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Citizenship as Europeanization, Europeanization as Citizenship: The European project inside and beyond European Union confines*

Paper for panel “Europe's new borders: EU politics & policies and the making of a European identity,” UACES conference “Exchanging Ideas on Europe: Europe at a Crossroads,” Bruges, Belgium, 6-8 September, 2010

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Abstract:

The European Union is not Europe; Europe is not the European Union. Yet while that much appears to be uncontroversial, what delineates the space called “Europe” and how that space in turn relates to the EU are very much at issue today. The paper will argue that the idea of citizenship provides a powerful and attractive way to reframe the question of a “European identity” in terms of “Europe” as a specific historical-normative *project* both within and beyond the confines of the EU. To this end, the paper will link the discourses and analyses of “citizenship” and “Europeanization” that have developed alongside EU-European integration. In examining the relationship between citizenship and membership (How or to what extent does citizenship exist in the EU? How or to what extent is the idea of citizenship a membership criterion and thereby influences the creation of a EU/rest-European borderline?), the paper will demonstrate the considerable “spill-over” impact the idea of citizenship has both inside and outside the EU. Thus, the paper concludes, citizenship as Europeanization and Europeanization as citizenship cut across and link various organizational expressions of European cooperation and integration today (from EU and OSCE to Sinti, Roma, and Travellers) and thereby provide a dynamic foundation for the creation of a European identity beyond the presently existing organizational confines.

Key words: European identity, Europeanization, citizenship, membership, EU, European integration, norms, borderlines.

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1. Introduction

There has never been so much Europe around as there is today: united, peaceful, democratic and prosperous, and with a clear presence in world affairs. From NATO to the World Trade Organization and political diplomacy in the Middle East, “the Europeans” has become a term widely used, a standing formulation almost, in media coverage and by policy makers in the United States and elsewhere. At the same time, however, an open and heated debate is taking place among Europeans about the very terms of what and who they are – and are not. What is “Europe”? What does it mean to be “European”? And who, if indeed anyone, could legitimately answer those questions? The outcome of that debate will in no small measure define the future of the existing process of European integration, the European Union itself, and the future of Europe in the world and will therefore be of utmost importance to all those who have come to view “Europe” and “the Europeans” as allies, partners, even friends.

This paper argues that the idea of citizenship provides a powerful and attractive way to reframe the question of a “European identity” in terms of “Europe” as a specific historical-normative *project* both within and beyond the confines of the European Union (EU). The EU is not Europe; Europe is not the EU. Yet while that much appears to be uncontroversial, what delineates the space called “Europe” and how that space in turn relates to the EU are very much at issue today. Ever since the fall of the East/West divide and border through the collapse of state socialism (1989/91), the space called “Europe” has opened up again and what once could be presumed moot, if not necessarily settled questions – What is Europe? Who is European? Where do Europe’s internal and external borders lie? – have become relevant again. The EU provides an institutionalized, organizational answer while at the same time clearly pointing beyond its own confines.

In the following, the paper will link the discourses and analyses of “Europeanization” and “citizenship” that have developed alongside EU-European integration. In examining the relationship between citizenship and membership (How or to what extent does citizenship exist in the EU? How or to what extent is the idea of citizenship a membership criterion

and thereby influences the creation of a EU/rest-European borderline?), the paper will demonstrate the considerable “spill-over” impact the idea of citizenship has both inside and outside the EU. Citizenship as Europeanization and Europeanization as citizenship cut across and link various organizational expressions of European cooperation and integration today (from EU and OSCE to Sinti and Roma) and thereby provide a dynamic foundation for the creation of a European identity beyond the presently existing organizational confines.

2. Europe/EU/Europeanization: From I to IV

For forty years, from 1949 to 1989, the central European questions – What is Europe? Who is European? Where do Europe’s internal and external borders lie? – were answered by default through the existence of the East/West divide and conflict as both an international and a regional demarcation line. With the demise of state socialism and the fall of the East/West divide, the space called Europe has opened up again and what once appeared to be rather moot, if not necessarily settled questions, suddenly (re-) gained their relevance and were in need of some answers. Two general lines of answers can be seen to have developed ever since.

In the first place, the European Union (EU) and EU-accession and –membership, stepped in to fill the void, spurred on by hopes on both sides of the member/non-member line of identity-demarcation. Thus, in EU declarations and other assessments EU actors have come to use Europe as their very own identity-marker and non-members (or not-yet-members) have come to view EU membership as a way to re/claim “Europeanness,” while international coverage of European affairs also has come to use Europe and Europeans when actually referring to the EU and its members. Second, and arguably in reaction to what was perceived to be the EU’s “usurpation” of “Europe,” intellectuals and scholars, but also politicians and in a broad sense the general public, have come to re/define Europe on the basis of a decidedly non-EU-institutional “identity.” Identity-markers that are claimed here run the gamut from the historico-cultural such as

Christianity (with its own demarcation lines between Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox) to a post-national, post-modern, heterogeneous non-identity of multiple Europes with various voices or subject-positions left to articulate their respective visions (Rumford 2002; Delanty and Rumford 2005).

The notion of *Europeanization*, in turn, can be said to represent in the present debates the bridge that links assumptions/arguments about what constitutes a European identity to assumptions/arguments about who belongs/does not belong into the EU. Indeed, the notion of Europeanization itself exhibits all the complexity, including the confusion and insecurities, associated today with the questions of what is Europe and who is European. We are able to identify four distinct, if interrelated, meanings of the term:

- I. Europeanization in the sense now reserved for Westernization, some critics would even argue globalization, namely, as a historically specific process of "modernization": making societies, indeed the world, into European/Western societies via the spread of universalism, individualism, the bureaucratic-administrative state, capitalism, the free market, industrialization, etc. (a process critics see as directly or indirectly violent).
- II. Europeanization in the sense popular and propagated in Eastern and East Central Europe, namely, of re-joining Europe, becoming what one was destined to be and actually already is, after the demise of state socialism/communism.
- III. Europeanization as European Union membership, namely, as implementing the European Union's standards, policies, and practices (this is the meaning most often used in the political and social science literature today).
- IV. Europeanization as a future-oriented project of constructing a new European identity-space (which therefore does not yet exist -- a "rising above the past" [V. Bunce, 1990]).¹

¹ Bunce presented this formulation in the context of thinking about the chances of establishing liberal democracies in what was then still simply called "Eastern Europe." My point, explained in more detail below, is that for a new Europe to emerge, *all* of old Europe needs to rise above its – unjust, conflict-ridden and conflict-driven – past.

One should stress that differentiating clearly in the above manner between the various meanings of “Europeanization” helps to assess the present debates. We are able to pinpoint what particular arguments are about, clarify the substance and issues of arguments, and make connections or, as the case may be, note contradictions between various arguments.

Admittedly, however, the list above contains a little slight of hand. While the first three meanings of Europeanization can easily be found in the social science literature and other debate fora, *Europeanization IV* is hardly a staple in the present debates. Yet exactly this absence, I like to contend, is the problem in the present debates.

Present debates about Europe and from Europeanization *I* to *III* are beholden to a past, real or imagined, and determined and constricted in their answers by conflating that past with the present: the “is” is determined and constricted by a “was.” Irrespective of the actual identity-markers used, whether geopolitical, historico-cultural, economic, or political, the answers therefore also end up being essentialist in character and scope as the past is seen as already endowed with those posited identity-markers. For something or someone to be considered – or indeed for someone to consider him or herself or their nation/people – European, there has to be an essence that reveals itself in and through the past, there has to be a “there” there; much like the claim of a common ancestry and shared communal essence by which the claim towards “nationhood” is established. Willy-nilly, this recursive use of an essentialist past in establishing and legitimizing identity-markers in the present thereby also ends up presenting “Europe” and “European integration” as already finished projects because the “ins” and the “outs” are already historically pre-established. Thus, the result is what we encounter in our debates today: much ado about essentialist claims, a lot of posing on the basis of national/ist mythologies, and very little room for compromise, if compromise is even sought after at all.

I do not wish to be perceived at this point as arguing against the search for a “usable past” per se. For as I have already argued elsewhere, recognizing that the European past was rife with injustices, a battlefield and a graveyard not only of many people/s but also of noble (!) aspirations, has been, can be and should be the starting point of a forward looking idea and ideal of a *new* Europe: peaceful, cooperative, and dedicated to human rights as the highest expression of a common European home (Wagner 2001). Indeed, this was at least part of the vision that created the process of European integration after the Second World War in the first place. And I here note that *Europeanization IV* can trace its own origins to the hopes expressed by many, at the very least from Coudenhove-Kalergi to Winston Churchill and Robert Schuman.

The point in the above is instead two-fold. First, the past in question in our present debates is not a negative one, but a positive one; it is not the past of an unjust, war-torn space, but the past of an accomplished identity-project, Europe, from which present-day claims about who is with “us” and who is “them” are derived. Second, *Europeanization IV* links the recognition of a highly problematic past across the various meanings associated with Europeanization by insisting that “Europe” in the sense of a common home still needs to be build. At issue in and for *Europeanization IV* is not who is with “us” not even who might be, but the principles by which and through which a common European home can be build; principles that are mindful of a problematic, conflict-ridden and conflict-driven past in the very definition of the space we call Europe today.

Europeanization IV therefore exhibits two distinct advantages over competing visions of Europeanization and claims about a European identity. Unlike *II* and *III*, *Europeanization IV* is not beholden to a pre-fabricated space or even to a concrete institutional-organizational entity in the form of the EU and it is (highly) critical of *I* by virtue of its historical-critical stance, normative insistence, and what one might call a principled openness. The latter, in turn, presents a distinct advantage over post-modern, post-national, hyper-cosmopolitan visions of multiple Europes: answers about the actual “content” of a European space (to borrow liberally from that famous phrase by Martin Luther King, Jr.) should be and are possible.

In the already noted earlier piece, I had focused on human rights as the normative kernel of the European integration project and as the bridge that links the notions of heritage, culture, and identity in the construction of a new European identity-space (Wagner 2001). Yet if human rights – a significant part of whose origins can be located in the European experience – can be said to be the supreme expression of an *alternative* European identity-space, the notion of citizenship, and its relation to the development of human rights, today presents the focal and crisis point across the various meanings of “Europeanization.” As the notion that politically and legally codifies belonging and in doing so empirically grounds rights and obligations, citizenship lies at the heart of any democratic polity and any contemporary definition of “us” and “them.” Not surprisingly then that citizenship has become a contentious issue in present debates about Europeanness and integration: from EU enlargement, the EU’s four freedoms within the internal market area, to immigration in general. Thus, in order to explain *Europeanization IV* further, I now turn to the question of a European citizenship.

3. Citizenship as Europeanization: from process to positioning

As noted in the above, citizenship is one of the central issues and concerns in contemporary debates about European integration and Europeanization. Yet as such, citizenship itself has become what one can call “contested terrain” (Wagner 2009). Much like the notion of Europeanization, citizenship reflects the complexity inherent in all contemporary debates about European affairs: what and who exactly is meant and addressed? As a legal-administrative construct of belonging, citizenship is defined in terms of the modern territorial state. One is a citizen of a territorial, sovereign state and it is by virtue of the authority of that state that the rights, privileges, and obligations of citizenship are defined, claimed, and defended. To put it very boldly at this point, one is a citizen by virtue of one’s being a subject first. At the same time (and this formulation can here be used in both an analytical and a historical sense), citizenship has also been recognized as a general normative claim beyond and above the realm of the legal-

administrative subject. Citizenship in this larger, normative sense is defined as a claim both towards emancipation and towards participation in any community or societal context; a claim that is grounded in the last instance on one's being a fellow human being and as such worthy of the same respect and rights as everyone else, irrespective of any particular polity context.

As has been noted in the European integration and Europeanization *III* literature, when it comes to the notion of citizenship, the EU and the process of European integration actually articulate those dual meanings/constructions of citizenship, which, in turn, reflects the tensions, indeed contradictions, between the national and the supranational that have become characteristic of European integration, EU-European "multi-level governance" and "governmentality" in general (Maas 2007; Wagner 2009; Kohler-Koch, Conzelmann and Knodt 2004; Walters and Haahr 2005). From a strict legal-administrative standpoint, a European citizenship, even in its more restricted EU sense, does not exist. Citizenship inside the EU continues to be defined through one's belonging to a EU member state. Indeed, the Lisbon Treaty's citizenship clause explicitly strengthens the member states in this regard by clearly stating that "[c]itizenship of the Union shall be additional to and not replace national citizenship" (FEU, Part 2, Article 20, see: Council of the European Union 2008).² Nevertheless, via the proclamation of general democratic commitments and with the creation of the internal market and its four freedoms, European integration has led to the development of a European citizenship based on the EU's and its member states' fundamental commitments to the structure and dynamic of *capitalist democracy*.³

² FEU = (Treaty on the) functioning of the European Union.

³ As E. Guild has formulated it, a European citizenship "has grown out of the rights of Community nationals to free movement as economic actors" (Guild 2004, p. 82). Maas (2007) stresses the gradual manner in which rights were extended and eventually became enshrined in a EU-Europeanized notion of citizenship, yet also stresses the political commitment to rights within the project of European integration in the first place and the political dynamic (and its debates) at work in the entire development. The notion of capitalist democracy here, I think, nicely captures the intertwining of the political and the economic; the notion is adapted from the earlier Neo-Marxist political economy literature.

Thus, while national prerogatives, not surprisingly related to the notions of public safety and security, continue to enshrine (possible and real) differences between “nationals” and “non-nationals” living within a EU member state, a political-normative understanding of citizenship has developed that militates against national and nationalistic confines and is as such supported by common social regulatory problems within the internal market area (labor laws, health services, insurance, pensions, etc.). This European citizenship by “stealth,” again: out of the structure and dynamic of capitalist democracy, presents both the confines and the opportunities of citizenship within the present European identity-space. If we were to focus on the relationship, both historical and normative, between the development of citizenship and the development of human rights, we would not only substantiate the tension between the political-normative and the legal-administrative (national), we would also have to point out that the normative web that Europeans have spun around themselves extends beyond the organizational borders of the EU. From the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the differences between “nationals” and “non-nationals” have become rather blurry and the notion of citizenship cannot be solely identified anymore as belonging to, indeed being the subject of a particular territorial state.

The tension – even contradiction – between citizenship as a function of a territorial (national) state and citizenship as a non-territorialized, post-national norm can be expressed as the tension – or contradiction – between a codified (or positive) norm and what legal theorists have come to call an “aspirational norm.” Without wanting to delve deeply at this point into the legal studies literature on norms, suffice it to note that for legal scholars, aspirational norms are intrinsically linked to soft law and as such share soft law’s problematic standing as too vague and a problem for practical issues of compliance (even placing the burden of proof on those who are asked to comply) and to negotiating settlements between sovereign actors (see for example: Westerman 2007).

Having duly noted the legal studies background and usage of the term, I would like to propose to use the term aspirational norm to define the idea of a European citizenship that

links the idea of Europe across the various meanings of Europeanization and solidifies the meaning of Europeanization as the creation of a new European identity-space (*Europeanization IV*). The notion of aspirational norm in this sense refers more to a dialectical moment, a Blochian “trace,” than to a legal expression. Nevertheless, citizenship seen as an aspirational norm also points to its place within the noted normative web in European politics both inside and outside of the EU confines and thereby clarifies the noted spillover effect and legal impacts by stealth that citizenship has had and continues to have. Like human rights in general, with which citizenship shares the discursive terrain, once asserted and accepted, citizenship cannot be easily contained without actually denigrating its very substance by way of some form of exclusionism. Present debates in this sense are about how to contain the “genie” citizenship again and what kinds of exclusionary measures can be legitimized *while at the same time still upholding the norm itself*.

At the time of this writing (late summer 2010), and I admit I unfortunately could not have timed this any better, the French government has stepped up its efforts to send Roma living in France back to Romania and Bulgaria; ostensibly, one might surmise according to the identity documents presented in each individual case, the countries where they came from. The renewed efforts – France has been sending Roma “back” continuously over the past years, last year alone an estimated 10,000 (“Frankreich fliegt mehr als hundert Roma aus,” *Der Spiegel*, August 20, 2010) – allegedly were taken in response to concrete occurrences and leading politicians of the conservative French government have framed the measures as directed against crime and in support of internal security (“Sündenböcke auf der Müllkippe,” *Der Spiegel*, August 18, 2010). This, one should note, closely resembles what happened in Italy in 2007/2008, which led to a crisis between Italy and Romania over the treatment of Roma living in Italy during the summer of 2008 (Wagner 2009). There is unfortunately one significant difference between summer 2008 and summer 2010: less protest and even more open acceptance, if not outright gloating, in Romania (with Bulgaria remaining silent). Romania’s President Traian Basescu has yet to step in as forcefully as he (eventually) did in the summer of 2008 and assert that “[t]hey [Roma] are our [Romanian] citizens ... Romanian citizens

are citizens of the European Union and are to be treated according to the standards of the European Union” (Press conference with Silvio Berlusconi during Basescu’s visit to Rome, July 31, 2008).

Despite the significant difference in official reactions from Romania (and Bulgaria) to date,⁴ these two summers share the common problematic of a European citizenship and its relation to the treatment and indeed the identity of Roma, Sinti, and Travellers populations in the EU and Europe in general, down almost to the very language used (Roma “problem,” now Roma “question”).⁵ The reactions on both the French and the general EU-European side to the security measures this time around only underline the noted problematic. Instead of going it alone (as the Berlusconi government did), leading French conservative politicians have attempted to Europeanize the “question.” A “working meeting” will be held soon and on September 6, 2010, an “informal meeting” at the EU-European level is scheduled (“Barroso and Fillon to hold Roma workshop,” EUobserver, August 27, 2010). Moreover, French government officials, including Prime Minister Fillon and President Sarkozy, have taken great pains to claim that the recent expulsions were nothing new and that France is conforming to EU law.⁶

Yet it is not as easy anymore as it used to be in European history for any politician to define an entire population group as a “problem” or “question” and to send it back to another state, even if that state were that group’s “country of origin.” While French

⁴ However, as has been recently noted in *Le Monde*, Romania and Bulgaria have stepped up the criticism. “Expulsion des Roms: la Roumanie et la Bulgarie haussent le ton,” *Le Monde*, August 18, 2010.

http://www.lemonde.fr/europe/article/2010/08/18/expulsion-des-roms-la-roumanie-et-la-bulgarie-haussent-le-ton_1400037_3214.html

⁵ For an analysis of the crisis between Italy and Romania in the summer of 2008 in more detail and also for a more detailed analysis of the relationship between European citizenship and Roma, Sinti, and Traveller populations, see: Wagner 2009.

⁶ Still, it should be duly noted that some fissures between government figures have appeared, see most recently, “François Fillon assume sa différence de ‘sensibilité’ sur le discours sécuritaire,” *Le Monde*, August 30, 2010.

http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2010/08/30/francois-fillon-assume-sa-difference-de-sensibilite-sur-le-discours-securitaire_1404226_823448.html

government officials vehemently protest the use of the term “deportation” and the invocation of Nazism by French church groups, migrant groups and other civil society voices, this particular historical memory cannot be denied and as such presents a stark moral indictment of the French measures. France’s own cherished identity as the modern European Republic par excellence is clearly seen as being at stake by both government officials/supporters and their critics. Besides the political-cultural dimension and arguably more damaging to the French government cause is the assumption that EU law clearly supports the measures. At issue here (at least as far as I am able at present to identify) is EU directive 2004/38/EC “On the Right of Citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the member states.”⁷ The directive does indeed explicitly mention expulsion as a policy measure for two reasons: on the grounds of public security/safety/health and in case of “beneficiaries” becoming “an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State” (Directive 2004/38/EC, [22] and [16]). However, already these general recognitions of expulsion are embedded in a language that signals that expulsion is only to be used as a last resort (for example “unreasonable”: the fact that someone merely applies for social assistance is explicitly excluded). One should duly note that the relationship between the provisions for long-term residency (over 3 months) and expulsion are not spelled out. Furthermore, Articles 28 and 29 of the directive explicitly address the protections against expulsion by spelling out who (no minors, for example, unless backed up by UN Convention on the Rights of the Child), the grounds for expulsion (imperative grounds of public security, for example), and how an act of expulsion can move forward. Article 31 then explicitly spells out the procedural safeguards, which include the usual rule of law “judicial redress procedures” except, again, for example, in cases involving “imperative grounds of public security.”

I should admit at this point that I am not a legal professional. Nevertheless, let me “go out on a limb” here and state that the French government’s case for expulsion of the Roma rests on rather shaky ground. It is clear that the directive 2004/38/EC wishes to avoid

⁷ Directive can be retrieved via EUR-Lex:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32004L0038:en:NOT>

making expulsion into an ordinary policy measure. The French government needs to claim either an “unreasonable burden” on its social assistance system or “public security.” In each case, however, the clear intention of the directive is to allow expulsion as a last resort while reminding member states of the exceptional circumstances that need to be present in order for the last resort to be taken. In the case of public security, the directive repeatedly uses the formulation of “imperative grounds of public security.” This formulation does not appear to cover simple crime statistics. In fact, Article 27 (2) of the directive explicitly dealing with restrictions on the grounds of public policy, public security, and public health uses the principle of proportionality and personal conduct and states that an individual (!) “must represent a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat affecting one of the fundamental interests of society.” Finally, and especially in light of the aforementioned Article 27 (2), it appears at the very least unclear if the expulsion provisions in the directive can be applied to an entire group of people *as a group*.

As has been discussed elsewhere, the travelling life of *some* Roma, Sinti, Travellers families today poses a fundamental challenge to the ideals and political-administrative practices of the modern national-territorial state (Wagner 2009). Not surprisingly, the treatment of Roma, Sinti, and Travellers in the context of the national state in Europe continues to militate against the very notion of a European citizenship and the ideals associated with the European project of integration. Thus, Roma, Sinti, and Travellers today find themselves again at Europe’s political-normative frontier. And as has been the case in the past, their treatment – for good or ill – will turn out to be pivotal for the path the European project will take. However, unlike in the past, European integration itself via the continuing interactions between Europeanization III and Europeanization IV provides an alternative voice and considerable empowerment to non-national, supra-national, and post-national actors and activists.

4. Europeanization as citizenship: some tentative conclusions

The goal of the above discussion was to present the notion of citizenship as a powerful and attractive way to reframe the question of a “European identity” in terms of “Europe” as a specific historical-normative *project* both within and beyond the confines of the European Union (EU). To that end I first introduced the idea of *Europeanization IV* as a way to capture “Europe” as a normative project explicitly dedicated to counter a European past characterized and determined by injustices, conflicts, and wars. I then proceeded to explicate the notion of citizenship in the context of Europeanization, which led to the presentation of citizenship as an *aspirational norm* that nicely expresses *Europeanization IV*. This was further substantiated by explicating the role that citizenship plays in the recent debates and policy-measures concerning Roma, Sinti, and Travellers in the EU. To sum up, Roma, Sinti, and Travellers today find themselves (unfortunately) again at Europe’s political-normative frontier. It is no accident that they, as Europe’s quintessentially non-nationalized group, are deemed a “problem” or a “question” by national politicians concerned about internal security (and territorial integrity) and voter support. Yet it is equally clear that – unlike in previous times – a Europeanized notion of citizenship fundamentally challenges national politics and empowers the “subjects” in question.

In the final analysis, I now like to point out, such a Europeanized notion of citizenship knows no boundaries. While origins can be located and historically situated, the consequences of the normative dynamics laid out in the above point beyond any territory; not even humanity is here strictly speaking the final stop (as contemporary efforts to extend rights discourse to animals and the ecosphere attest). What remains are the norms themselves and the challenge that they pose to any attempts at regulating people and especially to turning citizens back into mere subjects. Of course, this would be simply in line with one of the fundamental insights into democracy and democratic development as such: one never “has” democracy, democracy is always a process, a “moving” goal that needs to be re-negotiated and re-invented over and over again in various contexts.

Thus, following the normative logic and dynamic, the designations “Europe” and “European” themselves would become meaningless as identity-markers. They would retain a specific and, one might surmise, celebrated place in the history of a new – global – identity-formation. Like the German, Italian, Irish et al. immigrants in “America” one would remember more or less fondly one’s “roots,” even celebrate them on occasion, and perhaps retain some historico-cultural modes of belonging, but one would in the end belong to a different identity-space.

Before anyone at this point can accuse me of illusionism, let me point out that such a radical de-territorialization is presented here not only as a logical consequence of the aspirational norm of citizenship but also as a *choice*. One can follow this logic or reject it. Many times, all-too-many times, in European history, this logic of expansion and inclusion was rejected for restriction and exclusion: there was a “we” and there was a “them,” and while the “we” enjoyed a certain standing (rights, privileges) the others, “them,” were explicitly denied those rights and privileges precisely because they were deemed not to belong to “us.” It is interesting to note that in all those historic instances of restriction, exclusion and denial of belonging, the “we” in the end did also not fare well: the authoritarian hand of restriction, exclusion, and denial inevitably turned citizens into subjects and strangled the rights and liberties for all.

I would be remiss at the very end not to mention that present and not-that-far-into-the-future conditions appear to lend themselves to a rather pessimistic outlook. Given the present conjuncture of economic stagnation, the inevitable depletion of the main natural resources upon which not only our industrial life-styles but all peoples on the globe depend upon, the still increasing world population, the ever more real and direct effects of our human-made global climate change, and the continuing existence and further development of vast arsenals of destruction, it is not all that far fetched anymore to predict the return of massive conflicts, including on a World War scale, and thereby the destruction of democracy and of democratic rights as we know them. However, even when considering our present and likely future predicaments, and arguably especially when doing so, we should realize that our choices continue to determine our path/s.

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