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Europe at University

by Professor Dušan SIDJANSKI
Association of Institutes for European Studies

To clarify my position on the set of questions I have been requested to answer, I first wish to say that I fail to share either the general thrust of these questions or the main idea governing the ten theses. Although I fully support Mr. Calinescu's aim of creating 'full-fledged European citizens', I do not feel the manner in which he intends to go about it is justified. His questions on the rôle of a European university are biased and carry negative undertones as to the mission of the European university: 'Does it not prepare students more specifically for jobs within the framework of the individual Nation-State?'. Also, his ten theses are based on the assumption that the European university should be 'remodeled along the lines of the American university'.

It is true that specialized education in Europe is sometimes the preserve of Institutes for European studies which give courses on the various aspects of Europe, often from a European point of view. It is also true that most of these institutes are post-graduate centres with the exception of the Institutes of the Universities of Liège and Louvain which also grant degrees in European law. Law is in fact one of the rare fields in which European and community law can be taught in the second stage of University studies. However, this practise has not been adopted elsewhere as most universities prefer to dispense traditional basic training with optional courses on European law.

However, the affirmation that these institutes are 'highly specialized' and 'interdisciplinary' seems rather more questionable considering the true nature of the Institutes for European studies: the vast majority of these establishments organize courses and seminars of a classical type devoted in particular to the study of European problems. They are therefore specialized courses. One year of post-graduate studies is not sufficient, however, to become highly specialized; this degree of specialization can only be acquired in a limited number of research centres, the sole establishments in which an interdisciplinary approach has usually, but not always, been adopted. In contrast, most institutes assure the coexistence of several branches of study with the same focal point but have failed to establish true multidisciplinary cooperation. My personal experience leads me to the conclusion that a multidisciplinary approach – difficult to achieve in itself – which lays considerable demands on the participants and imposes the use of a basic *lingua franca*, can only be established through a research project. From a pedagogical point of view, however, with the exception of a few rare cases, it involves the

establishment of empirical links between certain branches (political science, law, economics and history, for example) instead of true multidisciplinary approaches.

This entire series of affirmations or questions appears rooted in a very restrictive interpretation of European university education, which has evolved along three lines:

- a) During the period of promotion and militantism, the European Centre for Culture in Geneva, the College of Europe in Bruges and the first series of Institutes were founded.
- b) The second generation of these establishments coincided with the development in Europe of a network of organizations and cooperation; the aim was to make a systematic analysis of these new structures in the third stage of University studies. The initial movement was shadowed and, to a certain extent, replaced by University endeavours to describe, analyze and explain the phenomenon of integration and cooperation. A number of institutes thus came into being in various countries, most of which now belong to the Association of Institutes for European studies (AIES). Founded in 1951 by six of the Institutes on the instigation of the European Centre for Culture, the Association of Institutes for European studies now counts 32 members: 18 full members, 11 associate members and 3 corresponding members, 6 in France, 7 in Belgium, 5 in Italy, 3 in Switzerland, 2 in the Netherlands, 2 in Germany, 1 in Austria, 1 in Spain, 1 in England, 2 in Canada, 1 in Israel and 1 in Denmark. At the same time, the idea was launched and various efforts made to create a European University¹, finally founded in 1976 on a more modest scale as a European University Institute in Florence.
- c) A third trend gained momentum as from 1957 when a professorship of European integration was created at the University of Lausanne; the number of courses and seminars in European universities on problems relating to integration increased rapidly. To meet an evident demand, several courses, on the European Communities in particular, were added to B.A. and Doctorate syllabuses.

To illustrate the foregoing, a survey conducted in 1967 by the European Community Institute for university studies revealed that in Belgium, there are some thirty subjects taught in 4 universities and the College of Europe in

¹A *European University?*, Bulletin of the European Centre for Culture, Geneva, July 1958.

Bruges; with a few exceptions, coherent programmes have been drawn up for each subject (Degree in European law at Louvain and Liège) under the auspices of the Institutes for European studies (Brussels, Louvain, Liège and Bruges). A similar situation may be observed in the Netherlands and Switzerland where 15 and 13 subjects are taught, respectively, mainly in the Amsterdam, Leyde and Geneva institutes. A comparable survey conducted in Switzerland for the 1976/77 academic year shows that the eight universities or specialized colleges offer about thirty courses and seminars on European problems, ten of which are comprised in the programme of the European Institute in Geneva. In Germany (45), France (73), Great Britain (33) and Italy (27), however, such courses are far more dispersed: there are few European Institutes, some programmes for the third level of university education (*maîtrise*, M.A.'s and doctorates) and most subjects are taught at random in a large number of faculties and universities.

Thus, courses and research work on Europe are being introduced in universities in very varied forms tailored, in most cases, to fit specific requests and special circumstances. This diversity guarantees the true wealth of European education.

Of course, more than one aspect of university education in Europe is open to criticism. In certain countries, the standard of university education is dropping and large enterprises, private institutes or specialized colleges are taking over their role. But can one nonetheless contend that universities mainly train their students for jobs within the nation? On the whole, the duties of cadres in our countries are very similar, allowing for the necessary adaptation to the environment which varies not only from country to country but also from region to region within the same country.

ENA in France and to a certain extent Oxford or Cambridge no doubt help train the 'national élites'. These exceptional cases by no means constitute the 'European model'. Moreover, such executives trained in a specifically national context have little difficulty holding positions in the community institutions or in European and even multinational firms.

Although predestined to occupy the key positions in their home State, these élites, which constitute the exceptional minority, are qualified to hold both national and international posts. My feeling is that executive staff nationalism stems less from University education than from the political socialization to which we are subjected from early childhood on: family, school, mass media, environment and 'later' one's occupation are all instruments of socialization which transmit 'national, regional or European'

attitudes. It is a dimension that precedes and distorts university education. Can one therefore still talk of 'national education' in the natural sciences or even in the social sciences and humanities? Physics, chemistry or mathematics are based by definition on a universal stock of knowledge and methods irrespective of nationality. Mistaken references to American physics, German chemistry or French medicine can be traced either to the nationality of research workers and teachers or to a policy adopted by dominant groups in these fields, which are nonetheless part of a universal whole. These expressions have no scientific meaning but carry ideological, political or institutional connotations (government scientific policies, subsidies, location of centres, membership in an institution or national University).

These connotations have permeated the less rigorous, more nebulous fields of the social sciences and humanities to a greater degree. Here, even a purportedly scientific undertaking involves a great number of subjective, ideological or nationalistic elements. Concepts, hypotheses and questions are more often laden with values and penetrated by ideology, even when they are not designed to represent or defend these values or ideologies. In these branches, more than elsewhere, the promotion of national or international ideologies assumes the form or likeness of a scientific discourse. However, these more malleable branches are becoming increasingly influenced by predominantly European or Western (origin and pole of development) and universal concepts and methods. Exchanges of experiences and the borrowing of ideas accentuate this tendency characteristic of the European mind. Certainly, the pursuit of an occupation within a given country counterbalances this more broadly oriented education based on the learning of methods.

The measure of general and specific knowledge varies, moreover, according to the branch of study: in economics, political science or sociology, the 'pool' of knowledge will be greater or less depending on the slant in each field (e.g. quantitative approach, neo-liberal or Marxist approach, ...). These variations, which are equally pronounced within a country (the difference between Oxford and Essex for example, or Paris I and Nanterre), are heightened through the choice of privileged subjects of study (national, European or international society or economy, social classes, political protagonists, etc.). Law is another matter for training in the field tends to be more 'professional' than general in keeping with market and job requirements which call for a sound knowledge of national law. Nonetheless, this branch of study can also assume a European dimension: study of community law, comparative law and international law. Above all, these new dimensions provide an answer to

the need for legal norms other than those created by state institutions. Jurists must thus pay greater attention to the common sources of law and its general principles.

It seems to me that the right university education is based on general methods that have proved their worth; moreover, in keeping with the European spirit, such education, in its various forms, transcends the notion of nationality. With certain exceptions, it prepares students to carry out tasks on various levels: in a local, national, European and even an international ambit. It is true that depending on the attitude and abilities of the teachers, university education often favours the country in which it is dispensed for this country is singled out and becomes the privileged subject of study: in the same way, an exclusively 'European' education would tend to favour a group of countries. Although Europe should be the subject of our studies more often, one must categorically oppose any limitation of science or education to Europe. 'European' university nationalism would be as harmful as that of national education or 'sciences' whether European, American, Soviet or Chinese.

I am convinced that any solid University education in Europe calls for universal scientific methods. If the national approach persists and rears its head at this late stage, it is more the individual teachers than the education itself that are to blame. University education offers an insight into the world and Europe; it is not designed to strengthen nationalistic attitudes acquired during the first stage of political socialization. Thus, the Europeanization of education must begin at primary school level and later be reinforced at university through the development of European studies and specialized institutes in addition to exchanges and cooperation between universities. The free movement of ideas as well as of students, professors and research workers helps to consolidate the European approach and spirit, especially if carried a stage further to include the free exercise of professions within Europe.

Regarding the ten theses proposed by Mr. Calinescu, my answer is as simple as his: the American university is not a model for the European university. First of all, which type of American University is being referred to for there are not only private but also state universities in the United States? For me, there is no question of advocating the reinstatement of private universities in Europe, although I do admit that competition from certain semi-private or private institutions would most certainly have a beneficial effect on education and research.

In any case, let us examine the ten theses in detail. No European university opposes autonomy — the status of universities in most countries. No one questions the fact that a University must be responsible to the city, the region, the State and Europe. However, in American Universities, privileged links have been forged between the university and business circles. This is an aspect that the author fails to mention and which renders the 'American model' unacceptable for most members of the European university community. Although some yearn for greater co-operation with the economic agents, most reject any form of dependence or influence. Autonomy must not work in a unilateral manner vis-à-vis the State, the *Laender* or the *Cantons* but also with regard to any hold the economy might gain over the university. In this line of reasoning, co-operation with trade unions and state companies is all the more desirable since it guarantees 'multidimensional' links and effective autonomy. The situation is quite different in the United States where business and foundations clearly influence the orientation of research work and education.

Of course, it is necessary to 'denationalize and decentralize' wherever this has not already been done, for, contrary to Mr. Calinescu's view of universities in Europe, they are in fact highly regionalized except in France and Italy; these two countries follow the Napoleonic tradition of national universities, the counter-model of a European university. But this is only an exception. In Germany and Great Britain as well as in Switzerland, universities are regional and cantonal rather than 'national'. They are largely autonomous and open to teachers whatever their nationality. The model for a European university exists in Europe; there is no need to cross the Atlantic in search of one. The basic task is therefore to popularize this model. In fact, in France and Italy, the general trend is also towards regionalization and a more open attitude in universities towards teachers and research workers from other European countries. From this point of view, freedom to exercise a profession within Europe and the suppression of borders remain key factors.

Can one depoliticize universities while at the same time seeking to politicize the European Community? It is evident that universities must remain untainted by 'State ideology'. But in our democracies, this 'basic ideology' is essentially pluralistic. Universities cannot but reflect through their tolerance and diversity this fundamental pluralism. European universities thus appear to me more truly pluralistic than American or Marxist universities. In other words, if I espouse the idea that it is necessary to prevent the State or any one party or intellectual clique from dominating the university, I think it is normal for parties and cliques to come into conflict in the city as in the university.

The only problem here is to secure the autonomy of the university with regard to ideologies, political forces and interest groups. Quality and freedom are the only acceptable criteria.

Otherwise, I share Mr. Calinescu's theses on the need to end the university's splendid isolation, reinforce the spirit of emulation between universities, institutes and teachers and step up the free movement of students and teaching staff. But I nevertheless cannot accept the idea that would ultimately turn universities into translation and publishing strongholds. Although I consider these activities important, they are not the exclusive province of the university, despite the contribution it should make in this field. One could envisage a number of solutions including the creation of translation centres and a network of incentives and support.

In conclusion, European models do exist. They partake of European tradition and views. The main task befalling the universities and European authorities is to conceive and create the necessary structures to extend and develop these models in a spirit of pluralism and diversity — the most quintessentially European traits.

Possibilités d'une politique européenne de l'Université

par Ladislav CERYCH, Directeur
Institut d'Éducation
Fondation Européenne de la Culture



ES universités d'Europe peuvent-elles préparer leurs étudiants à une conscience de leur appartenance à une culture commune, marque de leur identité spécifique face au reste du monde ? Telle est la question de ce bulletin.

Disons tout d'abord que s'il s'agit de « fabriquer des Européens », nombreux seront les manifestations d'une résistance sans réserve. Il en sera ainsi tout simplement parce que ces mots évoquent une université par trop « marchande » liée, pour certains, à l'idée d'une école de militants incompatible avec l'idéal d'une institution dont le but suprême reste la poursuite et la transmission de la connaissance.

Autant dire que le rôle des universités « formatrices d'une conscience culturelle commune » ne peut être qu'indirect ou implicite quoique important. Nous voudrions également affirmer que nous nous trouvons face à une relation réciproque : la construction européenne a autant besoin du concours de l'université que l'université a besoin de la construction européenne. Cette relation réciproque nous semble également la base possible d'une politique universitaire européenne.

L'université et la conscience européenne



ERTAINS ont analysé la conscience européenne et, à travers ce concept, défini aussi la notion de culture européenne, culture à la fois ouverte, diversifiée et spécifique, universelle et particulière. Inutile de rappeler ici, ne serait-ce que les noms de ces auteurs dont les plus récents furent ainsi Salvador de Madariaga, Denis de Rougemont, Henri Brugmans ou d'autres encore.

Il serait prétentieux de vouloir ajouter à leur analyse des éléments inédits, voire de tenter une redéfinition de la culture ou de la conscience européenne. Essayons plutôt d'aborder le problème d'un point de vue que l'on pourrait qualifier de systémique. Certes, le concept est à la mode mais ce n'est pas pour cela que nous l'utiliserons ici. Il nous semble en effet qu'il représente un instrument bien adapté à l'analyse d'une réalité aussi complexe que celle de l'université et de ses rapports avec le reste de la société, donc également avec l'Europe.