

ESSAYS

THE MASS MIGRATION AND THE END OF DEMOCRATIC EUROPE

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Abstract

In the last decade, radical political movements became an important threat to European democracies in the conditions of decline on the popularity of main political ideological parties all across the Europe. Especially nationalist radical movements seem to become more popular among the citizens after they took over a Euro sceptical message and a radical message against minorities or immigrants from the populist parties. The extremist message of these parties or radical movements is almost the same even they are located in different countries or cultures. A radical message of a Christian Orthodox culture Golden Dawn in Greece is similar to a Catholic and Protestant culture the Magyar Hajnal (Hungarian Dawns) in Hungary – or the Progress Party from Norway – a more secular culture than religious based.

My paper is focused on the origins of these parties in Europe and their radical message against immigrants or social/ethnic minorities. We argue that such parties can succeed over the long term only when they both 1) build on pre-existing nationalist organizations and networks and 2) face a permissive rather than repressive political environment. Those parties develop themselves on a fertile ground of far right wing populism and assume a very narrow to the fascist discourse of the beginning of the 20th century in order to contest the economic and democratic order. By adding factors such as historical legacies, party organization, and interactions between mainstream parties and far-right challengers to the study of radical right parties, we can better understand their divergent trajectories.

Key words: *Extreme right-wing parties, populism, migrants, European Union*

On July 22, 2011, in Norway, one of the safest and most social countries in the world, Andreas Breivik killed 77 persons, of which 69 were attending a socialist youth camp. The worldwide shock was enormous and immediately the problems of the European extreme right, hate speech and xenophobia were exposed, because alongside the massacre Breivik planned and carried out, a shocking fact was the manifesto which he had sent from his computer a few hours before the attacks.

Breivik's manifesto is a glossary of the European and American extreme right, a manifesto of hatred and contempt of the average white male against the world he lives in, where he grew and developed. Breivik is just a visible odious outgrowth of a political current that was born in the twentieth century and was reinforced in Europe and the US after the Cold War. A recurrent question that arises is: How was that possible? Or rather: How is that still possible after everyone has seen the violence and crime excesses of the German extreme right in the years of the German Third Reich

Breivik's Manifesto, named 2038 – A European Declaration of Independence (Breivik, 2011) is – somewhat like Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* – a mix of shared ideas and intellectual repressions against a society that does not recognize its value and a reaction to a contemporary intellectual main stream. Added to all these, an urban guerrilla manual, which he unfortunately put into practice shortly after publishing it. It is the work of a mentally disturbed person – quickly said the most – even though later, during the trial, forensic psychiatrists proved that Andreas Breivik was fully in his mental capabilities when he accomplished both the Oslo and Utoya island massacres.

The Breivik's manifesto would not probably have aroused any interest if it had not been followed by a mass murder, driven by the vision exposed in his paper. And it wouldn't have been interesting because this type of radical manifestos became, sadly, extremely common in the current political scene, which should really put us on guard; because Breivik is not the only one to expose radical ideas against the contemporary society and political left, and is not even the only one to commit murders. He just committed the greatest one of the twenty-first century, but his "patriot" comrades from Germany also killed Arab and Turkish immigrants in the name of the White Man domination [Breivik, 2011]. Moreover, as seen later, Breivik and Beate Zschape – a member of the National Socialist Structure who was involved in the killing of ten immigrants in Germany – were in contact, writing letters to each other. This shows that the extreme right phenomena became European ones, interconnected, ideologically founded on hatred and murder, on the contempt towards tolerance and humanism.

For decades, the European extreme right proffers the same theses and principles, many of them linked to the ones in the US, regarding the racial domination of the White Man over all other races, with strong xenophobic and anti-immigration accents. But the groups which were supporting these thesis were, until recently, marginal and without a major political relevance. Nor these could have had a social ascendant as the culture of civilised world was based, after the 60's, on the principles of a political correctness that prevented any type of hate speech, formal discrimination and that proposed a cultural model of social tolerance on all levels:

gender, religion, race. And this type of political correctness was based on the Enlightenment and Human Rights philosophy, which allows a fair competition with rational arguments in the public debate on ideas and not on prejudices of differences. This is the basis on which the twenty-first century democracy was desired to be built, and as Fukuyama shows [Fukuyama, 1994], this desideratum seemed very possible once the communism disappeared as the main ideological competitor to the Western political liberalism.

In general, the reaction of right wing ideologies to political correctness was massive, especially after the fall of communism, considered being a new type of soft totalitarianism. Therefore, the Christian conservatives movements – across the US and Europe – reacted extremely violently to this new ideology, considering it a new form of Marxism and an attempt of the left to stabilize the bourgeois society, society which just had won the war against the atheistic communism. Of course, it must be also said that certain left radicalisms, rather obsolete, generated a reaction against political correctness, which began to be fetishized and to be itself intolerant and incapable of a real dialogue, regardless the already sedimented common ideas.

The victory over communism as the apparent economic growth determined by globalization, generated an ideological speech opposite to the political left, based on Enlightenment and Human rights, on equality, individual freedom and equal opportunities principles. Losing its opponent – the soviet communism – the western democracies which until then defined themselves in contrast with it, lost their sense of identity and aims. They do not know anymore what they are and where they are heading to. What seemed to be a given fact before, is questioned now. Without the worldwide communism external pressure, democracy and liberty seem to get internally atrophied in western capitalist countries. Citizens feel that a world order died without another being born, and do not even know which way to search for a new order.

Unfortunately, a great part of the political left – especially cherished by the European social democratic parties – became contaminated by the double language of absolute economic freedom and the state's withdrawal from the economic sector, on the background of economic globalization. Thus, the middle class – a quite vague sociological concept – replaced the proletariat from the militant discourse; the parties' main aim was to bring as many people as possible within the middle class (considered the future's class) from the extremes (lower middle class and upper middle class). The social groups that couldn't, for various reasons, succeed entering the middle class– extreme poverty, lack of culture, occupying marginal crafting professions, physical disabilities etc. – were demonized, considered to oppose the progress of globalization.

One who reads nowadays Giddens' "The Third Way", "A third way and its critics" [Giddens, 2001, 2001] or Tony Blair's "A Journey" [Blair, 2011] understands how the 90's and beginning of 2000's social democracy gave up on the principles of syndicalism, equal opportunities and theorized the weakening of economic regulation. Thus, social groups, especially ethnic ones were abandoned, although the concepts of multiculturalism and equality regardless race, religion and gender were not formally abolished. Moreover, closer to nowadays, the leaders of western countries have formally abandoned multiculturalism, either assuming its failure, either by simply blaming it: "In 2010, in Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel

discussed the multiculturalism which has “totally failed”. In the UK, February 2011, Prime Minister David Cameron does exactly the same thing: “in the name of multiculturalism we have encouraged different cultures to live separately. We failed in an attempt to give them the vision of a society they wanted to be part of. We even tolerated those communities to mock our values”. Opinions also shared by the French President, Nicholas Sarkozy: “Multiculturalism has failed in Europe and in France, as we were too preoccupied with the identity of the incomer and not enough with the identity of the country receiving” [Sevilla, 2012].

Abandoned by the withdrawal of the political left parties and by the more and more less economically regulated states, vulnerable groups (especially cultural and gender minorities, but also economic ones) became the targets of the right-wing populisms and nationalisms. Paradoxically or not, the ones who took advantage of the lefties withdrawal were not the conservatives but the right-wing populists, with their ambiguous ideology – which supports globalization’s tough capitalism, but desires the strengthening of the national state and/or the Judeo Christian tradition of the west against the threats of globalization. This ambiguity was overcome after the 9/11, when with the war against terrorism, the ideological and civilizational fault lines became reality and the enemy got a name and a face – the stranger, especially Islam.

Populism is an undeniable reality in nowadays’ Europe, especially after the European parliament elections in May 2014. The question is why it enjoys such a high popularity, having such a public appeal? The answer is nevertheless that populism answers to a deep need, essential to human being. Which is that need? The need of a myth! I.e. the need of a presumed, confirmed in practice and reputed to be a perfect life style, whose achievement offers a superior motivation to human existence and an explanation or orientation to social action.

Trying to catch the essence in defining human being it has been talked about *homo sapiens*, *homo faber*, *homo ludens* or *homo religiosus*. On this frame we can add *homo mythologycus*. It states the truth that the man not only needs to eat, dress and make a living, but also to believe in what he does and what he does/make has a sense, an explanation, a reason and a respectable utility. The myth offers the necessary grounds for such belief. [Cassirer, 2001]

The ideal is for the man to establish realistic and real goals. In principle, no one chases unrealistic goals. Since it cannot precisely be known what is realistic and what is not, the realism of a current project can be measured by reference to a circumstance from the past in which it had been materialised. If once a certain goal was achieved then it is reasonable to think it is achievable once more. If in the past the achievement of a goal brought happiness, then its achievement in the future will have the same consequences. Such logic is not bad. The myth, however, is not a real history, but an imaginary one. It does not describe the past as it was, but as we wanted it to have been.

As aspiration and method of mobilization for self-improvement, the myth has the ability to play a positive role in history. The problem arises when a man confuses myth with history; and this happens when he doesn’t like the reality and therefore refuses to believe in it any longer, preferring to take refuge in illusion, dream, possibility, virtual. Those who do not find their material security, those who are

dissatisfied with the results of concrete actions, seek asylum in symbolic security, hiding in myth.

Most do not expect the dream to come to life. Unfulfillment does not kill the dream or the one who maintains it. A dream can be killed only by another dream. A myth can be destroyed only by another myth. Until then, apparently effective solutions prove themselves, on medium and long term, counterproductive, only rather contributing to remote the goal, than getting close to it. For such outcome, any democratic leader would be under popular sanction. The populist leader is not liable for concrete results, but only for maintaining the comforting feeling that these are achievable. I.e. is practically does not respond at all, or at least it is not accountable towards the masses, through democratic procedures.

The populists and populism can be torn down just through the symbols they created, when they lose control over their evolution or by myths and replacing symbols.

As David C. Art shows, radical right movements were born on the background of this kind of populism [Art, 2011]. In the 90's of the twentieth century, the radical right movements were extremely marginal, without any success to western audience. But once populism became an acknowledged ideological model, with lots of success in the public opinion, the extreme right could also enter (re-enter?) in the social attention. Because, in our opinion, movements like Golden Dawn, Jobbik, the German National Democratic Party (neo Nazi) etc. are extreme formed crafted on the ideological model of populism, sharing the same values and ideals. Only if the populist parties remain declaratively populist, the extremist ones focus on actions, being some sort of assault battalions (SA) of the parties which capture the audience through populism. Even more clearly, the Progress Party in Norway – party which assumes its national xenophobic dimension and calls on to limiting immigration – does not incite to mass murder against immigrants and/or socialists, while as Andrea Breivik will kill calling on the ideological model the Progress Party promotes. In essence, the extreme right ideologies are remarkably similar in every country, having the same set of principles to promote, all relying on what Erich Fromm used to name the *fear of freedom* [Fromm, 1998], although paradoxically these ideologies see themselves as liberating for their peoples and the leader himself a Liberator. Only that the oppressive element they always question is not a direct invader, a colonizer as in the Third-Worldism ideology, but a cultural, diffuse invader, which spreads oppression through extremely new and pernicious cultural objects.

The enemy is the Alter, as a completely foreign and unable to be assimilated Alter [Art, 2011], which through his actions weakens the (national/religious/cultural) Self. Therefore, the extreme right is xenophobic; although xenophobia differs from one society to another, for their specific cultural experiences. That is why the French and North American extreme right is Islamophobic, and the Hungarian and Czech is anti Roma people. All are instinctual – refer to odour, colour etc. – referring to totally different ethnic and religious groups. Roma people in Hungary or Slovakia are predominantly Catholic, as the majority, being identified as enemies through sensations and prejudices. This is not the case of Muslims in Western countries that have been trying to preserve their cultural and religious identity and are blamed for not allowing themselves to be completely assimilated. Bulgaria's case is even more interesting because ATAKA – the Bulgarian extreme right party –

is against the Turkish minority in Bulgaria and due to this Islamophobic – but without linking immigration to Islam. Thus, the Muslim Turks in Bulgaria are rather seen by the ATAKA as Roma people in Hungary or Czech Republic, while there still exists a harsh reaction against the local Roma people, but which are Orthodox Christians.

These variations, even though apparently uniform, show that in extreme right ideologies there are massive differences in seeing the enemy, culturally and religiously. And the error usually made is to assimilate all these currents with Nazism and interwar fascism. There is of course a certain fascination for the uniform, for black colour and for certain Nazi symbols (see the rune on the Golden Dawn emblem). But most extreme right movements reject this lineage, rather embracing the right-wing populist discourse, adding a strong tinge of violent activism.

Even in their work, *Mapping Extreme Right Ideology (An Empirical Geography of the European Extreme Right Ideology)*, Michael Bruter and Sarah Harrison [Bruter, Harrison, 2011] show that it is very hard to prove a lineage of the contemporary extreme right with the interwar Nazism, the current extreme right being the violent (radical) wing of the European right-wing populism.

So which are the characteristics of the European extreme right in general? Firstly, pronounced xenophobia, as Islamophobia or anti immigrationism, or against any other minority of the state within which these types of parties are founded. Xenophobia is sometimes doubled by the development of a white man mythology – European and/or westerner – compared to other cultures. What must be said is that there aren't identified many racial theories, the focus being put not on the idea of race, but on culture and economic development. If there is something imported from the interwar period – taken via the US (according to Bauer Schmitter, 2001) – that is a strong social Darwinism based on the cultural and economic survival of the societies that are able to create and develop versus those societies that are incapable of this and which, if there wasn't the white colonizers' modernization process, would be still stuck in pre-modernity.

Hence the contempt shown to foreigners seeking to immigrate to European societies, but do not want to change their customs and their native cultural model, thus entering into conflict with the majority.

As shown, there are three types of manifest xenophobia, one against immigrants (Muslim or any other religion) considered a threat to social stability and to the majority's dominant culture, another exclusively directed against Muslims considered potential Islamic terrorists and one against local minorities. To these three types is added a new form of xenophobia against intra-communitarian immigrants – Romanian or Bulgarian – considered recent invaders who threaten the welfare and economic security of the western Europeans.

This latter type of xenophobia also shows the reaction of the extreme right to social-assisted groups – social parasites – as named by the Golden Dawn – and the less fortunate. Thus, the radical groups in Greece or Hungary do not only attack immigrants, but even their own citizens considered to be socially and economically useless. This reaction against those on the margins of a society becomes one of the main elements in recognizing extreme right groups who use violence against the poor, regardless their origin.

Therefore it is to be observed an obsession with superiority, similar to vitalism in Italian fascism, adopted from Friederich Nietzsche's philosophy [Conway, 2002]. But such an intellectual lineage is hard to imagine among most of the extreme rights' members. This superiority, which agglutinates within it nationalism and Arianism (not racist in the sense of the concept, but the idea of the white man's superiority above any other cultures); considering Geert Hofstede's theoretical model that assumes there is a great influence of the national cultural model over the individual behaviour. In his most important work "Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind", Hofstede [Hofstede, 1991] claims that organization's cultural model (aka. The nation) dramatically determines the behavioural, labour and entertainment model of one individual, including his basic structure of values and morality. Thus, Hofstede's theoretical model is based on the idea of a national difference between individual values. It must be said that Hofstede did not propose a theoretical model for the political righties, but it was saluted and quickly embraced by the extreme right, recovered even in Breivik's manifesto [Breivik, 2011].

From this theory the extreme right draws its superiority considering that there are major differences between cultures and therefore some cultures are superior to other due to their cultural and values, and the most successful model of modernity and post-modernity was the western capitalist one. This is why the extreme right isn't anymore – as the interwar one – against capitalism, but, alike populism, the advocate for a pure and harsh capitalism, based on a completely social Darwinism, or a rather national (European) Darwinism, to which foreigners aren't allowed to participate in order to do not falsify the competition data.

There is a whole dispute among researchers related to the correlation of the economic crisis and the strengthening of extreme right movements in Europe, and probably both models have their truth. What can be said, on the surface, is that the economic crisis has shaken the consolidated values and lifestyle system of the European societies, generating conflict instead of the previous democratic consensus. Or, for some, this extreme right conflict seemed a formula for turning back to previous values and a re-stabilizing model of the middle class, threatened by the radical groups (considered anarchist) on the left side of the political scene. Calling on the cultural tradition, labour and capitalism – things that have already become ideological mantras in the last thirty years – the extreme right transformed itself into the watchdog of the "disasters" capitalism, theorized by Naomi Klein. Therefore, the extreme right is by definition a reactionary ideology, an ideology that wants to maintain the status-quo of the previous groups, favoured by the capitalist competition. Or these groups must constantly appeal to consensus and unity myths, the saviour hero and to generate the fear of conspiracy and invasion [Klein, 2008].

The expression of the clearest success in spreading the extreme right populism in Europe is what I would call "The Orban effect", even more obvious than Brexit. Elected prime minister in Hungary in 2010 (as president of FIDESZ) with 52.4%, with a conservative nationalist discourse, against corruption and Eurosceptic, Viktor Orban will ally with the extreme right Party Jobbik in order to achieve a parliamentary supermajority. This supermajority of 67% was responsible (under Viktor Orban's political in-offices) for modifying the Constitution in an extreme

nationalist sense that the Hungarian Nation becomes a source of law and the Hungarian language and tradition are considered holy. According to this constitutional change (the preamble of the Constitution is broader than the Constitutional text itself), the citizens of Hungarian origin in the neighbouring states, but not only, but also in the transcontinental Diaspora – such as the US, Canada, Australia – become Hungarian citizens by law. Thus, for the first time since the foundation of the European Union *jus sanguine*, the membership to a nation brings along the citizenship of that state.

Although a clear violation of EU treaties, in which Hungary adhered, the constitutional change was superficially treated by the European Commission (led by EPP, to which FIDESZ belongs) and there were no direct political, administrative or economic consequences. These consequences existed a decade before, when, in Austria, the populist party FPA (Freedom Party of Austria), led by Jorg Haider, came to power. And the FPA and Haider were guilty just for some tinted Nazi statements, without implementing any anti-EU policies. In contrast, a political or economic embargo did not exist in Hungary.

Seeing clearly that the UE is incapable of tough political initiatives, Viktor Orban, the Hungarian prime minister, adopted several anti-European and anti-liberal policies – such as limiting and censuring the independent media, exceeding the European tax quotas (Hungary has a 27% vat, although the European limit is 25%), intervention within the independence of the National Hungarian Bank and then upon the foreign exchange market (re-conversion of private debts in forints) etc. Viktor Orban even named this anti UE offensive: the Liberal Democracy [Budapest Beacon, 26th of July, 2014]. Faced with this offensive, the European Commission reacted without visible results, strengthening the confidence of all populist political forces that the EU's structures are incapable in fighting the extreme right.

As a reaction to this withdrawal of the EU's structures, Central and Eastern Europe and especially the member states of the Visegrad Group, were undertaken by nationalist-paternalist-populist governments. In 2012, Robert Fico, the leader of SMER – socialist declared party, but with strong Eurosceptic and nationalist accents, became prime minister, silently adopting Viktor Orban-like measures, so that in 2014 to become president of Slovakia and in 2016 to install a government in which SMER is directly associated with extreme right parties [Mihálik, 2016]. In the spring of 2015, in Poland, Andrzej Duda was elected president for an anti-European and anti-political elite rhetoric, calling for catholic and national Polish spirit. After the victory (somehow unexpected against the pro-European Komorowski), the party supported the current president (Law and Justice Party, catholic conservative declared party, member of the Alliance of European Conservatives and reformists AECR of the European Parliament) won the elections. And the first head of state Beata Szydlo met (prime minister of PiS of Poland) was, not by chance – Viktor Orban, both ensuring mutual support “against the double standards of the EU”.

Therefore, the “Orban Effect” metastasised throughout Central and Eastern Europe, generating an anti-European and anti-integrationist reaction. But the “Orban Effect” became the most visible in recent years for its position against the migrants (humanitarian and non-humanitarian) generated by the crisis in the Middle East.

The civil war in Syria, the Daesh explosion in Iraq and its spreading within the power vacuum of Syria engaged millions of people into exodus. Religious persecuted

families (Shiites or Christians), political persecuted (against the Damascus regime) or simply for military or strategic reasons, millions of people lost their homes and jobs, or are even more likely to lose their lives due to military confrontations, were forced to leave their home country and seek refugee status, according to Human Rights and Dublin Treaty, for EU. These huge groups of persons – men, women, children, elders and teenagers - have chosen a since recently, eccentric way of migration. This path which included (includes) EU member states and non EU states made their access and support extremely difficult. Leaving Syria or Iraq, via Turkey, these people arrived in Greece, in Europe, then – most often on foot – crossed Macedonia and Serbia for entering the European territory through Hungary. The majority of these migrants didn't want to stay in Hungary, but to transform it in a transit area on their way to Germany or Sweden.

If in the beginning, Hungary had an ambiguous attitude regarding accepting the migrants, giving them the right to transit its territory, without monitoring them, but since the autumn of 2015 the attitude has radically changed. From rising up wired fences on the border with Serbia (threatening to raise up even on the border with Romania – EU member state) till trying to completely block access for migrants. Barring millions of people on its borders, Viktor Orban's Hungary generated a major humanitarian crisis and hence a political crisis. Due to this crisis, Orban created a political platform involving not only the Hungarian citizens but almost the entire European society.

His deeply anti-immigration discourse was based on the idea of European identity, Christian, opposing Islam, and on the security obsession haunting the European society after the Paris attacks in January 2015. Thus, using the populist-nationalist language for its electorate, and a security – oriented populism for the European audience, Viktor Orban collided with European leaders, including those of the European Commission but also national state leaders such as Angela Merkel (German Chancellor) or Francois Hollande (French President), the advocated for a tolerance and inclusion policy of the EU. They proposed introducing mandatory quotas for the integration of migrants in the European Union's member states. Viktor Orban was the first to oppose such a plan, even if Hungary would have rather had benefits – including economic – being considered a country in humanitarian crisis along with Greece. Orban's speech was supported at the time by UK's Prime Minister Cameron, which mixed inter-communitarian migration with extra-communitarian – giving it an economic dimension. For this reason, the immigration issues became a European problem of strategic importance which outline three currents within the European Union, currents which have deepened tensions and, ultimately, blocked the consensual decision making process of the European structures.

The Visegrad group, which Romania also joined, declared that they would reject the mandatory quotas (meanwhile Poland accepted them), thus blocking the process of adopting a decision [Mihálik - Jankóla, 2016]. Therefore, although there formally exists a European agreement regarding relocation quotas, it doesn't actually function. The second current just seemed – in our point of view – indifferent, and the third one gave a tolerance and migrants' integration signal.

We will not go into the tribulations of the European process on this issue. What we wanted to prove is that the "Orban Effect" generated serious European tensions,

threatening the very unity of Europe. Its speech, adopted by more and more populist groups in Central and even Western Europe, emphasises the European Christian identity, the social impact of migrants on the asylum countries and not least, uses this subject to threaten the European construction and its values. The speech about tolerance and humanism of democratic liberal European leaders comes in contrast with a speech about tradition, multiculturalism refusal and firm isolationism.

The tradition to which the extreme right European movements refer is different, depending on its cultural, political, social and religious dimensions of each society within which these groups activate. But if there is a thing which unites them is that the majority achieved a political relevance during or against the socialist governments in Western countries, considered either corrupt or incapable of solving social problems, and which have offered a shelter or even citizenship to migrants from outside the European cultural area, especially those originating from Muslim areas. Thus they were able to combine the attack against migrants with the attack against socialists and implicitly against multiculturalism and political correctness.

This attack was based on the return to what were considered to be traditional, especially religious or national and cultural values [Albrecht, 2013]. Of course, religiously speaking, not all the movements of the extreme right resemble one another. In orthodox states – such as Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus or Romania – we witness a strong call to return to the original, agrarian community, considered profoundly moral and with the “fear of God”, which obediently accepts its history and crisis. This is not the case of catholic or protestant countries, where the religious dimension are much smaller. While in orthodox countries the Church shared the positions against political correctness and multiculturalism, assuming a reactionary position to modernity and post-modernity, in catholic countries the church is not seen as a partner and in protestant countries the relationship is almost inexistent.

But, with or without the support of the Church, the extreme right reacts even more violently against sexual minority groups, feminism and to any other liberty of conscience idea, considered all as manifestation types of the socialist ideas, and thus, of multiculturalism. It is obvious that the extreme right tries to become a reactionary ideology of the middle class to the change produced by shifting to modernity and post-modernity.

And therefore here appears the paradox of the extreme right movements, which although declare fighting for political and moral stability of the middle class, it just attacks the fundamental elements on which it was founded after the Second World War: liberty, dynamism and tolerance.

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