puzzling image of Stalin stressed even more. The image that Russia was ruled differently endorsed the irrational and unnatural character of communist regime, which in turn generated the fear because the unfamiliar things are considered negatively.

Particularly, the weeklies frequently emphasized the barbarian character of communists by writing about the persecution of Christians or other disrespectful behaviour towards Christians. In order to increase the fear of communism communists were described with unhuman and immoral characteristics such as unfair and cruel or merciless. Overall, the weeklies appealed to people's feelings more often than actual facts, through which they believed it was possible more effectively to influence people and to have them detest communists. In few occasions was exploited scientific information about Russian military, but the more commonly the source of persuasion was people's fear and dislike. As said, these images about Russia in the weeklies were not exceptional, on contrary, the negative images of communist societies were a widespread practice in the Western press, and a consequence of constant Cold War.

Not exploiting only strengths, but also weakness of enemy

Besides generating the enemy image of communists by the intimidating characteristics, the weeklies also exploited the vulnerabilities of communists. This occurred by stressing the weakness and disadvantages of the communist nations because the vulnerability of enemy gives hope that the enemy is possible to overcome.[30] For the same reason, the communists' immoral behaviour was evidenced, because morally inferior enemy could be defeated. This is important for societies that need positive confidence about their future. For instance, at the same time as the weeklies emphasised Russian military power's capacity, they also sought minimized it. Often weeklies also stressed the contradictions and the disagreements inside the communist parties in order to demonstrate the chaotic nature and disorganisation of communism.

Naturally, the weeklies exploited the miserable living conditions of communist countries to provide image of poor, undeveloped and demoralized communist nations. The disadvantages served to break the image of perfect communist society. During the research emerged particularly that in the weeklies the communist female's appearance was object of criticism, the purpose of which was presumably to make communism look less appealing for the female population. In addition, to establish the weakness of communism, the weeklies criticized communists as insincere and communism as a false ideology. By the examples was sought to prove that the communists did not obey the communist dogma but instead sought to imitate Western world's habits. This was considered a hypocrisy what did not guarantee the credibility of the communism. Moreover, by implying that communism was false ideology was claimed that communism was unrealistic and impracticable ideology, and in reality the mankind was not able to adapt to the communist society.

Another common manner to engender vulnerable enemy image of communism was to ridicule the communists or simply to diminish their importance to provide hope. Narratively the ridiculous image of communists, served to make communism appear less powerful because in the stories no one is willing to identify with a fool.

Narrative practice to form enemy

As said, the communism was transformed into enemy also through the narrative practice what the journalist used when they wrote the articles. This was a customary practice, because the plot structure is common in all literary and oral stories that people have adopted through their culture, and because without the known structure narratives would be incomprehensible. Consequently, journalists unconsciously followed the old mythological stories of holy war where the evil force, communists, pursued to destroy the peace and caused chaos while the good was forced to defend the world order. This enabled the destruction of enemies without guilt, but the mythological elements made also easier to understand the world events for the ordinary people because the evilness of the enemy is more comprehensible than complicated political reasons. Also, from the narrative perspective, the enemy's function is to form the group identity since at the beginning of humanity the storytelling has solved the fundamental problems of existence and provided a tool to consolidate the identity.[31] Therefore, the narratives in the weeklies which regarded communism or communists endorsed western and particularly anti-communists identity because through the story it became natural to identify with the good and to stand against the communists enemy.

In addition, the weeklies used the photos to stress the qualities of enemy as well as a tangible proof to verify the misery of people in the communist countries and the violent characteristics of communist. The photos were used to tell the stories how the people desperately desired to escape from the communist countries or how the communist military suppressed ruthlessly the freedom. The photos were also exploited to imply about communists' falsity.

Enemy and identity

Once having identified the enemy images and narratives, emerged the question why in so many ways was important for the both weekly write about communism negatively? The most obvious reasons were related to political and hegemony issues. At the beginning of 1950's Italy was governed by Christian Democratic party, who was constantly challenged by influential Italian Communist Party. Simultaneously, Italian right-wing had to re-define its ideas and strategy after the failure of Fascism as the middle-class was seeking a new political identity to represent them in post-fascist Italy. In part, the weeklies sought to form the new right-wing identity by revising the Fascist past less infamous, as I have explained in my dissertation, but another important mean to encourage the right-wing's identity was to stress the enemy image of communism. The purpose was that the public would to identify with the right-wing. This because the identity of individuals or communities develops through the sense of cohesion and partnering to group, whose members have common values and common targets.[32] Indeed, the function of an enemy is to help the establishment of group's identity because the enemy increases the sense of belonging and explains the reasons which separate the group form their enemy.[33] Clearly, by the enemy image of communism, the weeklies sought to develop common values and increased the sense of belonging.

In the process, where was practiced negative images of communists, was advocated the right-wing's identity by claiming that the right-wing supporters were morally more righteous people than the communists were wishing that the people would identify with the right-wing and reject communism. The weeklies based their strategy on common idea that enemy, in this case communism, represented the outsiders of society, even when they were Italian citizen, because they broke existing rules, acted differently, and had different values. Defining communists as others, they became dangerous and threat for the existing society. Moreover, by describing the essence of the enemy weeklies sought to define the self-identity by establishing the social order.[34] Also according to propaganda theorists, propaganda's task is to reinforce of self-identity by promoting the ways of a community.[35] Hence, the weeklies' motives were practical as they sought to safeguard existing political power, but simultaneously they sought more and less consciously to define as well the identity for the right-wing.

Moreover, the psychological theories have established that the identification of the outgroup is crucial to enforce group cohesion, because group members can displace the aggressiveness, which originally was directed towards

members of their own group onto the outgroup.[36] Hence enemy image of communism served also keep all anti-communists forces together in the battle against communism overlooking the disagreements among different right-wing parties. In fact, this political formula has been working well in Italy till recent years. Overall, two weekly newspapers like Oggi and Tempo function as examples how influential the media instruments are forming enemy images and at the same time establishing identities.

National identity

Besides exploiting the political identity of the right-wing, the weeklies sought to reintroduce nationalism as the national identities are a part of political struggle.[37] Hence, the political identity of the right wing and the national identity were connected, but the task was not simple because after Fascism nationalism had bad reputation and nationalist identity among Italians hardly existed. The communists were perfect motive and cause to advocate nationalism in Italy as they were told to be the opponent of the Italian nation. Accordingly, the weeklies stressed the need to protect the nationalist privileges by promoting the image of evil communists who sought to destroy Italy. In fact, the national identity bases on idea of the world dived into us and them,[38] and the national threat is a strong point of identification, which based on the idea of unknown enemy threatening society's habits or rituals. Communists were allegedly a threat to the nation because they had different political ideas and goals and pursued to change the established order of Italian society. Moreover, the fact that Italian communist party was led from outside of Italian society, by Russia caused worry and enmity. The right wing wanted to assure the readers that they were only political force which could maintain the social order so that people would identify with them who guaranteed security.

Should be acknowledged also that the national identities do not form casually or without lobbying. The national identities are formed because people are constantly reminded about the nations where they live by media and by politics. Thus, the national identities does born naturally just because people have the common language or common culture heritage but because people's everyday life is filled with the small messages which keep reminding about nation as a homeland.[39] In fact, people are not allowed to forget their national identities because they are constantly reminded that people live in nations, specially by politicians and weeklies.[40] Above all, media instruments have important role to form national identities as they repeat the same narrative of belonging to a particular nationality at the end creates national feeling. In other worlds, by the constant reproduction of communism as an enemy of nation and a threat for the nation, the weeklies sought to reinforce the sense of national identification in Italy.

Conclusions

In the light of the conclusions my dissertation, it become evident that during the cold war the media had key role to generate enemy images about Russia and communism, as well as media participated generating national identity. In addition, the research results provide concrete example how by sustaining the idea enemy, Italian weekly newspapers facilitated the formation of the right-wing identity. Consequently, by these deductions can be studied also the European identity formation by enemy images.

When the communism ended in different European countries and finally in Russia, for a while was celebrated the victory of capitalism and democracy. There was also expectation that Russia could join European family as Russia was once again seen as a learner, on its way to transform into capitalistic and democratic nation, as rest of Europe was. (This actually did happen, only that capitalism and democracy were executed according to Russian model which differed from European model.) As previously explained, the enemy images of Europe had changed during the centuries and thus soon was looked for the new enemies which would maintain European united and sustain European identity. The Yugoslav wars has demonstrated how flammable the situation in Europe was without common identity. After 9/11 in 2001 Islam became a new enemy of Western World. The enemy image of Islam was quite obvious due to various terrorist attacks, which was shared by majority of Europeans. It is noteworthy that the Islam was defined as enemy by the similar attributes as communism had been previously like barbarian, brutal, secretive, and unfair. Also, the fact that Islamist terrorists were led by the outside forces endorsed their enemy image. This unified the European policy as Europeans felt being threatened by outside forces.

As has been said at the beginning, the lack of common identity has been the essential problem of European community. In order to endorse universal European identity, Europe Union has been transformed into political institution, which has increased the public debate about identification with Europe and EU. The consequences, however, have been opposite to what was wished, since, particularly in recent years, the liberal vision has encountered the opposition from the new right, which sustain opposite values of Europe Union, like internal diversity.[41] As a matter of fact, despite that among European elite the sense of belonging has increased, the majority of people, particularly the poorest social classes have begun to dislike Europe Union more and more, and nationalistic politics have taken more power in various European countries. In this regard, Case has made interesting remark by claiming that "whenever the reinvention of European identity has been topical, after World Wars and 1989, Europeanness was conceptualized not so much around what had worked but as an evasion of what had not worked; national chauvinism and state socialism. Yet many aspects of self-identification models that emerged from these failed models remain common among

Europeans, as there is a fine line between national chauvinism and the building up of national identities."[42] Yet, many people have been surprised by fact that the right-wing ideals are still strongly popular in Europe, and the ideals which European Union has been seeking to diffuse the last decade have not rooted as much as European Union politicians or European idealist had believe.

On top of all that, the new enemy has recently emerged by latest refugee crisis in Europe. The refugees have been identified as enemies once again by the same characteristics as previous enemies as they represent a treat for the security of nation, they are considered violent, barbarian, expansionists and even false. The fact that they are miserable and ready for the sacrifices make them even more scary. The refugee crisis has reinforced the right-wing's successes since the right-wing stresses particularly the locality and own traditions.[43] Thus, the problem of refugees complies perfectly with the right-wing politics, as refugees are considered threatening the local and national wellbeing and culture, helping the right-wing to gain popularity among wider population. In fact, it is becoming increasingly evident that the old common values, emerged during French revolution, are not valid anymore while idea of protecting own national interests and benefits, embracing idea of new kind of democracy and making Europe closed fortify are becoming popular, but also because the values on which Europe has based its existence are fading away, like the ideal of free movement between EU nations.

While enemies like Russia and Islamist terrorists had united Europe endorsing the identity, the question of refugees has changed this custom. In fact, there is fundamental difference compared to previous enemy images: while previously the enemy image of communism and Islam was shared by large majority of Europeans, this time not all Europeans share the idea of refugees as enemies. This time the perception of enemy differs among social groups, and the fact that in European countries exist different views regarding the refugees are causing strong political contraposition inside the nations as well as inside the European community since different European nations' governments are taking distinct positions.

Now when the common enemy image is vague, or dividing factor in Europe, the future of European Union is even more uncertain, and the common European identity is declining. Consequently, the question of immigration politics has forced even the moderate European leaders to take right-wing position in order to guarantee the unity of Europe. Therefore, should be asked, despite the possibility appears improbable at the moment, will and should the European Union change its values according to the nationalist and new right-wing parties in order to remain united? In fact, it will be interesting to follow if the refugee crisis will be definitive condition which divide Europe due to the lack of common policy or should be said due to lack of common enemy? There is also another possible approach, which most probably French President's Macron is attempting: to return to old enemy rhetoric by establishing the military and defence collaboration between European nations. The leaders of liberal Europe are wishing that by the traditional enemy strategy would to keep Europe united, which could mean also of endorsing the enemy image of Russia.

Finally, it is important to realize that the European identity cannot base only on ideals of French Revolution, or elites' vision of common Europe otherwise it is failed project. The Europe should not be unrealistic and ignore its problems by looking for bureaucratic solutions. In addition, it is important to observe that the latest contrapositions regarding refugees in Europe has been caused by the fact that the majority of media has not acknowledged refugees as enemies. This explains why the enemy image of refugees has not been universally conceived by all as it had been the case of Soviet Russia or Islamist terrorists. Hence, in order to increase common European identity, one solution could be to establish a larger European media source. Until now, EU's media policy has remained restrained and cautious, and there has not been effort to control or supervise media.[44] However, because the media has played such a key role in creating enemies and identities, a single European media could be a mean of increasing the sense of social cohesion in Europe. The common European media could speak by mutual tone to all Europeans, and not just to certain citizens, by dealing the arguments from a European point of view and in name of common interest. In this manner, could be possible to generate minimum sense of belonging among Europeans, since the realization of a common European identity is unlikely for a long time.

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