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Toward New Paradigms

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The Formation of European Studies

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ABSTRACT

Academic studies of Europe in the postwar period increasingly focused on aspects of European integration. This development was led by contributions from the social sciences, not the humanities. The article explores a text first written in the 1950s and then revised in the 1960s which provides a strong rationale for the present focus and approach. The text in question is Denys Hay's book *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea*, which argues that Europe's relatively recent historical emergence as a cultural unity makes it fit for a distinctive form of regional studies. Hay conceived such studies as having their centre of gravity in concrete problems that stand in the way of achieving closer European union; concrete problems in, especially, politics, economics, and law, which closer union would raise. What Hay did not think such studies required was a contribution from the humanities. The article explores Hay's argument for that view, and offers a counterargument to the effect that, in light of the fundamental changes in the humanities since the 1960s, European Studies today would significantly benefit from incorporating humanities elements and approaches into its formation.

KEYWORDS

European Studies; social sciences; humanities; Christian humanism; race

With regard to academic scholarship and research that has a central focus on Europe, we might venture two summary observations. Each is striking, but taken together they appear to form two lemmas of a paradox:

> Lemma 1: Conceived as studies of human universality, scholarship in the traditional humanities should not be focused on Europe, but it is.
>
> Lemma 2: Conceived as studies of European integration, academic research on Europe should be focused on Europe, but it is not.

The first lemma results from the fact that studies of humanity shaped by the humanist universalism of the traditional humanities consistently fail to acknowledge that their approach to their object is marked by a pervasive Euronormativity. (A set of assumptions concerning the comparative superiority of "European humanity"). In the name of cultivating (what is called) a "more refined humanity," studies in the traditional humanities actually only pursue studies of historico-cultural Europe: very little interest is shown in

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the ways of life of non-Europeans. "They talked of 'humanity' but instead of taking the whole planet into their field of vision they stared fixedly at a few European countries."[1] Hence Lemma 1.

The second lemma results from the fact that studies of Europe shaped by the empirical methods of the modern social sciences consistently fail to acknowledge that the object of their approach is marked by exactly the same pervasive Euronormativity. In the name of pursuing research into (what is called) "Europe," work in the modern social sciences actually only pursues studies of a geographical region: very little interest is shown in the cultural history through which "European humanity" comes to be. "They refer to 'Europe' as it is understood geographically, as on a map, as if thereby the group of people that live together in this territory could define European humanity."[2] Hence Lemma 2.

If they both hold, the two lemmas together would generate a paradoxical conclusion:

> Paradox: When studies of Europe are not undertaken as studies of Europe, they are, and when they are undertaken as studies of Europe, they are not.

The intention of this article is not to provide a way of escaping this paradox.[3] This is because only the second lemma still holds. What I am calling Euronormativity (what is often called European ethnocentrism or Eurocentrism) has been strongly and widely criticised by humanities scholars since at least the late 1960s. As a result, the humanities have undergone a profound reformation: humanist universalism is no longer its mainstream formation. So the first lemma no longer holds and there is no paradox.[4] We are left, however, with the second lemma and the underlying problems it raises concerning the dominant formation of academic studies of Europe today.

To bring these problems to light, my discussion will take its bearings from another text concerned with the formation of European studies. Written by Denys Hay (1915–1994), formerly Professor of Medieval and Renaissance History at the University of Edinburgh, the text is entitled *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea* and was first published in 1957. It was reprinted in a Revised Edition with a new introduction and a rewritten final chapter in 1968.

There are three connected features of Hay's text that make it particularly relevant to my discussion. First, it was written before academic studies of Europe had settled into its current formation. Second, despite the fact that Hay's disciplinary expertise itself belongs to the humanities, his text aims to show that studies of Europe in the traditional humanities are characterised by the scholarship pattern of the first lemma and so fall short of what is needed in studies of Europe worthy of the name. And third, Hay's text concludes by recommending a formation of regional studies of Europe centred on the social sciences, the very formation that we find dominant today.

Through a critical reading of Hay's book, this article aims to show in turn that studies of Europe centred on the social sciences are characterised by the research pattern of the second lemma and so also fall short of what is needed in studies of Europe worthy of the name. With reference to the reformation of the humanities, the article concludes by recommending a parallel reformation of academic studies of Europe today.

The Name of a Continent

In a survey covering over 2000 years, Denys Hay guides his readers through the history of the idea of Europe, an idea eventually to attain, he says, "a new and practical meaning."[5] This journey takes us to an idea we are familiar with in academic studies of Europe today: an idea of Europe as "a region" associated with "a political programme" aiming at closer union among European nation states (127).

Hay begins by saying that he wants to investigate "the way in which the idea of Europe grew" (vi). His claim then is not only that the word "Europe" came to mean something different over time but that it came to mean something more. Later in this article, I will challenge Hay's conception of this semantic history, but his basic idea is certainly plausible. Hay wants to track the movement through which a regional human population that had not been self-consciously European became so, and became so in its "manners," "politics," and "economics" (xv). According to Hay's semantic growth conception, what takes place here involves the addition of a profoundly existential dimension to an originally exclusively geographical sense of "Europe." Conceived first as a geographical region, which is, Hay says, the only meaning it "cannot avoid" (xvii), the existential addition connects that merely regional meaning to "a way of life" (124). This new connection would then also give to the word "Europe" the supplementary sense of being the heart-attached "symbol" of that way of life (124).

This semantic history is the story related by Hay, and his growth conception implies that this history has a specific shape: from an idea that doesn't matter much to anyone, "Europe," initially "devoid of any meaning beyond the strictly geographical" and altogether "lacking sentiment" (58), the meaning comes over time to be "completely developed" (12) in a "final realization" (123) when, for a section of humanity, it becomes "the unchallenged symbol of the largest human loyalty" (116), a "project" (95) with "a positive meaning" (117), "a practical meaning" connected to "a political programme" (127), a meaning now laden with significant "emotional content."

In the concluding sentence of the original book, a sentence he excised in the Revised Edition, Hay summarised his basic thesis with considerable flair:

> The name of a continent was then to grow into a symbol of a way of life and was to prove, no less than the faith which had preceded it, capable of attracting loyalties and hatreds, missionaries and martyrs. (xiii)

Quite a sentence. Quite a sentence to cut from the end—now included instead in what the publisher's blurb called the "controversial" new introduction, where it was included only as excised.

The Emergence of Regional Studies of Europe

Was the picture of the history of the emerging idea of Europe articulated in that excised final sentence itself retracted by Hay? Not at all. But alert to something in his own final words as he read them again a decade later, Hay catches a change from how things were then to how things are now: the "mood" had changed in those ten years (xiii). The mood of the mid-1950s had, Hay asserts, "provoked" the book's writing, and not just his; books like it were being written by other scholars then too (xiii). And one thing projected or

anticipated by work written in that mood was something Hay would not later regret or retract: it looked for all the world that this development in academic studies would "deepen" sufficiently for Europe to become the focus of new "regional studies" (xiv).

Indeed, something did deepen sufficiently for this to happen. Research in the new field of European Studies really did start to appear just then. But as it did, it seems that Hay began to feel considerable unease about the way that it was threatening to develop—a worrying trajectory that his own original text might itself have got caught up in. His mood in 1957, like that of a number of other scholars of Europe, risked them becoming, he feared, "pure poets," rising "above the mere facts of life" and engaging in the "facile manipulation" of historical fact to suit the heart-stirring mood that was beginning to assail so many (xviii–xix). He came to think his final sentence was an expression of that risk, so he cut it out.

What Hay felt was needed in studies of Europe worthy of the name was something else. What he wanted to see in 1968 was not totally absent in academic work at that time, but it was not predominant: namely, "solid studies" and "a much soberer academic approach" (xix). Hay cites Ernst Haas's *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social and Economic Forces*, from 1958, as a fine example of this soberer approach (xix).

Was it this call for sobriety that made Hay's new introduction "controversial"? It's certainly not friendly to identify someone's best efforts at writing about Europe as facile or as poetry—even if you suppose yourself to have been caught up in the mood that provoked it. But the controversy does not end there.

The Fate of Scholarship in the Humanities

Hay wants to put the nascent development of academic studies of Europe on a path as "regional studies" (xv). He's a specialist in Medieval and Renaissance history, but the way he sees things going in studies of Europe is "dragging him" into wider issues about Europe as a subject for such studies (xv). He wants his contribution both to "erode legends" about Europe's past and counter "new myths" about Europe's present that would take the new "regional studies of Europe" in an unhappy direction (xvii).

The new myths he has in view are conjured up in relation to what he regards as a noble aim and one that he shares: to "promote European unity" (xvii). But if that unity does come about as a practical reality, it should, he insists, be understood as the consequence of "nineteenth century optimism and the severe realities of twentieth-century economic and military power"—and not legends concerning the "transcendental legacies" of "Greece" and "Romania" and "Christendom" that academics were, he felt, still too inclined to eulogise about—or invent (xix). The "soberer," "solid studies" Hay wants to see predominate could still affirm the history his excised final sentence announces. However, for just that reason, they would also affirm "a much more recent origin for the unity of Europe"—and hence would not be obliged to linger too much with history (xix). Secure in the knowledge that Europe's historical emergence as a cultural unity makes it fit now, precisely, for regional studies, such studies can then get on with investigating "concrete problems" that stand in the way, permanently or not, in principle or not, of achieving closer European union, "concrete problems" in "law, finance and politics which closer union would raise" (xix). This is the formation of European Studies that Hay wants to see become mainstream—and, of course, it *has* become mainstream.

What will no longer be so significant to this formation is precisely what, tacitly and never in that name, "regional studies of Europe" had been hitherto and was threatening to remain. Not research that was devoted to soberer matters of contemporary law, economics and politics but scholarship mired in erudition; essays and books exploring high-flying ideas concerned with "the literature, the art and the history" of Europe since antiquity (xiv). In short, what Hay's new introduction tilts at above all is "European scholarship in the humanities" as it had "for centuries" been undertaken (xiv).

Here Hay does have a controversial point to make. European scholarship in the traditional humanities really had not thought of itself as contributing to anything like European Studies, still less to "regional studies." On the contrary, it conceived itself as concerned with universal humanity and not with some merely regional human group and its culture. Historians in the traditional humanities, for example, would not think it their business to explore the history of any particular region except in so far as developments there belonged significantly to an all-humanity-embracing movement of "World history," including within that the universal histories of literature, art, and history (xiv).

And yet Hay was right. In reality, those studies of supposedly universal humanity were only ever seriously concerned with the Greek, Roman and Christian worlds that preceded the more recently appearing modern Europe. "The literature, the art and the history of non-European countries" simply did not figure in this central dimension of "European higher education" (xiv). Indeed, traditional humanities scholars would not even have conceived of themselves as contributing to "European higher education." It was "higher education" simpliciter, education appropriate, in principle, for absolutely anyone: *Studia Humanitatis* or *Literae Humaniores*.

Hay thus shows up the extraordinary belatedness of so much humanities scholarship in the 1950s and early 1960s. Whatever one thinks preceded the modern meaning of "Europe," and I'll come back to that, it is undeniable that the name was now understood as Hay suggests: the regional home and symbol of a distinctive way of life, perhaps (for some) even promising, for the various peoples of Europe, something like a "United States of Europe" to come (xix). The emergence of that idea had not disturbed the sleepwalkers in the traditional humanities, however. They held fast to the idea that their studies were not regional studies at all, but, they believed, studies specialising in the sense of the humanly universal. While Europe had become, in Hay's view, a fitting subject for regional studies—the (not in that name) regional studies of Europe that hitherto had actually been going on for centuries were not, for Hay, the sort of thing that was now needed (in that name). This is a shot across the bows in a culture war. It also gives expression to what I am calling the first of the two lemmas in the paradox of European Studies:

> Lemma 1: Conceived as studies of human universality, scholarship in the traditional humanities should not be focused on Europe, but it is.

Escaping the Past

"It is only since the Second World War," says Hay, that a "self consciousness" began to emerge where European thought turned to conceiving Europe genuinely regionally (xiv). Hay wants the new, more sober studies of Europe to contribute to the development of that postwar self-consciousness—not to get lost in fantasies where

a regional culture imagines itself the head of a universal process of the civilisation of "Man." One of the basic convictions of European humanism, the celebrated humanism of the traditional humanities, is the idea that Europe's culture embodies an exemplary and universalizable model for "Man" conceived as the uniquely rational animal. This kind of approach to studies of Europe was something Hay clearly wanted to rein back. Postwar Europe should become in its self-consciousness what it was anyway fast becoming in reality: one regional culture among others.

There is something overwhelmingly welcome in this effort. And yet these new regional studies of Europe have to confront a peculiarly challenging feature of their research object as a historico-cultural formation. The distinctively European "cultural unity" (120) that should be one comparably regional culture among others came to be such a cultural unity only by way of comparisons through which it absolutely did not conceive itself as one regional culture among others. That is, the very "view of the world" that shaped the "way of life" of the emerging peoples of Europe was not independent from these newly self-conscious Europeans supposing themselves to have attained "superiority" over all others, all non-Europeans (127).

It is not obvious that the evaluative assessments of "qualitative differences" (105) between Europeans and others that gave rise to the sense of Europe's comprising a distinctive cultural unity would or could simply disappear just because Europe had become self-consciously regional. On the contrary, one might suppose. In any case, there is no question that what gave it the "sense of cultural unity" that it came to have as a region, was Europe emerging for itself as "*the sole home*" of those civilisational attributes "which distinguish man from brute creation" (121; emphasis mine). Humanist metaphysics, metaphysics as such, profoundly informs this European self-understanding. The metaphysics of the European West has its ground in a conception of the human that affirms a radical break between "Man" (the uniquely rational animal) and brute (non-rational) animals. This conception has also underpinned the sense of European comparative cultural superiority in relation to this universally human condition. Of all rational creatures, "we, the Europeans" are, we have liked to think, the most rationally advanced, the most civilised, the least beastly of all.

On Hay's own account, Europeans supposing themselves superior to non-Europeans was decisive to the formation of the modern cultural unity that called itself European (120). That sense of the culture of Europe as the *avant-garde* in the progress of "Man" towards full rational perfection was hardwired into the humanism of the traditional humanities too—and Hay rightly recoils from it. But it was not only hardwired into that. It was hardwired into Europe's modern cultural identity quite generally, and that is a different order of problem for academic studies that have their focus on specifically European places. The attained coherence of Europe as a regional unity had been historically inseparable from a European conviction concerning its overall cultural superiority. It is not obvious that a project "promoting European unity" can escape that historically constitutive condition.

The question is clear if troubling. Can the historico-cultural content that had given to "Europe" a meaning that would make it, for Europeans, "the unchallenged symbol of the largest human loyalty" (116), be inherited without thereby inheriting its sense of its own cultural supremacy?

'A Soft Landing after Empire'

While Hay's text foregrounds the cultural supremacism internal to the emerging modern idea of Europe, it has to be said that he does not seem overly troubled by it. Perhaps he thought that resolutely facing the future, "promoting European unity" in postwar Europe through the development of "a political programme" aiming at "closer union" (xix), was the best way, perhaps the only way, of escaping the excesses, both at home and abroad, of Europe's modern formation, providing Europe today with "a soft landing after empire," as Timothy Snyder would later put it.[6]

I think this kind of argument can be found in Hay's text, and especially in his discussion of the idea that a regional identity only became the self-conscious reality for Europeans "since the Second World War" (xiv). Reviewing that discussion, we can see that Hay's conception of this postwar development has just the dual character that a "soft landing" thesis would suggest, combining the loss of an external colonial empire project with a nascent project of internal regional integration.

On the one hand, for Hay, it is not simply the Second World War that would mark a turning point for a postwar European self-consciousness. What made scholarship in the traditional humanities blind to the fact that it was and had "for centuries" already been "regional studies of Europe" will have been connected to Europe's centuries-long "world-wide activities"—the world-wide-isation (*mondialisation*) of the European world that took place through Europe's spreading out; through the conquest and subjection of "vast colonial territories" in Africa, Asia and the Americas that got underway in the fifteenth century. The turning point for a becoming-regional European self-consciousness would not then lie simply with the end of the War as such, but with the end of the era of European world-wide-colonisation, the end of European power and influence "penetrating every part of the globe" by colonial means (xv). The retrenchment and regionalisation that belongs to Europe's postwar condition was thus a consequence, in part, of a condition where "the continent [had been] shorn of its former world importance" (127).

On the other hand, as a world war of European origin, Hay conceives the Second World War as having a significance of its own too. It put on show, once again, the deep divisions within Europe, and hence demonstrated that it remained far from attaining the "closer union" that the modern idea of European cultural unity promised, and which Hay felt could and should become a practical reality (xix). Hay thus regards the experience of that European dividedness as running up against and in this way bringing to "self-consciousness" the practical prospect of regional unity that had emerged when "Europe" finally emerged as *the* name through which, in Winston Churchill's words, "*we* can express our purpose in a single word" (xvii n. 1; emphasis in original). European unity is thus promised as soon as the idea of Europe emerges in its modern form. And, for Hay, the experience of profound and ongoing European disunity simply highlights the fact that the regional coherence expressed by what he conceives as the fully developed, fully grown "Europe" idea had yet to become actual. Since the War, however, something new was stirring: the "practical meaning" of that idea of European unity was being elaborated by "a political programme" now actually being developed (127).

So the new European self-consciousness that emerges after the Second World War has a double significance: it registers the more or less simultaneous ending of an era of European world imperialism (world centrality), and the beginning of an era of European

regional integration (regional retrenchment). And then our question becomes this: Can Europe's postwar retrenchment into regionality belong to a movement that overcomes the supremacist and missionary content that had made its "cultural unity" possible hitherto?

European Legacies

I believe it can.[7] But nothing in Hay's text suggests it can. "Transcendental legacies" of Europe's supremacist and missionary past leave their mark on his vision of Europe's contemporary regional identity. While the key dimensions of this are not explicitly thematised by Hay, and might be missed in his text, they are there to be read. An anonymous review of Hay's book on the European Parliament's website collection "100 Books on Europe to Remember" catches sight of them when it presents Hay ascribing modern Europe's emergence to "a growing feeling of belonging—an almost racial feeling—amongst those in Christendom."[8]

An affirmation of a specifically European racial identity is indisputably present in Hay's text, but the "almost" in the "100 Books" summary is not inappropriate. The Europe that Hay officially invites his European readers to feel they belong to is not (explicitly) conceived with a racial sense at all, still less with a sense of racial superiority—though, of course, racist extremists will have wanted to make a case for that idea. Hay himself only ever refers to Europe as a "cultural" unity (120, 127), and when he takes note of Europeans affirming Europe's unrivalled "superiority," it relates then (still problematically no doubt) to its "climate" (3), its "politics" (105), and its "morality" (127). Moreover, when race *is* proposed as central to an understanding of what is properly European, Hay is not content with the conception of the unity of Europe's population that it promotes: race-based politics did not, he complains, lead to "European unification" (xvi). I will come back to that idea.

Regarding the other feature in the "100 Books" summary, the reference to Christendom, we should also notice that the Europe that Hay officially invites his European readers to feel they belong to today is not (explicitly) conceived by him as caught up with a sense of human spiritual advance either—though, of course, many Christians will have wanted to make a case for that idea. Moreover, when Western Christianity is proposed as central to an understanding of what is properly European, Hay is not content with the conception of the unity of Europe's population that it promotes: faith-based politics did not, he complains, "further 'Europe'" (xv). I will come back to that idea too.

Hay understandably wants to keep his distance from the politics of race and faith, even if only on the rather weak grounds of their limited capacity practically to promote European unity. But things are not so simple. We should follow the path of Hay's text in relation to a conception of European cultural identity that is marked by both a racial feeling and the legacy of Christendom.

Race and Faith

The summary in the "100 Books" review flirts with the facile manipulation of textual fact, but it is not simply a misreading. Hay's text is haunted by the awareness that Europe's

modern idea is bound up with a conviction among Europeans of an existing racial unity and of "qualitative differences between Europe and the other continents" (105). Moreover, this racial awareness is presented by Hay as a universal feature of the self-consciousness of "all Europeans." "All Europeans," Hay states without more ado, have regarded "Black men" and "yellow men" as "characteristically different" to "White men" (xv). Europeans have been at one on that, he thinks, even if, in his view, this self-consciousness "did little for the coherence of the Continent" since it "did not lead to the unification of Europe" (xvi). True enough—but it cannot be ignored that it did lead to attempts to achieve that, however unagreeable those attempts were. Furthermore, one should ask how far those who recoiled from its most extreme manifestations were free of its uniting force. It is impossible not to wonder whether a "racial feeling" is quietly internal to the "sense of unity" of this regional "all," if "*all*" regard "Black men" and "yellow men" as "characteristically different" to "White men" (xv).

Attempts to construct the contemporary cultural unity of Europe on the foundation of an earlier religious unity have also been made. As I have indicated, Hay regards those attempts as having done little to "further 'Europe'" as a practical unity either (xv), and efforts to recover or reassert a Europe-wide foundation for Europe in Roman Latinity is not something he endorses. Like race-based politics, and closely bound up with them, such efforts are positioned by Hay as characteristic, especially, of war-provoking prewar attitudes rather than peace-promoting postwar efforts (xiv). Hay quotes with evident contempt a British diplomat, Sir Charles Petrie, speaking at an infamous Volta conference on Europe, held in Rome in 1932. The conference was notable for the participation of a number of fascist sympathisers, among whom Petrie himself can be included. Here is Petrie, cited by Hay:

> What are those old Roman virtues that we must regain if we are to survive? They are religion, discipline and the family. Here in Italy they have been successfully reasserted by the Fascist regime, and it is to Signor Mussolini that an ever-increasing number of people are looking as the saviour who will show them the way to overcome the barbarians, who are no longer at the frontiers of civilisation, but are in our very midst. In fine, European civilization is one: and it is one because it is fundamentally Latin. (xiv n. 3)

Hay does not dispute the idea that "European civilization is one," but he does not want to go along with Petrie.

On the other hand, it is not obvious that he has anywhere else to go. His own history stresses the profound significance of the reformation schism in Western Christianity on European history. The "division in the unity of Christendom" had, he says, a powerful role in giving rise to an emerging idea of a Europe that might yet overcome divisions (57). And Latin Christendom, home of the "universal church," is fundamental here for Hay since his central, and I think unimpeachable, historical thesis is that, as a result of the fact that Western Christendom's territorial limits were conceived by Christian scholars as also Europe's, a movement could get underway where the latter came to "usurp" the weakened unity of the former, and not merely territorially. Over time the idea of the one simply "merged" with the idea of the other (109).

We should be clear about the idea of Europe that emerges in this merger. In a cultural context marked by the Christian appropriation of Greek metaphysics, "to be a Christian" had meant to possess "full humanity in opposition to the brute beasts"

(56). And it was not only the brute beasts. "Barbarians" too were excluded from full humanity because "the barbarians … live in a brutish fashion" (33). The humanism central to the traditional humanities is already fully installed here. But not only in the traditional humanities: it is fully installed everywhere in Europe, at the heart of the emerging idea of Europe itself. And it stays fully installed in European conceptions, religious or secular, of a universal history of human perfectibility and progress that would announce the future attainment of a civilised condition of "full humanity" for all humanity, however beastly non-Europeans (or even some Europeans "in our very midst") may currently be. For now, however, "Europe" is "the sole home" of anything like that attained condition (121). In short, the idea that Hay wants to affirm, namely, that "European civilization is one," is explained on his own account by the fact that it was originally forged by the dominance of a power that was "fundamentally Latin"—which means both spatially and spiritually coming from the world of "the Greeks and the Christians" (14).

The understanding of the world and the significance of our (human) lives that characterised the emerging Europe as it merged with the usurped Christendom did not fall from a tree. Indeed, Hay will have provided solid evidence for the idea that the Europe which made its way with that emergence belongs squarely within what Jacques Derrida calls "the epoch of Christian creationism … when it appropriates the resources of Greek conceptuality."[9] Hay makes almost nothing of such "transcendental legacies" in his account of what he represents as the "growing" sense of "Europe," deliberately avoiding them as we have seen. And yet even the "nineteenth century optimism" (xix) that he admits as significant to postwar developments carries the world in which modern Europe emerged into our time. For the "nineteenth century optimism" that Hay adverts to was itself an explicitly and profoundly *Christian* optimism. In a recent study of modern political history, the intellectual historian Samuel Moyn puts it very well. Recalling the cast of mind of what he calls "the Christianity of the sunnier liberalism [in the] nineteenth century," he states:

> Nineteenth-century seers of progress … regularly stressed the Christian lineages of their commitment to meaning in history. They understood that perfectibility and progress were legacies of an old tradition of Christian reform. And they were right to do so, since historicism, the assumption that history is a forum of opportunity for individual and collective agency and self-assertion, has undeniable roots in Christian belief and practice.[10]

Christendom, the place that appears there where Christian creationism appropriates Greek conceptual resources, begat European places—and haunts them, even today.

Pictures of Europe

Counting him among those "devotees of European union" keener on myth than on sober fact, Hay gently mocks Churchill for finding "irritating" the modern geographers' concepts that had rendered visible "the continent of Europe" on a map for the first time (xvii). They did so only to tell us, Churchill complains, that what "at school we learnt" is a continent isn't one (xvii n. 1). Hay finds Churchill as "impatient" with geographers as he was with historians: he didn't like his "grander legends" eroded (xvii). For his part, Churchill didn't think what he learnt at school was a legend: "I still believe it to be true" (xvii n. 1).

Hay begs to differ. On the other hand, in this squabble between a statesman and a scholar who nevertheless agree in their "aims" (xix), a profound anachronism in Hay's semantic "growth" model becomes evident. Strictly speaking, "strictly geographical" concepts cannot be said to have supplied the original meaning of "Europe," as Hay insists (58), because they did not supply them at all. As he puts it himself at one point, prior to the emergence of modern geographical sciences in the sixteenth century, people lived in "a mapless world" (xxiii). That certainly overstates it, but before the sixteenth century the common understanding of the *oecumene* or *terra* on which our lives are led was indeed rendered visually by map-like pictures of a completely different sort. We should attend to Hay's discussion of these pictures. Not only does that discussion show up the anachronistic character of his own conception of an originally "strictly geographical" meaning of "Europe" but it provides crucial documentary evidence for the opposite. From the very beginning, "the name of a continent" was, as Churchill knew better, already "a symbol of a way of life," and it is only more recently that we see the emergence of a thinner, "strictly geographical" meaning.

Introducing the graphic images that he will call the "traditional picture" (95), Hay reflects, first, on the tripartite division of the world found in the Bible. The names of these three parts are the names of three men or boys: the sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—following their dispersion after the Flood. Hay quotes the verses from Genesis 9:1 and 9:17 that concern these three at length, but we can make do with a short extract:

> And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.
>
> God shall enlarge Japheth [ליפת יפת or yapet li yapet], and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. (8)

Some 400 years into Christian-ecclesial history, the North African Latin-speaking Roman Neoplatonist Christian thinker St. Augustine presented a reading of the Biblical story of Noah's sons that construed it as a piece of prophetic history, an allegory. For example, the Genesis narrative says that Japheth "shall dwell in the tents of Shem." The Augustinian idea is that from the descendants of Shem, namely the Jews, the Messiah will be born. In the tents of Shem, that is from the dwelling place of the Jews, the peoples descending from Japheth, namely the Christians, will be "enlarged" or, as we might more naturally say today, "spread out." Indeed, "Japheth" literally means "enlarged" or "spread out": *yapet li yapet*.

Having introduced the Biblical tripartite division of the world, Hay then passes to a second source text for the understanding of the *oecumene* or *terra* of our lives that Europe will inherit, this time from the Greek writer Herodotus, the writer often regarded as the father of history writing. Hay notes that Herodotus was "puzzled" by what he found (2); puzzled since he (Herodotus) already did not know, why the world—"which is one"—was considered to consist of three parts, and why the parts bore the names of three women or girls: Asia, Libya, and Europa. From around the second century BCE the part of the world that Herodotus called "Libya" was renamed (by the Romans) "Africa" (2).

And then a remarkable moment, a perfect illustration of the Greco-Christian synthesis that Derrida identifies as fundamental to the epoch we still inhabit. In a Medieval manuscript that was a copy of an earlier text, a now lost early-seventh-century manuscript by

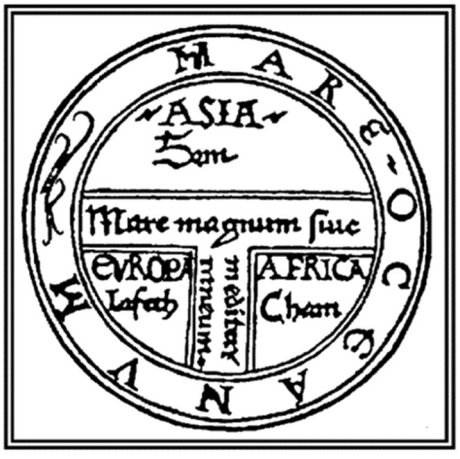

Figure 1. The Traditional Picture.

Isidore, Bishop of Seville (602–632), a map-like picture was found. The crucial thing about this world picture is that, as a visual projection, it is entirely in accordance with the description of the world provided by St Augustine some 200 years earlier (354–430). The Biblical names are there, naming the parts of the world. However, and here's the fascinating thing, it incorporates the Greek names too. In this picture Europe is the space of Japheth's spreading out. The graphic image that Hay calls "the traditional picture" (Plate 1b; xxv) is reproduced here (Figure 1).

This is a representation that takes Japheth to Europe. Christendom is thus seen as radiating from the world of "the Gentiles"; it is the world formed predominantly from the interplay or synthesis of the "the Greeks and the Christians" (14).

Right. But note, this means that "Europe" here is already not conceived in a merely geographical way. On the contrary, as it appears in the traditional picture, Europe carries the significance of being Japheth's part of the world, the world of the Gentiles.

Wanting the traditional picture to exhibit a merely geographical idea of Europe, Hay strains credulity to suggest that the picture's Christian character is nowhere visible in it: "there is no elaboration here of the notion that the descendants of Japheth were to be the Christian races" (54). This is not plausible. That specifically Christian elaboration of the old testimony was already there in Isidore's picture visualising St Augustine's interpretation of the Hebrew Bible as prophetic Christian history. It went without saying that the place from which this picture of the world emanates belongs to just one part of the picture. It's a picture from our place, the place of the Gentiles, the people of the Bible and the Greeks, from our Christian places, from Christendom.

It is from this region that the world-regionalisation we still employ today becomes imprinted on the world. And that region had always seen its own destiny in spreading out, enlarged right across that projected whole. "Christendom being potentially universal" (xvi)—tied to the "universal mission of Christianity" (27), a truly "global mission" (30)—meant that one could envisage *in* the traditional picture the spectre of a new picture to come: one could "envisage a whole world that might be Christian" (xvi). Hay too recalls that Japheth means "enlarged" (12).

Hay recognises the meaning of a "universal church" (37) and recognises too that in "using 'Europe'" thirteenth- and fourteenth-century authors "intended something akin to . . . 'Christendom'" (59). He's right. Yet he does not stop for one second to wonder in his story of a supposedly merely geographical term growing into an affectively charged one whether the world-wide activities of "diplomacy, war and trade" (xv) that would become the hallmark of the fully emerged Europe are configured in a world-widing or globalising way precisely because they inherit the centuries-long history of a potentially world-wide Christendom. But we really cannot get away from it.

Moreover, the traditional picture does not only give us a richly emotive sense of "Europe." In what was to become what Hay acknowledges to be a "fearful tradition" (12), it is painful to read in the Biblical text that it was God's wish that Canaan, the son of Ham, the African, shall be Japheth's servant. Leaving the dwelling place of Shem behind him, and with the son of Ham as his recognised subaltern, "God shall enlarge Japheth." The Isidore copy includes an inscription at the bottom: "Lo: thus did the sons of Noah divide the world after the Flood." Fine. But it was not a spatial division without "qualitative differences": this traditional picture is a traditional Christian picture, and hence a projection from Japheth's world, imprinting a completely other sort of "political geography," another way of introducing a visual representation of the *oecumene* or *terra* of our lives into our understanding of our lives—endowing the "surface" on which we live with a sense that was, *pace* Hay, already replete with a rich traditional meaning, and for non-Europeans it would be a fearful one.

Pictures of Europa

The modern sense of an unrivalled European superiority is not, we should note, a late arrival to the sense of "Europe" either. On the contrary, and again plainly at odds with his "growth" story, Hay acknowledges that in writings from antiquity, through Renaissance humanism and beyond there have hitherto always been expressions of "awareness of the qualitative difference between Europe and the other continents," "qualitative differences" that have hitherto always been assessed in evaluative terms: in terms of Europe's "superiority" and the "inferiority" of other places (105).

Hay's framing of Europe's postwar regionality cannot disentangle itself from this history by fiat. And it does not. He wants to relate the history of an idea that grows to acquire an affective meaning that it originally lacked. But he can't deny or deny for long that it comes down to us pre-laden with just such meaning, especially through the Christian conception of the story of Japheth's finding a home, first, in Europe. The Greek name had its place preserved in Christendom in the traditional picture. That picture morphed gradually into the cartography of geographical science as Christian scholars (in Christendom) themselves morphed seamlessly into secular scientists (in Europe); the visual representation of the region thereby increasingly informed (finally) by "strictly geographical" concepts, even if Europe's now secular scientists nevertheless kept "instinctively" to the old Christian limits.[11]

The traditional picture undermines Hay's claim that, prior to its modern emergence, "Europe" was "devoid of any meaning beyond the strictly geographical" (58). Moreover, even if one tried to maintain that, as a Greek name, "Europe" is separable from its later Christianised content, and stressed the pre-Christian,

exclusively Greek resources alone, it would still be impossible to maintain that the name "Europe" was originally a "strictly geographical" expression. There is, after all, a "maiden" who, at the origin of it all, gave her name to it (1). How much richer can the name of a place be than to be connected from its origin to a myth of its origin?

It is in relation to the myth of Europa that Hay's conception of the semantic poverty at the origin of "Europe" ("for neither Greeks nor Romans did 'Europe' mean much" [4]) is at its weakest, and all the more so because there is, with that myth, an emotive and meaning-enriching sense of the origin of "Europe" that is staring him in the face in every troubling abduction scene that he recalls, and which he just doesn't (want to) see. At the origin is not an original "strictly geographical" sense but the mythical representation of a rupture with the origin.

It is with this thought that a very different reading of the idea of Europe comes to the fore. And it is one that really can take us beyond the cultural supremacism that had forged its modern meaning. Right from the beginning, the only settled condition for what has called itself (to be) "Europe" is the experience of the possibility of making a break with every settled condition. Literary and artistic representations of Europa's abduction will have contributed to the marking of "Europe" in this respect too. Not by what Hay absurdly calls the "charming intimacy" of homely domesticity, where (goodness me) contemporary images of "the Rape of Europa … might decorate the boudoir," but, as Ovid had made clear, by the profoundly anxious resolve that belongs to the departure (without horizon of return) from one's native home and heading off who knows where.

At the origin of Europe we find then the idea of the departure-from-the-origin. And with that we also find the idea of a break with nativism. Indeed, we see the chance for a distinctively European calling: the call for a way to be in which people are connected, above all, by "*elective affinities*," by a feeling of "being at home" that, however natural it may be experienced, is not simply involuntary, and hence, let's be clear, has nothing whatsoever to do with "today's [zoological] belief in race."[12]

Reformation in the Humanities

It is, in fact, only with the emergence of modern Europe that the *oecumene* or *terra* of our lives begins to be tied to "strictly geographical" concepts. This is not to suggest that the Europe that emerges in our time has an exclusively, still less a determinately, geographical meaning—or that it has lost its old ties to Christendom. Not at all. Indeed, despite himself, what Hay really shows is that the European world emerges with an understanding of the world and history in which Europe is now as Christendom was then: the (supposedly) radiating centre of human progress, the apogee of civilised and rational existence. Modern Europe inherited the "transcendental legacies" of a Greco-Christian world that saw its destiny in attained world-wide-isation. Retrenchment "since the Second World War" led to a shrinking back from the old colonial form of that spreading out, but it was not the end of that vision. The promise of the Christian religious character of a globally attained universality was increasingly conceived in terms of the exemplary rational character of a regionally attained pacific union; the Euronormativity of its missionary and colonial modernity still readable in "soft landing" conceptions of contemporary Europe as, precisely, a normative power.

Hay is right to say that "the decade after the War" was a turning point. The missionary and colonial model of European world-wide-isation became increasingly visible, and increasingly unacceptable, as it always had been for non-Europeans. It was becoming clear too that what the dinosaurs in the traditional humanities were still doing just "made explicit" what had been tacitly the case "for centuries" (xiv): the humanism, the presumed universalism of the traditional humanities was European through and through. It was, in fact, precisely the world of the "White man" that these European humanists studied. It was the ethnocentric and androcentric study of "Dead White European Males," as we might now say, in light of more recent studies . . . in the humanities.

And there's the rub. It is undeniable that, in Europe, it has primarily been scholarship in the humanities, and first in that respect, scholarship in philosophy, that has taken up the challenge of cultivating a very critical attitude towards Europe's long-dominant humanist metaphysics. For example, first published in French just a year before Hay's Revised Edition, Derrida's groundbreaking text *Of Grammatology* announced in its opening sentences the intention to "focus attention on the *ethnocentrism*" that has everywhere marked the "*the history of (the only) metaphysics*";[13] a Western metaphysical tradition in which "Europe," conceived as the uniquely philosophical culture, is supposed to be inseparable from the attainment for "Man," conceived as the uniquely rational animal, of a fundamentally more rational, less beastly condition, human life itself transformed by humanistic erudition—*ex-rudis*.

From around the last third of the twentieth century, critically reflecting on the presumed universalism of the humanities became *the* central theme of research in the humanities. And the critical attitude that was widely cultivated there is now, belatedly, slowly making its way back into the regional studies of Europe that Hay, in his time, had not unreasonably feared might suffer from that connection. But today things have changed. Indeed, today it is the humanities that, in this respect, lead the way. In a scathing assessment of "the existing literature on the EU and European integration" in his controversial introduction to *Eurowhiteness*, Hans Kundnani notes that the question of "the obvious connections between the terms 'European' and 'White', has received surprisingly little attention."[14] Indeed.

Those who have called themselves "Europeans" have barely begun to think better or recover themselves better in this respect—especially considering that some of the most vehement anti-racists in Europe have exactly the same biologistic conception of race as the race extremists, still dividing humans, as Hay does too, along skin-and-body defined lines, "Black men," "White men," etc., without, for example, qualifying any of that with the rider that we are speaking of human beings who have been and still are racialised in this specifically biologistic way.

We are a long way from elaborating a thought of race in Europe (and not only in Europe) that would free it from being linked to what is perceptible in human corpses—the endless production of which has been a totally non-coincidental but terrifyingly regular activity of biologistic racists of European origin. Some may regard any thought of race as a line of thought not to take. I'm not sure. But it is undeniable that, alongside its Christian universalism, there was a genuinely fearful biologistic racial essentialism at the root of modern European conceptions of "qualitative differences" to others. Whether it includes a reconceptualised understanding of race, there is no doubt that coming to terms with the legacy of Europe's missionary and colonial culture, a European "way of life" that

condemned the lives of so many non-Europeans to violence, humiliation and death, inheriting that difficult legacy, remains a crucial task still ahead of us.[15]

The postwar, post-Empire world gave academics in the social sciences to understand that their studies of Europe could attain to a "purely European" regional significance, if still global in outlook (xv). But what has been "purely European" hitherto is a cultural unity that is profoundly marked by what I am calling its Euronormativity; a "view of the world" that places European humanity, the world of the "White man," as the exemplary model, the most advanced point in human cultural and civilisational progress.

This Euronormative legacy has not gone away. Today, however, we are beginning to see that when modern social sciences focus on Europe, they are too often still sleepwalking with respect to the most place-determining aspects of the very object of their studies: their eyes shut to the fact that what they are studying is what has called itself (to be) "Europe"—with all its memories. Without due attention to its Euronormative content, however, what's left to study is a merely residual sense: "Europe" as it is understood by political geography, as on a map, and integration as understood in relation to concrete problems that closer union raises. It is a thinned-out Europe. And as a result, we encounter the second lemma in the paradox of European Studies:

> Lemma 2: Conceived as studies of European integration, academic research on Europe should be focused on Europe, but it is not.

Unsettling European Studies

If the two lemmas were still intact, they would jointly give rise to a paradoxical conclusion. With their eyes shut to their own limits, the paradox of European Studies would be that when studies of Europe are not undertaken as studies of Europe, they are, and when they are undertaken as studies of Europe, they are not.

But the two lemmas are not both intact. Contemporary research in the humanities has not remained with its eyes shut. Indeed, research in the humanities today is sharply aware that the traditional humanistic studies of human universality really were, as Hay saw too, studies of Europe. What we need then is not a solution to the paradox. Rather, with only the second lemma intact, what is needed are sustained interventions on that front: practical opportunities, in academic events and publications, critically to draw in (not download!) already reformed humanities research on Europe into the mainstream of academic discussions of Europe today—and in this way to carry that mainstream towards a new self-consciousness, beyond its presently settled condition and formation.

As Derrida reminds us, it's just the thing about transcendental legacies that even if we wanted to forget them, we can't—"since they do not forget us."[16] "We, the Europeans," do not have or receive the legacies that we inherit. We *are* that inheritance. "Thou art a scholar. Speak to it, Horatio."

Notes

1. Spengler, *The Hour of Decision*, 150.
2. Husserl, "The Vienna Lecture," 27.
3. We can get a rough picture of the research patterns that I am exploring in this article by considering each of the lemmas in relation to the concept of the "home" or "*Heimat*." The first

lemma concerns studies of a culture conducted without due regard to its *territorial* home; the second concerns studies of a territory conducted without due regard to its home *culture*. I do not mean to suggest that studies of the second type are merely exercises in physical geography. No, at issue here are empirical studies of an aggregate of human beings (each with their personal identities, values, community feelings, opinions, preferences and wishes) who are currently present at hand in a particular spatial region of the global totality. While this article does not pretend to give the last word (barely a first word) on what *studies of Europe that really are studies of Europe* should look like, my basic claim is that the research patterns of each type fall short of what one might reasonably expect from first-rate studies of what, today, remains of a distinctively European "*Heimat*"—where *Heimat* refers here to an original unity of place and life that belongs to human beings living in a condition of at least some degree of a *situated existence*. I say a little more about this in note 15.

4. To say that the reformation in the humanities means that the first lemma no longer holds should not be taken to suggest that the humanities today are now miraculously problem-free. The normative consensus of research in the humanities in the European West today is that "Euronormativity" or "Eurocentrism" is unacceptable, intolerable. I do not demur from that. However, I want to add that the anti-Eurocentric recoil that marks so much of that contemporary consensus today is *also* intolerable. We need to take seriously that anti-Eurocentrism in the European West is just as problematic as the Eurocentrism it recoils from. I am with Derrida here in thinking that "we *today* no longer want either Eurocentrism or anti-Eurocentrism" (Derrida, *The Other Heading*, 13, emphasis in original. See also Glendinning, *Europe, Part 1*, 6–9; and Glendinning, *Europe, Part 2*, 33–37). This is not a merely theoretical issue or an issue for "theory." As Richard Rorty warned as long ago as 1998, the relentless critique of the European West in the mainstream of the contemporary humanities is potentially catastrophic, leaving the future of democracy in peril. Without the cultural ballast provided by the commitment of intellectuals to the ethos of their own societies, public confidence can simply melt away—and then people wind up "looking for a strongman" instead (Rorty, *Achieving Our Country*, 89–90).
5. Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea*, 127. Hereafter page numbers are cited in the text.
6. Snyder, "Dangerous Myth."
7. As we shall see, the view I defend takes its bearings from what I consider to be the only indisputable feature of Europe's own origin myth, namely, *the idea of a traumatic break with the origin*. It is this feature—that the origin of Europe is inseparable from the idea and experience of a break with the origin—that enables us to affirm the possibility of a break with the supremacist and missionary content that the "Europe" name has carried hitherto. Indeed, the possibility of breaking with every ethno-nativism is the only "native" characteristic of what has called itself (to be) "European" humanity: it is "born" with it. On the other hand, as the content of a cultural legacy of critique as *self-critique*, this European ethos too can be lost. Who's to say that this is not exactly what we see happening in the European West today?
8. European Parliament, "100 Books on Europe to Remember."
9. Derrida, *Grammatology*, 13.
10. Moyn, *Liberalism against Itself*, 67.
11. Spengler, *The Hour of Decision*, 2.
12. Ibid., 58 (emphasis in original).
13. Derrida, *Grammatology*, 3 (emphasis in original).
14. Kundnani, *Eurowhiteness*, 7.
15. I think there is a contrast position to contemporary talk of "race" that is at least worth considering. Following Spengler, it would be a conception of race as something strictly irreducible to anything "a corpse displays" (Spengler, *Decline II*, 125). I think Spengler is right to regard *all* "physiological" or "anatomical" or otherwise "superficial" (bodily) conceptions of race, conceptions which produce "subdivisions *within the integral race* '*Man*'" that are based on differences of skin tone, hair type, nose shape, eyelid shape, skull length, etc., as "without exception *worthless*" (ibid.; emphasis in original). On the other hand, this should not be taken to imply a shift to a variant position in which talk of racial

or ethnic supremacy is suppressed but is replaced by a cultural or spiritual counterpart: a shift from zoological or biological racism to cultural or spiritual racism (see Derrida, *Of Spirit*, 40). The Spenglerian suggestion is not that we should affirm *racism without race* (disavowing biologistic materialism while maintaining the idea of the qualitative cultural superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others). On the contrary, in view would be the possibility of a conception that affirms the opposite: *race without racism*. Perhaps that is *not* a serious possibility. Hence my hesitation about "race" talk in the main text. Nevertheless, the interest in Spengler's approach to race is that it would have, as Theodor Adorno rightly put it, "nothing to do with that of the National Socialists" (Adorno, *Spengler*, 320). For Spengler, "having race" concerns, first, the life-enhancing way in which *place* is inscribed in someone's *form of life*. It is quite a step away from the old modern zoologies of race to insist that "of all expressions of race, the purest is the House" (Spengler, *Decline II*, 120). And it is a further step away when this is coupled with the affirmation that there is absolutely nothing "pure" here anyway: "race purity is a grotesque word … all … have been mixed … and have welcomed a stranger into the family" (Spengler, *The Hour of Decision*, 219). What I take to be a plausible Spenglerian idea of a "race without racism" approach is thus one that would conceive describing a person as "having race' not as *a baldly natural physiological fact*, nor something attained through *an educative process of cultural formation* but as a way of registering what is "in the last resort" *a fundamentally individual physiognomic fact* about someone's form of life (Spengler, *Decline II*, 131). This approach implies no comparative hierarchy of different races whatsoever—only a contrast to a condition of *not* having it or *hardly* having it. However, in our time perhaps exactly that contrast is what we need to keep in view, since the condition of "racelessness" (in Spengler's sense) would be inseparable from the increasingly planetary *Heimatlosigheit* that Yuk Hui explores so well in *Post-Europe* as the (more or less) universal legacy of the global spread of European technological modernity (Hui, *Post-Europe*, 7–29). That legacy is also what bequeaths Europeans today with a severely attenuated form of situated existence, a (post-Europe?) condition marked by, for example, an abstractly territorial conception of "our continent" and a computer-generated portfolio of "styles" for "our houses."

16. Derrida, *The Other Heading*, 13.

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