



VII. Q & A: A guide for a future discussion about Europe



"Every beginning holds a magic within it."

Hermann Hesse

My aim with this draft is not to offer you a turnkey constitution for a European Republic. How could I? At every level of this admittedly rough draft, there are many open and difficult questions that many intelligent people would need to consider. This draft — like the entire book — has *only* the aim of steering European thinking in new and constructive directions at the beginning of the 21st century, now that it is foreseeable that the EU has failed politically and may not survive the turmoil of the coming years.

On this website I offer you the catalog of questions that I discuss in the book of the same name, and to which I offer my personal answers in the book.

The most pressing questions that need to be discussed – and to which I offer here in *italics* my personal answer for further reflection – would, in my opinion, be:

1. Questions of a fundamental nature

- How could European citizens have allowed the EU to become such a technocratic failure over the past decades?
- Can we break away from the EU and transform it into democratic structures without throwing away the achievements of the last 70 years of European integration (the euro, the Erasmus program, regional policy, urban renewal)?
- Do we want to, or even can we, establish a European state? Who would be deterred by this, and who would be motivated by it? How could this be done?
- If we don't want to or can't do that: Can we (still) prevent the EU from becoming an authoritarian state? Is the general principle of equality for all European citizens a viable basis for democracy?
- Do the citizens of Europe still want to become a political entity in a multipolar world? Or have we lost this ambition?

2. Socioeconomic questions

- Do the citizens of Europe want to develop increasingly oligarchic societies – partly due to the technocratic and exclusively market-liberal structures of the EU?
- Or do Europeans want to rediscover the Republic in the truest sense of the word: Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité? That is, freedom of thought, equality before the law, and social unity – in short, a Republic – in economic matters?
- Would it still be possible for the individual sovereign EU states to rediscover their once functioning national republics?
- Does Europe want to allow a certain degree of macroeconomic control and pan-European political control and planning in the interest of the Res Publica of European citizens, e.g. through the management of common public goods in Europe, instead of allowing the internal market to operate unhindered?
- Do we need direct taxation of European citizens by the European Republic to finance the common tasks of the European Republic, so that it can acquire its own tax sovereignty?
- Do we need a kind of European fiscal equalization system between the European sub-units in order to develop them in an economically coherent manner?

3. Questions of a cultural nature

- Would European athletes be interested in competing together as one team for a European Republic at the Olympics or World Championships?
 - Which should be the capital of the European Republic?
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- Will the EU European Cities of Culture program, the Erasmus program and the Schengen Area, the ESA, the Jean Monnet Chairs or the European University Institute be retained?
- Would a European Republic fail because of the language problem?
- Do the citizens of Europe want to preserve Europe's 2.5 thousand-year-old civilization and culture, bring it to fruition together, and contribute it to the multipolar world?
- How would a European Republic, as a community of values based on European civilization, Europe's cultural achievements, and the continent's Christian foundation, deal with the technological developments (AI, robotics) that are currently shaking all societies and raising important anthropological questions about the future of humanity?

Questions of an institutional nature

- Should the European Republic adopt a semi-presidential system like in France or the USA?
- What would a joint presidential election of all European citizens trigger? Panic? Chaos? Or unity? Joy? A shared political memorial? Strength, solidarity, and a renewed sense of "us"?
- Or would a system with a European Prime Minister or Chancellor of the European Republic, elected by the European Citizens' Assembly, be better?
- Would a pro-rata voting system (one person, one vote) in the elections to the European Citizens' Assembly disadvantage citizens of today's demographically small European states (e.g., Luxembourg, Malta, Estonia) and over-advantage citizens of today's populous EU states (Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Poland)? Or would this problem be resolved by the new, supranational alliances and coalitions in the European Citizens' Assembly and the European Senate? Which of the two groups of citizens in Europe would lose, and which would win?
- What would be the configuration of the 45 European sub-units or autonomous regions that would form the basis of the European Republic? A Black Sea region, a Baltic Sea region, an Alpine region, Occitania, Alemannia, the Rhine-Main-Moselle region, a Rhineland-Meuse region, an East German region, a Danube region, a Balkan region, an Iberian region, etc.?
- What do we do with the European monarchies in Europe: Spain, Belgium, Denmark and Sweden?
- What will happen to the United Kingdom? Would its political entities, such as the Welsh or the Scots, who are already at odds with the central government in London, welcome membership in a European Republic and gladly become strong and autonomous sub-units?

Questions regarding the accession candidates and neighboring states of the current EU

- What will the European Republic do with today's EU accession candidates, such as the Balkan states, Turkey, and Ukraine? Or with those aspiring to EU membership, such as Moldova, Armenia, or Georgia?
- How would the European Republic relate to the Russian Federation?

Questions regarding the USA

- Does Europe want to remain, as it were, the "eastern tip" of the USA? Or does it want to become a political unity of Europe and establish cooperation with the USA on an equal footing?
- Could an emancipated and sovereign Europe leave NATO?

Questions regarding the future multipolar world

- Could a neutral Europe play a moderating role in the future, multipolar system of states?
- Should the European Republic, as a political entity in a future multipolar world and with an orientation towards Eurasia, even submit an application for membership to the BRICS states?
- How would the Arab, Latin American, and African worlds, among others, react if a European Republic were to secede from the West, now that Europeans—almost as the last in the world—have recognized what Latin Americans learned as early as the 1970s and the Arab world at least since the second half of the 20th century: that the USA is nowhere a true partner, but rather strives for a (often brutal) hegemonic position in all parts of the world? Would a European Republic no longer part of the West be welcomed, or would suspicion of Europe persist? What would be the expectations in these countries regarding an emancipated European Republic?



- According to which principles would a European Republic, after the end of the Pax Americana, establish a new, international and multipolar order together with the other states?

Questions regarding the political risk of founding a republic

- What if the European Republic were once again hijacked as a system by lobbyists, technocratically, or oligarchically, as is currently the case with the political system of the EU?

Questions that need to be discussed in Germany

- Anyone who wants to achieve something new must first come to terms with their history! Does the Federal Republic of Germany want to expand its work on the culture of remembrance to include the 27 million Soviet citizens murdered by the Wehrmacht, who have been neglected in the narrative of West German history after 1945? Or does it want to continue denying this mass murder?
- In light of the current "war preparations" – euphemistically termed "defense" – against Russia, could the Wehrmacht exhibition by Jan Philipp Reemtsma, the then-director of the Hamburg Institute for Social Research (HIS), be revived? It ran in two versions, from 1995 to 1999 and from 2001 to 2004. The exhibition shattered the myth of the "clean Wehrmacht" and demonstrated its active participation in Nazi crimes.
- Nowhere is it clearer than on the German election map that the internal German dividing lines – black and pro-NATO/EU in the west; blue, anti-EU and "pro-Russian" in the east – are widening again after 35 years. Forty years of separate political socialization and differing cultures of remembrance do not leave a population untouched. How do we deal with this? Should the former GDR continue to be exclusively denigrated as an unjust state, and should the GDR dictatorship be cemented in school textbooks in a one-sided or predominantly Western light – or is there another way to approach the 40-year division into two republics? For example, by giving greater value to certain elements of GDR socialization and the narratives of former GDR citizens about 1945 and beyond, their views on Russia, and their knowledge of the 1989 democracy movement? A new dialogue between East and West Germany seems important and necessary here to overcome the growing division of the country.
- Does West Germany, in particular, want to return to a serious discussion about the future of Europe, beyond warmongering?
- Should we revive the long-overdue discussion about a German Europe versus a European Germany, for example, given that we once again want to create the largest (conventional) army in Europe? Because Germany is and remains the most important country in Europe: the European continent stands or falls with Germany, a theme that repeatedly emerges in the 18th- and 19th-century writings mentioned in Chapter III. Without Europe, Germany cannot survive. This was already stated in 1994 in the famous Schäuble-Lamers paper of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group.
- Which German party, after the CDU's total failure on European issues over the last twenty years and the Greens' transformation into an olive-green party, wants to take over, lead, and moderate the European discourse in Germany? Even the SPD hasn't truly been a pro-European party since the 1970s (Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt). Does anyone still remember the overblown hype and subsequent debacle of Martin Schulz, then President of the European Parliament, in the 2014 European elections? Like the SPD, almost all traditional German parties currently seem virtually irrelevant to the European question. The space for a German pro-European party is therefore open – and it's a big one!
- The questions of a Europe beyond the EU and of Europe's place in a multipolar world—that is, the questions of European statehood and emancipation—are the two most pressing on the European continent. Clearly, no single European state can escape Europe's current political, economic, and social predicament alone. Can this discussion be conducted broadly in the largest and most important EU member state? The contemporary geopolitical rupture, the rise of the BRICS nations, and the end of the Pax Americana necessitate a fundamental rethinking of Europe. Who in Germany, then, will say "en avant," or "always forward, never backward," and initiate a future-oriented, rather than a backward-looking, discussion about Europe, acknowledging Germany's transatlantic missteps and entanglements in the 20th century (see Chapter II) and demonstrating the will to arrive in the 21st century? For the world is watching Europe. But it is not waiting for us!
- What truly needs to be done out of love for Germany to protect and enhance the regional diversity, as well as the established political, social, and economic structures of Germany's regions and their cultures? Even German bread isn't the same across the country; from the Bavarian pretzel to Münster pumpnickel, there are around 1,000 different types of German bread. And whether the popular crime drama "Tatort" and the Bundesliga will be enough to maintain a sense of German national identity for much longer after the last World Cup debacle is questionable.

- Can a much-discussed return to the nation-state and a sovereign Germany truly be a plausible political prospect if the Federal Republic a) does not break away from the USA, abandon its historically ended Western ties, and transform the Atlantic Alliance into an equal partnership with the USA? b) isolates itself from the prosperous regions of Eurasia? c) if Germany, as a sovereign country, nevertheless wants to remain in the single market and the Eurozone? and d) Even if Germany were to succeed in regaining national sovereignty under the problems or conditions described in a) to c): What will happen to the other, especially the smaller, current EU member states – Malta, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Hungary, Finland, Portugal, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Ireland, Sweden, but also Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, etc., which mostly have no more than ten million inhabitants, or even fewer, in a multipolar world where the West will soon cease to exist? What would be achieved if Germany remained sovereign and experienced another economic upswing, but all other EU states surrounding Germany failed to do so?

As I said, in the book I formulate personal answers to these questions and put them up for discussion!

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