Can the European Union Survive?

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IASR Lecture, 15 September 2015
Content

I. What did we have before the EU?

II. Emergence of the EU

III. Empire in the making?

IV. Future challenges
I. Europe before the EU

- Was a very restless continent in which terrible wars were waged almost constantly more than a thousand years (probably much more violent than any other continent).
- With its imperialism from the 16th century onwards also the menace of all the other continents.
- The Great European War 1914-45 was the implosion of this violent continent.
- The war brought all the European empires down.
II. Emergence of the EU: A peace plan

- The EU started to develop as an US initiated peace plan for pacifying the troublesome continent.
- Therefore it began as the Coal and Steel Union between the former enemies France, Germany and Italy and the Benelux countries (1952).
- … and therefore the next step was adding cooperation in regard to the use of nuclear power.
- Sharing access to these three was meant to make modern war between parties of the treaty impossible.
- And it worked! No war has been waged between the member states of the EU!
II. Emergence of the EU: Expansion, 7 waves

- 1952/55/58: France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg
- 1973: Denmark, Ireland and the UK
- 1981: Greece
- 1986: Spain and Portugal
- 1995: Austria, Finland and Sweden
- 2004: Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
- 2013: Croatia
- Candidate countries: Turkey, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Iceland
II. Emergence of the EU: Expansion on the map; Nations Online Project
II. Emergence of the EU: Milestones of the deepening coordination, Wikipedia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Treaty/Agreement</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>In Force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Maastricht Treaty</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**European Communities:**
- European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM)
- European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)
- European Economic Community (EEC)

**Schengen Rules**
- Treaty expired in 2002

**Western European Union (WEU)**
- Unconsolidated bodies

**Three pillars of the European Union:**
- Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)
- Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters (PJCC)
- Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

**TREVI**
- Treaty terminated in 2011
II. Emergence of the EU: More milestones

**Single market act(s):** A still ongoing process launched in the White Paper ‘Completing the Internal Market’ by Jacques Delors et al in 1985. "the objective of completing the internal market has three aspects: [...] the welding together of the [...] markets of the Member States into one single market; [...] ensuring that this single market is also an expanding market; [...] ensuring that the market is flexible.” The process has already created a highly integrated European economy (the kind that has never existed before our time).

**Stability and Growth Pact** (since 1997): The fiscal discipline by requiring each Member State, to implement a fiscal policy aiming for the country to stay within the limits on government deficit (3% of GDP) and debt (60% of GDP); and in case of having a debt level above 60% it should each year decline with a satisfactory pace towards a level below. Deviants may face sanctions.
II. Emergence of the EU: Some more milestones or the 2 ‘ten-year plans’

The Lisbon Strategy 2000-2010 (European Council 2000): ‘to become the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion and respect for the environment.’

Europe 2020 Strategy (European Commission 2010): ‘smart, inclusive and sustainable growth’. Includes also a set of indicators and an annual negotiation mechanism between the Commission and member states to bring the states closer to the objectives of the strategy (the European Season)
II. Emergence of the EU: The sources of its social power


- In the most general sense, **power** is the ability to pursue and attain goals through mastery of one’s environment.” (I:6) **Social power** is exercised over other people and has two aspects.

- **Distributive aspect**: Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance (as Weber put it in his definition of *Macht*). This is actor A’s power over actor B. It is a "zero-sum game": all A’s gains are losses for B. **Collective aspect**: Here we refer to such cases in which A and B, acting together, can in cooperation enhance their joint power over third parties or over nature.

- The IEMP model
II. Emergence of the EU: Ideological power (I)

Values (The Treaty of Nice, 2001/03): The EU is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The societies of the Member States are characterised by pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men.

The values are important, especially in three cases. Firstly, any European State wishing to become a member of the Union must respect these values in order to be considered eligible for admission. Secondly, failure by a Member State to respect these values may lead to the suspension of that Member State’s rights deriving from membership of the Union. Thirdly, the Union enhances the values in its trade political treaties with other states. Widely accepted even if:

• modest challenges in the form of populist nationalism with racist aspects
• modest challenges in the form of Muslim (and sometimes Christian) fundamentalism
II. Emergence of the EU: Economic power (E)

After The Great European War nobody wanted to establish an European treaty on the basis of ideological, military or political might → the European political project got an economic shape (mainly designed by the German ordoliberals), which still persists. Today:

• Internal trade today integrated, and half of the trade in the EU covered by legislation harmonized by the Union.
• EURO the joint currency of 19 of the 28 member states; the second important reserve currency of the world after the US dollar
• GNP 15.9 trillion $ (in 2013); Gini 30.5 (in 2015)
• Doing very well in comparative terms: Major player in the global economy and a free trade zone of 508 million consumers, economy about the size of the US economy but citizens less inequal.
• On the other hand: problems with creation of economic growth (austerity policies) and sharing economic burdens with the member states
II. Emergence of the EU: Military power (M)

• Militarily the EU is a worm.
• Incapable to intervene into crises: the former Yugoslavia, Libya, Middle-East (Syria at the time being), Ukraine …
• Military expenditure itself is high (45% of the US and 327% of the Russian expenditure) but the army comes in 28 packages (the most important of which are the armies of France and the UK).
• Great need for coordination: 3 last waves of expansion (in years 1995-2013) are geopolitically an invasion into the peripheral areas of the former Soviet empire, and Russia is reacting accordingly.
• Currently the EU does what it has always done since the Great European War: leans on the US through NATO but the US may have different interests in Europe than most of the EU member states …
II. Emergence of the EU: Political power (P)

Main bodies:

• European Parliament
• European Council and Council of the European Union
• European Commission
• Court of Justice of the European Union
• European Central Bank
• Many other bodies
II. Emergence of the EU: Political power (P)

- The parliament, the council(s), the commission and the bank today form a relatively integrated decision making system.
- There are only some 30,000 Eurocrats in Brussels and the EU budget is only 1% of the GNP of the EU area but the directives of the union today bind approximately two thirds of the national legislation of the member states.
- Yet we still do not know ‘what is the telephone number of Europe’ (Henry Kissinger)
II. Emergence of the EU: Political power (P)

• Legitimacy of the whole system among citizens is eroding due to the rise of nationalist populist movements; cf. Neil Fligstein: *Euroclash* between the Eurowinners and the Eurolosers (Oxford University Press, 2008).

• Yet two thirds of those who voted in the last election of the European Parliament voted for European integration.

• But note: the turnout rate was as low as 42.5%
II. Emergence of the EU: Conclusion

‘Europe is an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm’ -- Mark Eyskens the foreign minister of Belgium in 1991, just before the operation Desert Storm was launched with some of the EU states (such as the UK) in and some (such as Germany) out of the operation.

One of the main problems is an extreme emphasis of the economic frame. The ordoliberal mind-set of the EU currently still makes it difficult to even recognize the existence of other than economic entities in the world. This, again, makes it difficult to face many of the future challenges.
III. An empire in the making?

Types of empires according to M. Mann, vol. 3, pp. 18-20.

1. **Direct Empire**: direct sovereign power
2. **Indirect Empire**: the core claims sovereignty but peripheral elites have some autonomy in practice
3. **Informal Empire**
   - 3a. Informal ‘Gunboat’ Empire: ability to strike and withdraw
   - 3b. Informal Empire through Proxies: coercion outsourced to the locals
   - 3c. Economic Imperialism: economic coercion
4. **Hegemony**: soft power

For Mann all European empires collapsed in WWII, and the only remaining empire today is the **US informal empire in all the senses 3a-c**. Some other scholars, however, disagree …
III. An empire in the making?

Some figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>EU28</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inhabit, millions</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>1 356</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>1 236</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area, m sq/km</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP, trillion $</td>
<td><strong>16.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.3</strong></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP $ per capita PPP</td>
<td>52 800</td>
<td>34 500</td>
<td>9 800</td>
<td>18 100</td>
<td>4 000</td>
<td>12 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gini coeff</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export, billion $</td>
<td>1 546</td>
<td>2 167</td>
<td>2 049</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td><strong>10.5 %</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.7 %</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.9 %</strong></td>
<td>3.6 %</td>
<td>2.0 %</td>
<td>1.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milit exp, billion $</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. An empire in the making?

Conclusion

• The EU cannot be considered an empire in the same sense as the US or Soviet Union before its collapse or the European empires before the Great European War because it lacks military integration.

• However, it can be considered an empire in the making because it is a huge economy, has political presence and interests in a global scale, and has great military resources.

• BUT there are serious obstacles on the way possibly blocking its development toward the consolidation of the empire or even eroding the current cooperation and the union as we know it.
IV. Future challenges: How to analyse those?

- More extensive than the IEMP model: not restricted to the analysis of just social power
- Natural power: natural resources, population
- Artefactual power: science, artefacts, infrastructures
- Extension of ideological power into cultural power: cultural frames in addition to values and norms
IV. Future challenges: Natural power

- Population
- Energy
- Environmental problems
IV. Future challenges: Artefactual power

- Science
- Infrastructures
- Smart technologies and the end of work (inclusion)
- Smart technologies and environmental challenges (sustainability)
IV. Future challenges: Cultural power, languages in the EU, Eurobarometer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Native speakers</th>
<th>Total (able to hold a conversation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Future challenges: Cultural power, religions in the EU, *Eurobarometer*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Share of Europeans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non believer/Agnostic/Atheist</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religion/None stated</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Future challenges: Cultural power

The problems of inclusion and drawing lines in a multitraditional society. Especially:

- nationalist populism
- racist populism
- Muslim (and Christian) fundamentalism
Excursion: Immigration, UN
http://jakubmarian.com/category/maps/

Percentage of the total population formed by immigrants
Excursion: Immigration2, UN
http://jakubmarian.com/category/maps/
IV. Future challenges: Economic power

• Fiscal crises of the states and austerity policies
• The lack of subsidising mechanisms between the member states
• The Euro as an incomplete currency (there is no lender in the last resort): tremendous possibilities lost at least at the time being in comparison to the US dollar (Yanis Varoufakis: The Global Minotaur. Zed Books, 2011).
• The lack of any meaningful approach to growth policy
• The problem of framing: the EU frames all activities as economic activities (due to its ordoliberal origins). This should change …
IV. Future challenges: Military power

• Something definitely should be done.

• At least in regard to Russia. Alternative: national solos of different EU member states with the US, probably Poland as the leader of the block of the former Warsaw Pact countries.

• Another scenario to think about: the rise of Turkey … (Cf. Georg Freedman: *Flashpoints. The Emerging Crisis in Europe*. Scribe, 2015).

• The actual fact: there is no sign of substantial military cooperation even if after Kosovo in 1999 the European Council gave a resolution aiming to that direction.
IV. Future challenges: Political power

- The problem of coordination
- Paper Europe (Giddens)
- Ad hoc solutions
- Ad hoc 1: France-Germany deals
- Ad hoc 2: Chancellor Merkel (Beck: Merkiavellianism)
- The UK
- Populist and nationalist mobilization in almost all member states
IV. Future challenges: Conclusion

• The EU is still ‘an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm’ (Eyskens).
• Future challenges are tremendous and versatile.
• There would be need for a coordinating political power such as the EU but ….
• … nobody knows what the future brings with it.