

New Europe and Its Growth to Limits?

Third Edmund Mokrzycki Symposium, 20–21 October 2006, Warsaw, Poland

The Third Edmund Mokrzycki Symposium took place in the Staszic Palace in Warsaw on October 20 and 21, 2006. It was co-organized by the Graduate School for Social Research/Center for Social Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences and the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (Social Science Research Center Berlin).

Many distinguished social scientists from several countries as well as a group of talented young scholars who have been trained in the Academy presented their work in seven sessions and panels. The papers ranged from broad, theoretical and historical overviews to empirical reports on specific case studies.

Professor Sven Eliaeson, the conference convener and main organizer, sketched a thoughtful conceptual introduction to the conference and outlined the themes of all seven sessions in a memo that was circulated before the meeting. He wrote, *inter alia*:

Borders are an amorphous concept. They might denote an iron curtain with watch towers and land mines, or mental and invisible borders in the brains of people. Evidently borders within Europe are less relevant today than before *Die Wende* and the implosion of the Soviet empire. However, the question where Europe ends not only remains but gains new significance in the enlargement process. Moreover, some border regions, such as the Oder river become redefined and new options open. Religious borders and borders for family formation are merely examples of borders in Europe. The 1054 divide is arguably the most important one. There is a historical correlation between city culture, market capitalism and civic virtues. Eastwards the border is “floating”, less cities and even the architecture of the towns reflecting the old religious border between Orthodox and Catholic Churches. West of the divide there is not only a Church in the middle of the town but also a *Rathaus*/city hall.

It is hard to convey the richness of the presentations and vigorous discussions in a short report. The following few points reflect not so much the totality of the many excellent presentations and exchanges as the author’s own interests and fascinations.

The main theme of the conference, “New Europe and Its Growth to Limits?”, has been present in several papers and debates. A set of tensions among various conceptualizations of the growth to limits/limits of the growth emerged and has been discussed: (a) optimal (economically) size of the (European) political organism, (b) optimal size for the effective security arrangements, (c) optimal size of the “manageable” or viable (European) identity, (d) optimal size for effective governance (for revenue collection, distribution, and—in particular—for transformation assistance).

An astute observation that the split between the “party of globalization” and the party of “territoriality” has had arguably become the main socio-political cleavage in

many (most?) European societies led to a discussion on the nation state (its viability at least for a foreseeable future has been accepted) and the meaning of European citizenship. An increasingly timely theme of the “diasporic citizenship” has been debated and led to a new consideration of optimality: the optimal strategy of membership circulation, with the attendant problematic of political, economic, and cultural inclusions/exclusions. This theme has overlapped with several discussions on the issue of transnationalization of: (a) civil society, (b) middle classes, and (c) (negatively) of crime.

The first panel focused on the history and critical examination of the European identity and slowly progressing integration, at least since the Enlightenment. Positive dimensions of the European development (“liberal” and republican political philosophy, division of powers, democratic institutions, the growing culture of tolerance) were juxtaposed with its “negative” features such as colonialism and imperial expansion. The necessity of the more extensive study of the external views of Europe (for example by the former colonials) was noted. An interesting problem was articulated: whereas colonialism (a common experience of several major states) led to the solidification of a common European identity, may the reversal of colonialism—most clearly manifested in the influx of former colonials to the former metropol—contribute to this identity’s weakening?

An interesting session examined the relevance of such classics and Gunnar Myrdal, Karl Marx and Karl Manheim for the current debates on European politics and societies.

The question of historical memory and its role in the formation of collective identities has been debated. Several presenters dealt with concrete examples, such as the politics of monument building/destruction and re-naming of streets in the city of Lviv (Lwów, Lemberg) or the meaning of Holocaust in the Polish collective memory.

Several papers dealt with the EU and its eastward expansion. The benefits and drawbacks of the accession to the EU were debated. The criteria of membership were discussed in the view of the possible accession of Turkey. Predictably, the “pro” economic and political arguments for Turkey’s membership clashed with a more cautious assessment of that country’s “cultural/religious compatibility” with “Europe,” however defined. It was noted that a division between the “European” and “non-European” cultural/social formations does not separate one group of countries from another, but rather runs through each country, *inside* of it. In the midst of this debate, an appeal for a more balanced conceptualization of Europe was issued; for example, it was argued that scholars should avoid being entrapped in a spurious dichotomy between conceptualizing the EU as an “elite conspiracy” or a “populist plebiscite.”

Several presentations and interventions dealt with the inadequacies of the standard conceptual apparatus used by most social scientists. It was suggested that in addition to such notions as “limits,” “(fixed) identities,” and “borders” we need to rely more on a set of more “dynamic” concepts, including “boundary formation,” “fuzzy boundaries,” “networks,” flows,” and “hybridization.” An interesting debate on the administrative and political meaning of “fuzzy boundaries” led to a clarification of questions rather than an articulation of clear answers.

As with the two previous Mokrzycki Symposia, the quality and richness of the contributions and debates bodes well for the planned conference volume.

Jan Kubik

Associate Professor of Political Science,
Rutgers University,
Distinguished Fulbright Chair in East European
Studies at Warsaw University, Poland

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Program:

Session I Conceptual History of Identities and Borders

Chair: Sven Eliaeson

Jürgen Kocka The Mapping of Europe's Borders: Past, Present, and Future

Dieter Gosewinkel Europe and its Borders as a Political Concept

Jan Zielonka Boundary Making by the European Union

Stefan Immerfall Territory, History, Identity

Nadezhda Georgieva Hybrid Identities: Border/Liminal Romani Intellectuals

Session II Borders and Modernization

Chair: Józef Niznik

Göran Therborn European Modernities and Their Capitals

Bernhard Wessels Religion and Economic Virtues

Nico Stehr The Moralization of the Markets in Europe

Francois Bafail Cross-border Policies: EU Past and Future

Michael Th. Greven Are Borders Necessary—Especially Political Borders?

Session III The Relevance of the Classics for Transformation Processes

Chair: Nico Stehr

Radoslaw Sojak Karl Mannheim and the Quality of Public Discourse in Post-communist Poland

Robert J. Jessop The *Communist Manifesto* as a Classic Text

Session IV Continuation of III

Chair: Jacek Wasilewski

Nataliya Yeremeyeva Individualization of Identities: Borders for the Self and Threats from Alienation (re-reading of Norbert Elias)

Wilhelm Bohutsky Gunnar Myrdal's Brand of Institutionalism and the Prospects of Application in the Analysis of Modern Developmental Problems and Post-Socialist Socio-Economic Transformation

Session V Cases: "New" Countries and EU Entrance as a Transformation Factor

Chair: Jan Kubik

Henryk Domanski Formation of Civil Virtues

Nikolai Genov The Accession to the EU: Gains and Pains of Accelerated Rationalization

Kristine Barseghyan Diaspora, Oil and Roses: Power, and Democracy in Post-Communist South Caucasus

Pal Tamas "Orange Revolutions" as Middle Class Language Uprisings

Jürgen Nautz New Forms of Governance: Fighting International Crime and the Role of Civil Society

Session VI Cultural Bridges and Trenches. Civil Society and transformations

Chair: Joanna Kurczewska

Slawomir Kapralski Memories as Bridges, Memories as Trenches. Poland's Memories of "The Other" since 1989: From Myth to Remembrance to Politics

George Kolankiewicz Between Diasporic Engagement and Integration. The Emerging Outlines of Polish Diasporic Citizenship in Post Accession UK

Olga Kutsenko New Middle Class Revolt: Lust for Freedom and Hobble of Legacy

Victoria Sereda Legacy of Collective Memory in Polish-Ukrainian Ethnic Stereotypes

Teresa Kulawik Knowledge Society and Public Accountability in Poland

Session VII Panel: Growth to Limits?

Chair: Michal Federowicz

Norbert Götz, Jan Kubik, Tatyana Dublikash, Andrzej Rychard