

# Heinz-Uwe Haus on Culture and Politics



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Edited by

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# INTRODUCTION

## *Heinz-Uwe Haus*

History determines the present. Therefore, history is not the same as the historical past. We “repeal it” by learning from it. In doing so, we intervene with all we do: social, ideological, moral, aesthetic, artistic. A mind-set that “captures its time in thought” cannot lose sight of the two German dictatorships, the Third Reich and the GDR-regime. The question arises ever again on a global level, which it has been impossible to answer since the revolutions of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: how freedom can provide itself with a durable order: political, economic, and strategic. The rule of totalitarian injustice in Germany from 1933 to 1989 was a particularly misanthropic extreme in the dangerous swaying between liberalism and socialism of the last 200 years. Since liberation from communism and the end of the cold war, a fairly long-term view of the conspicuous new “world-disorder” is needed in cultural and ethical contexts and in domestic and foreign policy. This need is part of the responsibilities of our mutual German history and our future as a western democracy.

The selected texts document the interference of a theatre maker with questions of politics and society. In selecting the texts, I recall how shortly before the decisive events of the peaceful revolution in autumn 1989, intellectual impulses from the West enriched our discussions and visions. Thus, the first publication of Francis Fukuyama’s thesis in the article “The End of History” mobilised and fascinated my friends and me. It was a dream of hope for the search for a new order. In our discussions and on flyers of the *Demokratischer Aufbruch* we predicted a world liberated from the burdens of history, in which the liberal path of the West would be the only constitutive one. The disenchantment that would follow only a few years later, which Samuel Huntington triggered with his clear-sighted description “Kampf der Kulturen. Die Neugestaltung der Weltpolitik im 21. Jahrhundert” (München 1998), hit right into the middle of a further process of transformation: from the labour of different levels in the process of re-unification to the unexpected involvements in globalisation. Neither the unity of the nation, nor that of Europe, had the dreamed-of stability and depth that were now in demand. The challenges for the concomitant consolidation and expansion of the EU were huge, especially since for all former Eastern Bloc states, the “return to Europe” was the



path to home rule. With the Islamic attacks on the Twin Towers of the World Trade centre on 11 September 2001, Huntington's analytic truth became generally recognisable. Today, the clash of civilizations has become part of daily life, i.e., accepted as reality as concealed behind the conditions of political correctness. Those who experienced the liberation of 1989 cannot succumb to the "spiral of silence" (a term that Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann brought to awareness for the then still "west"-German media). I do not want to accept that we allegedly live in a time of relativity, in which the truth does not count, but what counts is what one is allowed to say and what one is not allowed to say. Interference—loud and clear, not whispered, on the quiet, let alone with "German expression"—remains the motto, the core of the fighting spirit of the autumn of 1989! Alexis de Tocqueville had gotten to the heart of it in the context of the emerging democracy in the USA: If in doubt, the majority would decide in favour of equality and against liberty.

The texts selected for this book reflect contexts of culture and politics, written on different occasions: political conferences, academic symposia, directing concepts, magazines. Accordingly, they address different audiences. The author is, as director, professionally in the advantageous position of having to address the most conflicting opinions and interests of the spectators of a production. This demands stance (Brecht would say *Grundgestus*) in order to find the use value (*Gebrauchswert*) of representation for here and today.

I am grateful to my dialogue partners, Angela Christophidou, Robert von Hallberg, Charles Helmetag, Frederick Lapisardi, Stefan Hoejelid, Glyn Hughes, Odile Popescu and Josh Smith for the exchanges of thoughts, in some cases over years, which are reflected in the dialogues selected for this book. With my friend Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe I have shared for a long time many common threads in thinking. His attentive support of my work and his purposeful suggestions have become an indispensable part of our collaboration. For this I owe him sincere thanks. This book would not have been possible without his contribution—as interview partner, co-author of this introduction, and co-editor. The way that Daniel merges philosophy, theatre studies and dramaturgy—and is able to analyse theory and practice as a dialectic unity—continues to be an enriching discovery.

### ***Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe***

The late 1980s saw the dissolution of the iron curtain and the development of democracy in Eastern European countries that had been oppressed by a range of varieties of communist totalitarian regimes. In Germany, this

development led to the abolition of the so-called German Democratic Republic and the re-unification of Germany. The subsequent unification process (as different from the reunification paperwork, and declaration, is ongoing, as are the processes of shifting towards democracy of the former Eastern European communist states).

The transition is not an easy one, for a multitude of reasons. In this book, Heinz-Uwe Haus charts the development of the unification and democratization processes. He is in a privileged position to do so, having been politically active on the side of democracy all his life, in difficult circumstances indeed during the “GDR” times, He was one of the leading voices of the movement credited with being instrumental in the collapse of communism in the “GDR”. In addition, as a leading theatre director in “GDR” times and beyond, his thinking and action have always combined politics and theatre and the arts overall.

In the book, Haus provides a unique narrative of the context before German unification, unification itself, and the aftermath of unification across the decades since. Haus explores the difficulties on the way, which may well turn out to be unexpected revelations to the reader as only the critical distance of an insider can facilitate. Haus widens the context from post-unification Germany to encompass issues of broader current relevance, such as Europe, America and Islam. Theatre provides the conceptual framework for this wide-ranging debate.

In conversation with Frederick Lapisardi, Haus explains the political events immediately following the fall of the Wall until unification in the context of European politics (1.2). Haus considers the aftermath of the collapse of the GDR with special emphasis on the role of the intellectual during and after the communist regime (3). He expands the context of the 1989 developments even further, within the framework of Fukuyama’s “End of History” (4). Haus is then able to discuss the role of specific intellectuals, authors, in the unification process, and to bring his attention to the art form of theatre (5). He moves on to discuss the intricacies and challenges of the change from communism to post-communism in Eastern European countries with special reference to his productions of Schiller’s *Die Räuber* and Brecht’s *Baal* (6).

From the broad role of theatre in post-unification Germany, Haus homes in on Brecht’s work, which has been central to Haus’s career, here considering the relevance of Brecht in Germany after re-unification (7). That argument is put into relief with a consideration of the relevance of Brecht in a different, contemporary culture in crisis: Cyprus, where Haus’s precarious dissident position in Eastern Germany was fully appreciated and understood, and where Haus was given major opportunities for

productions (8). While Brecht has been central to Haus's thinking and work, he is equally at home across genres and theatre history—from a Brechtian perspective. Thus, he offers an insight into his position on comedy: while Haus's work in the theatre had not focused on comedy, his position on this genre is still revealing for its political stance (9). From genres the book moves to theatre history, with an excerpt of a review of a book on the theatre of Yeats written in 2005, and framed by the 2017 position (10). Haus then scrutinizes the Greek ideal of democracy and its ramifications for today's European political landscape in the context of an intercultural production of *Antigone* in 1986 at the Ancient Greek theatre ruin of Oeniades near Messolongiou (11).

We then move to the discussion of German, European and global politics. The first interlocutor here starts with questions about Berlin, where Haus has been living for the majority of his life, and expands the horizon to Europe—the concept as such, its history, its current meaning, and the role of the arts and artists and intellectuals in its future development (12). In conversation with Charles Helmetag, Haus considers the developments in Germany ten years after the fall of the wall, 1999 (13), then, with Daniel Meyer-Dinkgrafe, Haus discusses the developments specifically in Germany 20 years after re-unification, 2009 (14). In conversation with Angela Christophides, Haus elaborates on the concept of innovation and its importance for Europe (15). In conversation with Josh Smith (a community organizer, who works for social media in Melbourne, Australia), Haus comments on US politics around 2010 (16). Muslim immigrant waves and Islamic terror attacks affect Europe in unprecedented ways (17), which have impacted on the US-Europe relationship more recently as well (18). In conversation with Hylas, Haus expands further on the question of European cultural and religious identity in view of gradual Islamisation of Europe (19). Then he brings the discussion back to the socio-political and cultural contexts of Cyprus and Haus's theatre productions in those contexts (20). For the understanding of European identity, the concept of history is ever important. Taking further the argument of chapter four, Haus explore the impact of his suggestion for the concept of history in the context of theatre (21). Haus considers how he responds to globalisation, which he further defines, as a theatre maker (22). In excerpts from his political diary, Haus reflects on the Paris bombing of 2015, and the impact of German chancellor Angela Merkel's refugee politics (23). More general comments on the art of acting show clearly that Haus trained and worked for a while as an actor, although he spent most of his career as a director (24). Notes on his 1983 production of Schiller's *Die Räuber* highlight Haus's approach to the classical German

theatre repertoire (25) In a contribution from August 2017, Haus reflects on the implications of a recent speech by US President Donald Trump in which he questioned the extent to which the world is prepared to uphold European values (26). Finally, Haus answers specific questions that emerged for Meyer-Dinkgräfe in working on this project (27).





*Budru 2017*

So, anyone who claims that I am a dreamer who expects to transform hell into heaven is wrong. I have a few illusions. But I feel a responsibility to work towards the things I consider good and right. I don't know whether I'll be able to change certain things for the better, or not at all. Both outcomes are possible. There is only one thing I will not concede; that it might be meaningless to strive in a good cause.

—Vaclav Havel





## CHAPTER ONE

# THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE “FALL OF THE WALL” AND GERMAN REUNIFICATION

Conversation with Fred Lapisardi, Valetta/Malta, 17 July 2010

*Lapisardi*

With the Wall having fallen in 1989, it was to be another 11 months before Germany was reunited. In the first (and last) free elections to East Germany's parliament on March 18, 1990 the electorate voted by an overwhelming majority for those parties that demanded swift accession to West Germany.

*Haus*

The Peaceful Revolution led to the first free elections since Soviet occupation after the end of WWII, and to the negotiations between the two German governments that culminated in a *Unification Treaty*. Negotiations between them and the four occupying powers produced the so-called “Two Plus Four Treaty” (Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany) granting full sovereignty to a unified German state, whose two halves had previously still been bound by a number of limitations stemming from their post-WWII status as occupied regions. The united Germany remained a member of the *European Community* (later the European Union) and of NATO.

*Lapisardi*

Let us remember how the Peaceful Revolution (German: *Friedliche Revolution*), a series of peaceful political protests against the regime, became part of the collapse of Communism, and the ending of the Cold War.

*Haus*

And we have to keep in mind external factors and historical circumstances that facilitated the escalating events in the autumn of 1989: opposition to the soviet-puppet regime had existed since it had been established in the

Soviet-Occupied Zone of Germany after the end of WWII. But before the Peaceful Revolution, such opposition usually had little to no effect on the regime. In the most significant incident, the people's uprising of 1953 was quickly and violently suppressed by Soviet troops which had been stationed in the Eastern part of Germany.

### *Lapisardi*

Even political resistance within its own ranks ultimately had little to no effect on the Party's regime and ended with its critical members being incarcerated after a series of show-trials. Until 1989, the only visible form of popular protest was the increasing rate of people that were fleeing to the West. By 1960, already three million citizens had left the country. On August 13, 1961, the regime, in an attempt to stop the quick decrease of population, erected the Berlin Wall.

### *Haus*

There were two significant external factors that caused a stir in the people, and gave them hope that change was possible, along with increasingly widespread disapproval of the regime. First, in 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev rose to power in Moscow and introduced a new foreign policy, which led to the termination of the Brezhnev doctrine. It ultimately meant that Moscow's allies, including East Germany, could no longer count on Soviet foreign military aid. This also meant that the East German government was left alone in trying to control the growing internal threat presented by its own citizens.

The regime started to falter in May 1989, when removal of Hungary's border fence opened a hole in the Iron Curtain. It caused an exodus of thousands of East Germans fleeing to West Germany and Austria via Hungary.

In the summer of 1989, East Germany's communist leaders praised the Chinese Communist Party decision to use violence against Tiananmen Square protesters. Like China, East Germany had used violence against dissidents throughout its existence and it was not clear whether events would develop peacefully. By September 1989, the Germans in the East had become unrulier, and opposition movements were created. Among them were the *Neues Forum* (New Forum), and *Demokratie Jetzt* (Democracy Now). The demonstrations began on Monday, September 4, 1989, at the St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig, led by a Protestant pastor of the church. The demonstrators' strong tie to the church helped assure the peaceful nature of the demonstrations. The group grew from week to week and by October 9, 1989 there were 120,000 non-violent protesters, and a

week later there were 320,000. Once other cities, such as East Berlin, Karl-Marx-Stadt, Plauen, and Potsdam, heard about the Leipzig demonstrations, they, too, began meeting on Monday nights in the city squares. On November 4, 1989 over 500,000 citizens gathered in protest in the streets of East Berlin and at the Alexanderplatz square.

#### *Lapisardi*

The situation for the demonstrators was dangerous and unpredictable. We have to remember, that after the October 2 demonstration in Leipzig, party leader Erich Honecker had issued a *shoot to kill* order to the military. The regime prepared a huge police, militia, Stasi, and work-combat troop (*Betriebskampfgruppen*) presence and the rumours of a looming Tiananmen Square-style massacre described a real possibility.

#### *Haus*

On October 9, Leipzig’s people took again to the streets, this time forcefully under the banner “We are the people!” Military surrounded the demonstrators but did not take action. The Stasi, the regime’s secret police, unsuccessfully attempted to spark violence by planting violent demonstrators in the middle of crowds. But without Soviet directive, the regime became paralyzed. Honecker had to resign on October 18. The severity in the size of the demonstrations proved that the majority of the population was against the regime. “We are the people” was the main chant of the non-violent protestors that could be heard echoing throughout the streets of East Germany. It came to symbolize the power of the people united against its oppressive government. They wanted democracy, free elections and freedom of mobility. As I think back, since my childhood, the people’s request for “free elections” (*Freie Wahlen*) was what the communists most feared, because they did know that their regime would be openly demasked as dictatorship without people on its side.

#### *Lapisardi*

By October 18, 1989, along with East Germany’s falling industrial and public service infrastructure, due to the lack of man power because of the high number of citizens leaving the country at a rate of 10,000 per day, and with the large non-violent demonstrations carried out throughout the country, caused enough pressure to force key figures of the politburo into early retirement. By November 7, 1989 the entire government had resigned.

*Haus*

Then, on November 9, 1989, Günter Schabowski, the spokesperson for the government, declared that effective immediately, all East German citizens were free to travel abroad without fear of being persecuted and without needing permission from the government. Later that evening, pictures were broadcast all over the world of thousands climbing and tearing down the Berlin wall in the presence of East Germans who were free to come and go as they pleased, a right that had been denied to them for years. In December 1989, Egon Krenz, the newly appointed leader of the regime, resigned from his duties and East Germany's communist political party, the SED, (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*) disintegrated. The demonstrations eventually ended in March 1990, around the time of the first free multi-party elections.

*Lapisardi*

The non-violent demonstrations were a key component in the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9 and ultimately led to the elimination of the Soviet puppet- regime, 45 years after the end of WWII. In just five days from November 4 to 9, the banner "We are the people" changed into "We are one people". The German reunification happened within a year, on October 3, 1990.

*Haus*

Looking back, one also has to remember external factors, which were unexpected challenges for most of the new democratic leadership. Often quicker than one could reflect, one had to come to terms with contradictions and mechanisms in Western politics, which were not visible during the Cold War or which we just ignored, and because we had other concerns and interests. Sharing the same values does not automatically mean that we all sit in the same boat.

For decades, (West-) Germany's allies had stated their support for reunification. But in those months of awakening we often were confronted by bitter surprises. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who speculated that a country that "decided to kill millions of Jewish people...will try to do it again", was one of the few world leaders to publicly oppose it and that was not easy. As reunification became a realistic possibility, however, significant NATO and European opposition emerged in private.

*Lapisardi*

The British and French governments, too, did not want German "reunification". Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, British Prime minister

Margaret Thatcher told Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev that neither the United Kingdom nor Western Europe wanted the reunification of Germany. Thatcher also clarified that she wanted the Soviet leader to do what he could to stop it, telling Gorbachev “We do not want a united Germany”. Although she welcomed democracy for East Germany, Thatcher worried that rapid reunification might weaken Gorbachev, and favoured Soviet troops staying in East Germany as long as possible to act as a counterweight to a united Germany.

### *Haus*

Her actions and attitude were only too familiar from Shakespeare’s “history making” feudal gangsters. But we were in 1989 and not 1604! I remember how we discussed what could be done to weaken her influence. The only solution seemed for us to focus on ways how to embed the German unification process into a wider European unity. And we all put our hope on the United States’ global strategic interests, which seemed to best serve our goal to have a united fatherland again, which will be completely part of Western Europe and the North Atlantic Alliance. We experienced, in the weeks of self-liberation, not only the unconditional solidarity of millions of people around the globe, but also the intrigues of leaders and interest groups, which had changed the sides, just to avoid the “wind of change”, who carried the other half of the continent. In meetings with British politicians at a Wilton-Park conference in Winston in the spring of 1990 I experienced how even some of her advisers became critical of her performance. The “Iron Lady” had obviously passed her zenith.

### *Lapisardi*

Thatcher, who carried in her handbag a map of Germany’s 1937 borders to show others the “German problem”, feared that its “national character”, size, and central location in Europe would cause the nation to be a “destabilizing rather than a stabilizing force in Europe”. In December 1989, she warned fellow European Community leaders at a Strasbourg summit – in the presence of Kohl—, “We defeated the Germans twice! And now they’re back!” Although Thatcher had stated her support for German self-determination in 1985, she now argued that Germany’s allies had only supported reunification because they had not believed it would ever happen. (!)

*Haus*

Thatcher favoured a transition period of five years for reunification, during which the two Germanys would remain separate states. Although she gradually softened her opposition, as late as March 1990, Thatcher summoned historians and diplomats to a seminar at Chequers to ask, "How dangerous are the Germans?" and the French ambassador in London reported that Thatcher had told him, "France and Great Britain should pull together today in the face of the German threat." Clearly, Thatcher failed the lesson of the 1989 revolution. But it was disappointing for a people, who had so much admiration for the World's oldest democracy.

*Lapisardi*

But similarly, a representative of French President François Mitterrand reportedly told an aide to Gorbachev, "France by no means wants German reunification, although it realizes that in the end it is inevitable." At the Strasbourg summit, Mitterrand and Thatcher discussed the fluidity of Germany's historical borders. On 20 January 1990, Mitterrand told Thatcher that a unified Germany could "make more ground than ever Hitler had". He predicted that "bad" Germans would re-emerge, who might seek to regain former Germany territory lost after World War II and would likely dominate Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, leaving "only Romania and Bulgaria for the rest of us". The two leaders saw no way to prevent reunification, however, as "None of us was going to declare war on Germany."

*Haus*

Mitterrand recognized before Thatcher that reunification was inevitable and adjusted his views accordingly; unlike her, he was hopeful that participation in a single currency and other European institutions could control a united Germany. Mitterrand still wanted Thatcher to publicly oppose unification, however, to obtain more concessions from Germany.

Other European leaders' opinion of reunification was "icy" – with the exception of the socialist Spanish leader Gonzales. Italy's Giulio Andreotti warned against a revival of "pan-Germanism", and the Netherlands' Ruud Lubbers questioned the German right to self-determination. The consensus opinion was that reunification, if it must occur, should not occur until at least 1995 and preferably much later. Most of all we were alerted how the German Nazi past could quickly be used as argument against the revolution's demand of one people in one state. For the Four Powers, the new democratic forces were the focal point.

We’ve feared that the window of opportunity would not be open for long. The victors of World War II – the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France, comprising the Four-Power Authorities – retained authority over West Berlin, such as control over air travel. The Soviet Union sought early to use reunification as a way to push Germany out of NATO into neutrality, removing nuclear weapons from its territory. West Germany interpreted a 21 November 1989 diplomatic message on the topic, however, as meaning that only two weeks after the Wall’s collapse, Soviet leadership already anticipated reunification. This belief encouraged Kohl to announce, on 28 November, a prominent 10-point reunification plan without consulting allies.

### *Lapisardi*

The Americans did not share the Europeans’ and Russians’ historical fears over Germany expansionism, but wished to ensure that Germany would stay within NATO. In December 1989, the Bush administration made a united Germany’s continued NATO membership a requirement for supporting reunification.

### *Haus*

Kohl agreed, although less than 20% of West Germans supported remaining within NATO; he also wished to avoid a neutral Germany, as he believed that would destroy NATO, cause the United States and Canada to leave Europe, and Britain and France would form an alliance. The United States increased its support of Kohl’s policies, as it feared that otherwise Oskar Lafontaine, a critic of NATO, might become Chancellor. The forces, who joined the Alliance for Germany (CDU, DA and DSU) and won the March elections, supported the American position and Kohl’s policy.

With this backing, the Kohl government was willing to do almost anything the Soviet Union asked for in exchange for its support. Horst Teltschik, Kohl’s foreign policy advisor, later recalled that Germany would have paid “100 billion deutschmarks” had the Soviets demanded it. The USSR did not make such great demands, however, with Gorbachev stating in February 1990 that “The Germans must decide for themselves what path they choose to follow”.

In May 1990, he repeated his remark in the context of NATO membership while meeting President Bush, amazing both the Americans and Germans. But the event re-affirmed what was known since the end of WWII, that the “German question” (*Deutsche Frage*) will be answered only in Moscow and Washington and nowhere else.

*Lapisardi*

During the NATO-Warsaw Pact conference in Ottawa, Canada, Genscher persuaded the four powers to treat the two Germanys as equals instead of defeated junior partners, and for the six nations to negotiate alone. Although the Dutch, Italians, Spanish and other NATO powers opposed such a structure, which meant that the alliance's boundaries would change without their participation, the six nations began negotiations in March 1990.

*Haus*

After Gorbachev's May agreement on German NATO membership, the Soviets further agreed that Germany would be treated as an ordinary NATO country, with the exception that the former East Germany would not have foreign NATO troops or nuclear weapons. In exchange, Kohl agreed to reduce the sizes of both Germany's militaries, renounce weapons of mass destruction, and accept the post-war Oder-Neisse line as Germany's Eastern border. In addition, Germany agreed to pay about 55 billion deutschmarks to the Soviet Union in gifts and loans (which was then the equivalent of eight days of the West Germany GDP).

*Lapisardi*

Mitterrand agreed to reunification in exchange for a commitment from Kohl to the European Economic and Monetary Union. The British insisted to the end—succeeding to raise Soviet opposition—that NATO be allowed to hold manoeuvres in the former East German territory. After the Americans intervened, both the UK and France ratified the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany in September 1990, thus finalizing the reunification for purposes of international law. Thatcher later wrote that her opposition to reunification had been an “unambiguous failure”.

*Haus*

On 14 November 1990, the united Germany and Poland signed the German-Polish Border Treaty, finalizing Germany's boundaries as permanent along the Oder-Neisse line, and thus renouncing any claims to Silesia, East Brandenburg, Farther Pomerania, West Prussia, and its territories of the former province of East Prussia. The following month, the first all-German free elections since 1932 were held, resulting in an increased majority for the coalition government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl.



On 15 March 1991, the *Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany* entered into force, putting an end to the remaining limitations on German sovereignty that resulted from the post WWII arrangements. The Peaceful Revolution of 1989 brought the Wall down, won the first and only free elections in East Germany, led to the unification of the nation, but most importantly, in solidarity with all other Middle and Eastern European nations it ended the post-WWII order. The people on the streets joined the one and only direction to liberation, unity and freedom: the “return to Europe”.

In preparation for our meeting, I looked up old documents. The following describes best that strategic position, which developed soon its own dynamic and power against all, who got accustomed to the injustice, suppression and terror of the Cold War.

*Demokratischer Aufbruch* (Democratic Awakening), the first party that worked for East Germany’s voluntary accession to the free German republic long before the “4 plus 2” negotiations were held, established an expert round on Europe in Berlin as early as in December 1989. The following is an extract of a paper named “Propositions for new European identity” for the German nation to be unified, and problems to be solved by the Germans together and in a self-critical way. It summarizes the spirit of those days as well as its very practical demands for its realization.

Here’s the quotation:

The Germans who have liberated themselves from the GDR regime have experienced 40 years of fencing off. They are suffering from the effects of virtual imprisonment; provincialism and xenophobia are typical symptoms of this. Many find it difficult to grasp the future mission of a united Europe, its “bridging function”. Young people, most of all, neither know of the value and the great meaning of other cultures nor have they ever had any cross-cultural or cosmopolitan experiences that affected and aroused their sense of tolerance.

We realize a depressing incapability of openly approaching anything foreign. The complex process of German unification gives a chance to transport and entirely new and viable value system against narrow-mindedness and cultural ignorance to the people living on this side of the Elbe River, a system that formulates our joint European responsibility. It will be inevitable in this respect to impart historical knowledge and facts so that questions and cultural values of other people are perceived by our people and incorporated on their lives. A positive identity that overcomes the systemic pressures resulting in a mass society and simultaneous isolation can only be gained by getting over the past and starting to build one’s own future in Germany and in Europe.

Germany must not utilize its dominant position in an isolated manner. It should make its strength available, out of all-European motifs, to a joint

European power. (...) The process of European integration requires a democratic awakening to new concepts and structures.

We need a European policy that combines a realistic approach to the next possible steps with political vision. The quicker the relics of what used to be the GDR are removed and the walls in the people's heads torn down, the better conditions will become for strengthening peace, freedom, and unity in Europe. Any further debate about "autonomy" or "sell-out" with regard to the winding up of the GDR only benefits the counterrevolutionary mafia of SED and *Stasi* activists and puts the political and economic consolidation of our free democratic constitutional structure at risk. "Us" and "them", *Ossies* and *Wessies* are word pairs that reflect poor historical awareness.

It is imperative (...) that we set the development of democracy and civil rights going along with the progress of our economic and social union. (...) The individual should be able to see immediately that more common ground in Germany and in Europe means more individual freedom and social justice. Above all, the continuing utopism and fundamentalism among the West European left should be countered using the experience gained under the so-called "real socialism".

It should be the objective of the agreements on European unification that a European confederation be formed. Each nation shall be able to preserve their cultural identity on the basis of self-determination. This very process is a prerequisite for making an independent and effective contribution not only towards preventing wars but towards creating a lasting peace.

World peace is no longer threatened by the post-war East/West confrontation but by the North-South conflict. Europe should therefore become aware of its responsibility for a partnership with third-world countries that is based on mutual understanding.

Post-reunification Germany sees itself not as a "post-national democracy among nation states", as the political scientist Karl Dietrich Bracher once termed the "old" Federal Republic in 1976, but rather a post-classical democratic national state among others – firmly embedded in the Atlantic Alliance and in the supranational confederation of states that is the European Union (EU), in which certain aspects of national sovereignty are pursued jointly with other members states. But it was the new mind-set within leading forces of the opposition, which tied the German questions to the European perspective.

The German question has been resolved since 1990, but the European question remains open. Since the expansions to the EU in 2004 and 2007, the EU has included 12 additional nations, of which ten were under Communist rule until the dawn of the new epoch between 1989 and 1991. They are all states that belong to the former Occident – and which have

been defined by a largely shared legal tradition, the early separation of religious and state powers, princely and civil powers, not to forget the experience of the murderous consequences of religious and national enmity, and racial hatred. It will take time for those parts of Europe that were once divided to grow closer together. This will only succeed if European unity develops at the same pace as the Union has expanded. This development requires more than institutional reforms. It hinges on joint deliberations on European history and its consequences. The one consequence that is more important than all others is an appreciation of the overall binding nature of Western values, first and foremost inalienable human rights. These are the values that Europe and America have created together, which they uphold, and by which they must at all times be measured.

It will have to be part of the public discussion in any society to analyse the past and to come out in favour of, or against, past events where such society wishes to make a contribution towards a lasting peace and reliable security structures in Europe. The process of political and administrative integration that is going on in Europe gave, and still gives, rise to the hope that communist heteronomy will be overthrown forever, marking the end of the past and preparing the ground for universal and democratic solidarity.

The interrelations mentioned in the weeks of radical change have remained the same, although the considerable destruction of civilization in Eastern Europe is straining, sometimes even overtaxing, both the ongoing reform process in the East and Western administrative structures. The current feeling of “mental helplessness” is a direct consequence of the new dimensions of Europe, a continent stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural. The complexity of psychological and social processes, the gap between political self-liberation and undeveloped bourgeois manners, the total economic ruin and the unconsolidated constitutional state, cannot be reflected by concepts such as a “Europe of Regions” or “post-nation identities”. It’s been some time now that the European Union has been not just a means for taming the German spectres but a means for driving all evil spirits out of all nations of our blood-soaked, suffering continent. It is not only Germany that will be incorporated in, and tied to, the Community. All European nations will.

## CHAPTER TWO

### GERMAN UNITY — A SETTLEMENT AFTER 45 YEARS

Interview with Fred Lapisardi, for the Greek-Cypriot magazine *Politiko*,  
Nicosia, Volume III, No. 2, 25 October 2012

#### *Lapisardi*

On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall unexpectedly opened, less than a year later, on October 3, 1990, Germany was re-united. Both events came after decades of division that had begun with the partition of Germany into four occupation zones following its defeat in 1945 by the Four Powers—the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. Once a powerful nation, Germany lay vanquished at the end of World War II. The war's human cost had been staggering.

#### *Haus*

Millions of Germans had died or had suffered terribly during the conflict, both in combat and on the home front. Intensive Allied bombing raids, invasions, and subsequent social upheaval had forced millions of Germans from their homes. Not since the ravages of the Thirty Years' War had Germans experienced such misery. Beyond the physical destruction, Germans had been confronted with the moral devastation of defeat. In addition, the nation had to come to grips with its involvement in the Nazi atrocities.

#### *Lapisardi*

Germans refer to the immediate aftermath of the war as the *Stunde Null* (Zero Hour), the point in time when Germany ceased to exist as a state and the rebuilding of the country would begin.

#### *Haus*

At first, Germany was administered by the Four Powers, each with its own occupation zone. In time, Germans themselves began to play a role in the governing of these zones. Political parties were formed, and, within

months of the war's end, the first local elections were held. Although most people were concerned with mere physical survival, much was accomplished in rebuilding cities, fashioning a new economy, and integrating the millions of refugees, which had been forced to leave the Eastern areas of Germany that had been seized by the Soviet Union and Poland after the war. The political realities of a Europe so radically rearranged presented a demanding set of challenges.

### *Lapisardi*

Overshadowing these events within Germany, however, was the gradual emergence of the Cold War during the second half of the 1940s. By the decade's end, the two superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—had faced off in an increasingly ideological confrontation.

### *Haus*

Yes, the Iron Curtain between them cut Germany in two. Although the Allies' original plans envisioned that the territories left to Germany would remain a single state, the antagonistic concepts of political, social, and economic organization gradually led the three Western zones to join together, becoming separate from the Soviet zone and ultimately leading to the formation in 1949 of two German states. The three Western occupation zones became the Federal Republic of Germany (or West Germany), and the Soviet zone was named the German Democratic Republic (or East Germany). No doubt, we in the East felt betrayed by the West's acceptance of the division. Painfully we had to recognize that the best way to contain Soviet expansionism was to assure the economic prosperity of the West. The success of the aid program that came to be known as the Marshall Plan deepened the rejection of the East's command economy and strengthened the trust in a free social market economy.

### *Lapisardi*

Can you explain in this context the role of the so-called Berlin Airlift?

### *Haus*

The Berlin Blockade (June 24, 1948 — May 1, 1949) was one of the major international crises of the Cold War. The Soviet's blocked the three Western force's railway and road access to the Western sectors of Berlin that they had been controlling. Their aim was to force the Western powers to allow the Soviet controlled regions to start supplying the Western sectors with food and fuel, thereby giving them nominal control over the entire city. In response, the Western Allies formed the Berlin Airlift to

bring supplies to the inhabitants of the Western sectors. The skilled, bone-wearying flying of American, British and French airmen saved the Western sectors from falling to the Soviets and helped mend German-American wounds from World War II. The success of the Airlift demonstrated that the Western forces would reject further Soviet obstruction. The Airlift was also a hope for the people in Berlin's Soviet sector and in the Soviet-controlled zone. Keep in mind that local elections in mid-1946 resulted in a massive anti-communist protest vote. Berlin's citizens overwhelmingly elected democratic members to its city council (with an 86% majority) — strongly rejecting the election's Communist candidates. As Molotov, the Soviet foreign minister, noted, "What happens to Berlin, happens to Germany, what happens to Germany, happens to Europe". Stalin's policy of creating an Eastern Block buffer zone (remember the Communist coup d'état of 1948 in Czechoslovakia) with a weakened Germany under Soviet control culminated in autumn of 1948 in an attempted putsch for control of all of Berlin through a September 6 takeover of the city hall by SED operatives. It became impossible for the non-Communist majority in Berlin city-wide assemblies elected two years earlier to attend sessions within the Soviet sector. The elected city government was routed, with its democratic members being replaced by communists.

### *Lapisardi*

With their putsch, the Soviet's succeeded to divide the governing of the city. In the Western sectors, the democratic representatives set up a free government.

### *Haus*

Three days after the putsch a crowd of 500,000 people gathered at the Brandenburg Gate, protesting the Soviet's and communist's actions. The airlift was working so far, but many people feared that the Allies would eventually abandon them to the Soviets. They needed reassurance that their sacrifice would not be for nothing. Mayor Ernst Reuter took the microphone and pleaded for his city, "You people of the world. You people of America, of England, of France, look on this city, and recognize that this city, this people must not be abandoned — cannot be abandoned!" Never before had so many Berliners gathered, the resonance worldwide was enormous. The fact that the Soviets' actions contradicted the London Conference decisions convinced the Western Allies that they must take swift and decisive measures to strengthen the parts of Germany not occupied by the Soviets. The most important result was the creation of the