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What's the MONTAIGNE Programme?

10 questions – 10 answers

Abstract

Public opinion and a large part of the academic writers would have us believe that Europe and the EU have been merged in the « European project ». But this assertion does not stand up to scrutiny. The *European project* is a top-down construct of the interested elites to consolidate the position of EU as a global player. This construct however does not answer the questions: *Which European do I want to be? What kind of Europe do we want to live in together?* The EU's hegemonic claim to be able to speak for Europe stifles the subjective experience of Europe as an affective space. Philosophical errors of the past and current political interests are responsible for it. Based on a fundamental revision of traditional philosophy by Hermann Schmitz, founder of New Phenomenology, the MONTAIGNE programme opens up the understanding, how one becomes susceptible to collective European emotional atmospheres : by acquiring experimentally an unknown European language *via* the lived-bodily experience of that embedding culture. In contrast to conventional foreign study programmes, the new MONTAIGNE programme serves exclusively to grow into the guest culture up to the secondary epigenesis of the person as a European.

- 1 The MONTAIGNE programme is part of your project to regenerate Europe.¹ What is the crucial difference between it and the academic exchange programmes that have been introduced and how realistic is the implementation of the MONTAIGNE programme?*

The MONTAIGNE programme claims to contribute to the regeneration of Europe. In this respect, it is ambitious. It must be taken into account that the MONTAIGNE Programme plays in a different "league" than, for example, the ERASMUS Programme, because the former is not a programme that seeks the proximity of national governments and the European Union. Contrary

¹ Werner Müller-Pelzer (2021 a): Europa regenerieren. Über das Entstehen kollektiver Atmosphären, erläutert am Beispiel des studentischen MONTAIGNE-Austauschprogramms, Freiburg / München: Karl Alber.

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to what is communicated in public, the current ERASMUS+ programme does not primarily serve international understanding and the formation of a sense of "we" among young Europeans, but rather the mobilisation of suitable human resources for global competition. Since its inception in 1987, its name has been the acronym of *European community action scheme for the mobility of university students*. Jacques Delors, former President of the European Commission and initiator of ERASMUS, had formulated the intention at that time to combine student mobility with a better understanding of the European peoples, but this was before the integration of universities into the programme of the new global player EU.² The criticism of the current ERASMUS+ should therefore also be understood as a defence of the original intention of its initiator. Today, there is no longer any talk of an exploratory stay abroad in which questions are asked such as: *Which European do I want to be? What touches me so much in my Europeaness that I don't want to give it up? How do we want to live together in the future?* According to the official information of the EU, these questions have already been answered by the fact that Europe and the European Union have merged and become one in the European project ; the EU has allegedly become the heiress of European values, understood as the condensed form of artistic, poetic, ideological, philosophical and civilisational achievements from the Renaissance and the Enlightenment to the development of modern democracy. Therefore, the EU claims to speak for Europe. If one accepts this, then the chances of realising the MONTAIGNE programme should be poor.

However, this rhetoric of the EU elites has obviously turned to be a flop (Germ. *Luftnummer*). The EU is an institutional construction to increase the power of a new global player; Europe, on the other hand, is not. The EU consists of an almost unmanageable number of interlocking organisations; Europe does not. The EU is held together by economic and financial interests and government decisions; Europe is not. The EU has a multitude of bodies that carry out the intentions and decisions of the member states; Europe does not. A state can apply to join the

² Jacques Delors (2004): *Mémoires*, Paris: Plon, 455. – Delors had already gone on record in 1998: "Je refuse une Europe qui ne serait qu'un marché, une zone de libre-échange sans âme, sans conscience, sans volonté politique, sans dimension sociale. Si c'est vers ça qu'on va, je lance un cri d'alarme." Jacques Delors: *Comprendre l'Europe, Biographie Jacques Delors* <https://www.touteurope.eu/actualite/biographie-jacques-delors.html>, ursprünglich in: *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 06 Juin 1998. <https://www.touteurope.eu/actualite/biographie-jacques-delors.html>

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EU on the basis of a vote by its citizens, but equally it can leave; for Europe, on the other hand, this is not possible. This list can be extended without further ado. The hyperbolic equation Europe = EU is dangerous because by blurring the differences, EU politicians pursue their political interests, which obey an anti-European goal: Claiming Europe for the global power interests of the EU thwarts the basic European norm of asking questions of truth, i.e. asking about the good life on the ground of the European civilisation type.³ As an institutional construct, the EU cannot be a contact point for the affectivity of Europeans. As Jacques Delors had already said: one cannot fall in love with the unified European market (even less with a global player).⁴ The invocation of *European values*, which the EU feels called to represent, does not change this. Since no European myth is available that would affectively unite all Europeans, a glossy and reductionist surrogate of the extraordinarily diverse and contradictory European intellectual history has been fabricated, to which realpolitik politicians fall back as needed. The fact that the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman lines of tradition are also being claimed blanket for Europe shows how thoughtlessly the EU elites are proceeding here. This is a highly tense conglomerate of ideas in the history of ideas that, according to the prevailing view of historians, can only be regarded as European prehistory.⁵ Hans Joas has criticised this attempt to construct a legitimacy for itself as the "self-sacralisation of Europe".⁶ In this respect, the chances for a fundamental rethinking are quite good.

Now for a crucial difference that distinguishes the MONTAIGNE programme! English, German, French, Spanish and Italian *cannot* be chosen as target languages in the MONTAIGNE programme. As is well known, global English is on the rise. In combination with the electronic media, many people thus gain access to the knowledge currently available and to other people who may live far away. Against Europe, on the other hand, is the fact that global English is

³ Peter Sloterdijk (2004): Falls Europa erwacht. Gedanken zum Programm einer Weltmacht am Ende des Zeitalters ihrer politischen Absence, Frankfurt a. M., Suhrkamp, 57-59.

⁴ Quoted by Nadège Chambon / Stéphanie Baz-Hatem (2014): Jacques Delors, hier et aujourd'hui, Paris : Desclée de Brouwer, 165.

⁵ Christian Meier (2012): Kultur, um der Freiheit willen. Griechische Anfänge – Anfang Europas?, Frankfurt a.M.: Pantheon; Jacques Le Goff (2012): Die Geburt Europas im Mittelalter. München: C.H. Beck.

⁶ Hans Joas: „Die Lust an genereller Kapitalismuskritik ist zurück“, Interview in der *Wirtschaftswoche*, 30.12.2012, <https://www.wiwo.de/politik/konjunktur/sozialphilosoph-hans-joas-die-selbtsakralisierung-europas/7543054-3.html> See also Id.: „Mich schaudert das Tremolo in den Europa-Reden“, aktualisiert am 06.10.2012, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/soziologe-hans-joas-mich-schaudert-das-tremolo-in-den-europa-reden-11916327.html?printPagedArticle=true#void>

being used by powerful, economic interests that, in favour of unlimited growth and the pursuit of profit, are grinding down or completely dissolving the traditional ways of life worldwide to a level that conforms to the market. The assertion that this development is inevitable turns this endeavour into the ideology of globalism⁷, for which even the multiplicity of European languages is indifferent and therefore dispensable. *Global English is without affective reference to Europe* and thus becomes an obstacle to a reflection on Europe.

But language policy for German, French, Spanish and Italian is also contaminated by the desire for power. Language and culture in the four language areas mentioned are seen by policy-makers as strengthening national influence at EU level and in other countries, and this also at the expense of neighbouring European languages. To a modest extent, then, this language policy follows the same logic as the spread of global English: affective de-Europeanisation is thus advancing. Accordingly, the European languages with a low potential of political, economic and symbolic power have already largely sunk to vernacular languages, i.e. languages for everyday use. But German, French, Italian and Spanish (in Spain) will also successively not escape this fate: Not only in politics, but also in business, scientific research, university teaching and mass media, global English increasingly determines public language use. But the European languages are not negotiable: as the *Lieux de la mémoire de l'Europe*⁸, they form the common affective backbone of Europeans.

The emerging monopoly is clearly different from a *lingua franca*: the latter would represent an understanding across cultural thresholds that serves practical-commercial purposes and takes place on an equal footing, i.e. does not concede unilateral advantages to any participant: between trading partners, competitors or adversaries.⁹ Global English, on the other hand, has become an Anglo-American instrument of domination of globalism, in which the affective

⁷ Wolfgang Streeck (2021): *Zwischen Globalismus und Demokratie. Politische Ökonomie im ausgehenden Neoliberalismus*, Berlin: Suhrkamp.

⁸ Jürgen Trabant: „Sprachenvielfalt“, in: Den Boer, Pim / Duchhardt, Heimnz / Kreis, Georg / Schmale, Wolfgang (Hg.) (2012): *Europäische Erinnerungsorte*, 3 Bde., Bd. 1: *Mythen und Grundbegriffe des europäischen Selbstverständnisses*, München: Oldenbourg, 269.

⁹ Jürgen Trabant (2012): „Über die Lingua franca der Wissenschaft“, in: Heinrich Oberreuter / Wilhelm Krull / Hans Joachim Meyer / Konrad Ehlich (Hg.): *Deutsch der Wissenschaft. Ein politischer und wissenschaftlicher Diskurs*, München: Olzog, 101-107.

attachment to power is determinative. In this respect, the other European languages are no match for it. In order to distinguish it from a *lingua franca*, Jürgen Trabant therefore speaks of global English as "globalese"¹⁰. In this way, the MONTAIGNE programme proves to be an antipode to the exchange programmes that, within the framework of educational economics, teach students the logic of increasing global players, more or less massively depending on the field of study.

2 So you claim that the EU is pursuing anti-European goals?

Yes, that is correct. On sober reflection, one cannot help thinking that those who claim to be Europe's defenders are its greatest opponents. Even after the explanations given so far, one has to ask why the EU elites have put forward the daring thesis that two such different spheres of reality have merged into a whole, into the *European project*. The answer is: the forced combination of religious values, artistic products and civilisational achievements with state integration, technological progress and economic prosperity is a justification narrative that is supposed to endow the new global power with a "mission" on the outside and create a "narrative" on the inside with which the EU wraps itself in a quasi-sacred aura that is supposed to ward off critical questions from the outset. *European values* are stilisated into an instrument that is supposed to be morally unsurpassable. In Germany, this goes together with the unsurpassable humility with regard to the Holocaust of European Jews.¹¹

However, to dispense with accountability is directed against the European type of civilisation, which thrives on criticism and self-criticism on the part of Europeans. Anyone who seriously wants to talk about Europe cannot pin a positivistically abbreviated catalogue of cultural achievements, dutifully learned lessons and universal values to their lapel and then turn to business. The first thing to do is to clarify how the *European type of civilisation* differs from other civilisations. Only on the basis of this standard can we judge what the term Europe stands for.

¹⁰ Trabant (2014).

¹¹ This goes so far that the Holocaust is described by some authors as a "negative founding myth of Europe". See Claus Leggewie: „Holocaust als negativer Gründungsmythos Europa“, in: Id. (2011): *Der Kampf um die europäische Erinnerung*, München: C.H. Beck, 15-21; for „Humility Conditioning“ see Aleida Assmann (2019): *Der europäische Traum. Vier Lehren aus der Geschichte*, Bonn: BpB.

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Simply claiming, as the EU does, that it sets this standard and has a monopoly on the interpretation of European history, present and future is not acceptable.

The EU "narrative" turns the actual circumstances upside down: It is not quasi-governmental, bureaucratic, institutional mergers and treaties under constitutional law that keep Europe alive as a cultural context and develop it further. It is rather the case that every European, every generation and every single European culture must ask itself to what extent people *today* are affected by certain appeals of past and present forms of expression and which, after critical examination, can represent a common basis for living together with other Europeans.¹² The EU is thus attempting to seize the most expressive, atmospheric figures of European culture for political purposes in order to gain a reputation, but without itself contributing anything to Europe as a living-feeling.

3 What exactly is meant by the expression "European type of civilisation"?

The European living-feeling arose against the background of a practical-philosophical challenge that people first had to face in ancient Greece.¹³ The distinction between the way of life of the in many ways superior oriental civilisations and the lifestyle of the Greeks is already self-evident in written testimonies of the 5th century, as Herodotus proves. To be a human being according to the Greek understanding set oneself apart from the oriental type of civilisation of priests and despots as represented in the ancient empires of Egypt, Babylonia and Persia. Based on this epochal confrontation and then in conflict with the 1000-year priesthood of the Catholic Church, the European type of civilisation emerged, which revolved around the following demands:

- Freedom: not being dominated by anyone, i.e. also free self-determination through intellectual discipline when arguing in the public arena, free measuring of one's own arguments against those of others,

¹² Gérard Bouchard: „L'Europe à la recherche des Européens. La voie de l'identité et du mythe”, *Notre Europe – Institut Jacques Delors*, Études & Rapports décembre 2016, <http://institutdelors.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/europeidentitemythes-bouchard-ijd-dec16.pdf>

¹³ Hermann Schmitz (1997): Höhlengänge. Über die gegenwärtige Aufgabe der Philosophie, Berlin: Akademie, 23-33.

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- Personality development without dogmatic determination: making something of oneself, not being a plaything of opaque political, clerical etc. powers demanding submission. No acceptance of genetic or historical predetermination,
- Self-reflection, critical self-assessment: neither overestimating oneself (excessive technological and social constructivist optimism) nor humiliating oneself (intellectual capitulation to clerical and other claims to power, nihilism, ironism¹⁴).

Today, the type of priestly rule is easily recognisable worldwide; despotism, for its part, is represented not only by regimes based on brutal violence, but also by the varieties of elite, state and financial capitalism with a democratic façade. In comparison, the European living-feeling seems to indicate a weak status that is hardly noticed by the public. This is explained by the fact that the European type of civilisation and the different styles of Europeanisation in the individual cultures do not produce a positive "European doctrine", but only become conspicuous when serious violations of the *implicit norms* are recorded.

As the example of Greta Thunberg's initially individual protest shows¹⁵, an opaque situation can change unpredictably.¹⁶ The *Fridays for Future (FFF)* movement was triggered by an experience of injustice, of having been betrayed by politicians on the subject of the *destruction of the biosphere*, especially CO₂ emissions.¹⁷ Greta Thunberg was confronted with catastrophic shame that could only have been avoided at the price of dishonesty. Fundamental moral doubts arose. An individual sense of injustice, which arose with a quality of conscience and then spread to others, led to the unavoidable demand: *This should not be!* Unrestrained anger or devastating shame arose, and in order to prevent this, the young Swede made the demand: *I don't want to*

¹⁴ Ironism results from the romantic irony of not being affected by anything anymore. Siehe Hermann Schmitz (2007): *Der Weg der europäischen Philosophie. Eine Gewissenserforschung*, Bd. 2: *Nachantike Philosophie*, 813 ss.

¹⁵ Greta Thunberg had placed herself in front of the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm with a sign "Skolstrejk för klimatet" ("School strike for the climate") on 20 August 2018, the first school day after the holidays.

¹⁶ Homepage of *Fridays for Future*: <https://fridaysforfuture.de/> and *Extinction Rebellion*: <https://extinctionrebellion.de/> For analytical reasons, the origin must be distinguished from the non-governmental organisations that then form.

¹⁷ See Werner Müller-Pelzer: „Verantwortung. Zur Regeneration des europäischen Zusammenlebens“, in: Michael Gehler / Alexander Merkl / Kai Schinke (eds.) (2020): *Die Europäische Union als Verantwortungsgemeinschaft – Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*, Wien: Böhlau, 43-86.

become guilty. I must act! All three basic norms of the European type of civilisation had been seriously violated by the global players, including the EU.

- 4 *However, the European sentiment towards life does not play a role in the general public. How can it be explained that the thesis of the fusion of Europe and the EU in the European project hardly meets with any opposition in society?*

FFF has spread its message, which has now been taken up all over the world, without explicitly referring to the European living-feeling. But it is a memorable testimony to the vitality of the European civilisation type because it focuses on the responsibility of the individual and encourages everyone to take life into their own hands. The absence of a debate on the European living-feeling is due to the fact that the second type of self-overestimation of the élites (see above) comes into play. With the help of social constructivist measures, people are distracted from the question of responsibility for the destruction of the biosphere and the consequences to be drawn. In order to be able to cling to the previous economic model despite the climate catastrophe, societies are covered with a comprehensive psychagogy that is supposed to make the EU appear as a moral global player and that makes a collective *mauvaise foi* (dishonesty, subtle self-deception) socially acceptable:

- *dishonest*, because the EU has not and cannot inherit the European culture and sentiment of life with its innumerable affective forms of expression, and because the surrogate of *European values* is supposed to conceal the globalist, anti-European finality of the European project;
- *fine self-deception*, because with the quasi-sacred, untouchable self-image, the space of free argumentation and criticism - a central achievement of the European type of civilisation - is restricted and domesticated. The surrogate of European values is supposed to provide the EU with the famous "clean vest" in order to be able to play out its power as a global player.

With the collective *mauvaise foi*¹⁸ spread through all media, EU-savvy milieus and government channels, a diffuse social "formation" and "contouring of affectivity" is generated that is difficult to grasp analytically.¹⁹ This can be specified for Germany: The ability of broad sections of the population to resonate is blocked by *affective ties to money and power*. Some social scientists argue that this is an expression of neoliberalism, to shake off any embedding in a norm-giving society and rather, conversely, to embed society in the neoliberal economy.²⁰ Everything that could threaten one's own prosperity and chances for social advancement is then blanked out.²¹ With this affective schema, the EU elites have indeed achieved a "political herd immunity" among the population to doubts about the equation Europe = EU and to alternatives to borderless globalisation, so that the European civilisation type and the European sentiment of life based on it are not present in the public and are not missed by most.

Now, however, the following must be considered: as with vaccinations in the field of medicine, a quota of approx. 85% of the population is also meant for political herd immunity. This means that on the subject of Europe, too, we can expect enough people who do not accept the track Europe = EU. However, the few who have sufficient inquisitiveness and the necessary stamina are socially and medially marginalised. Presumably, students who have become aware belong to this group of people. But in the course of an average university degree, including conventional exchange programmes, they will not get an answer: At present, a course of study is designed

¹⁸ See Rainer Mausfeld (³2019): *Warum schweigen die Lämmer? Wie Elitendemokratie und Neoliberalismus unsere Gesellschaft und unsere Lebensgrundlagen zerstören*, Frankfurt a.M.: Westend.

¹⁹ Jan Slaby: „Möglichkeitsraum und Möglichkeitssinn. Bausteine einer phänomenologischen Gefühlstheorie“, in: Andermann, Kerstin / Eberlein, Undine (2011) (Hg.): *Gefühle als Atmosphären. Neue Phänomenologie und philosophische Emotionstheorie*, Berlin: Akademie, 126.

²⁰ Streeck (2021), 21 ss., 107 ss., 507 etc. Already Peter Ulrich (⁴2008): *Integrative Wirtschaftsethik. Grundlagen einer lebensdienlichen Ökonomie*, Haupt: Bern / Stuttgart / Wien, 138 ss.

²¹ These include the destruction of primeval forests for beef production and the cultivation of soya, which is needed for the - drug supported - rearing of pigs in factory farms, - meat, which is largely exported to third countries with EU subsidies and forces the producers there out of the market on the basis of preferential clauses; a chemical industry, which increases profits with gigantic quantities of toxic substances for agriculture and damages the health of the population; Arms exports and rearmament, which serve the expansive, strategic military interests of NATO worldwide; automobile production, which causes numerous health problems in addition to the consumption of resources and climate damage; currency hegemony in the Eurozone, which oppresses less competitive economies and divides the European peoples and, among other things, leads to the spread of globalism and leading, among other things, to the expansion of the nuclear industry, associated with incalculable risks worldwide, and much more. This also includes that the appearance of charitable activities is supposed to cover up that fixation on power, for example on the topic of migration and refugees. The fact that politics thereby also cultivates the image of the virtuous global player EU and covers up the internal political disunity on this issue is added to this.

in such a way that students experience higher education as a "turbocharger" for their careers, but leave it as *Europe-illiterate*.

Above all, however, a serious difficulty becomes apparent here: it is not possible to speak objectively about the European living-feeling, i.e. without considering one's own affective involvement. But to deal with subjective facts is out of the way for a usual academic discussion.

5 But aren't universities the ideal place to enable a reconsideration of Europe?

Unfortunately, this is not the case.²² As mediators of critical European traditions of thought, today's universities fail for three reasons.

1. Meanwhile, they see themselves as globalisation accelerators and are led by globally oriented managers. Student support programmes have become part of the policy that alienates Europeans from Europe because they are expected to see themselves and their lives from a distanced, "international" perspective. Students are sometimes encouraged to plan their education as a case study and to manage their studies with the methods of project management. Studying abroad, as mentioned above, is also about optimising one's profile as a future employee under the conditions of global competition. This corresponds to the quasi-extraterrestrial "view from nowhere"²³, free of affective involvement by being embedded in Europe, i.e. in a specific environment, language and culture. Although these programmes abroad adorn themselves with philanthropic intentions such as the promotion of intercultural competence, cosmopolitanism and the formation of a European sense of community, they are in fact intended to provide the European Union as a global player with qualified human resources in all disciplines that are relevant to global competition. Universities take the equation Europe = EU for granted, and if they have a well-connected centre for European integration police, they believe they are making a contribution to the understanding of Europe.

²² Siehe auch Werner Müller-Pelzer: „Aufbruch ohne Applaus. Wie das Studium zu einem Ort der Subversion werden kann“, Replik auf Christoph Paret: „Schiffbruch ohne Zuschauer. Warum die Universität nicht mehr Ort gefährlicher Gedanken ist“, *Lettre internationale* 130, 29-31, in: *impEct – Intercultural and Multidisciplinary Papers. European Contributions* 12 (2022).

²³ Thomas Nagel (2012): *Der Blick von nirgendwo*, Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

2. The situation is aggravated by the fact that, according to the university disciplines, Europe is discussed in different ways without considering the common origin in the European type of civilisation: Historians believe that Europe is a historical topic; social scientists believe that Europe is a sociological topic; political scientists believe that Europe is a political science topic; economists believe that Europe is an economic topic; and legal scholars believe that Europe is a legal topic. Each discipline carries its methodological pre-decisions into the investigation, so that the answers are, depending on the discipline: Europe is a cross-national institutional grouping, a multi-level construct, a transnational institutionalised body of rule, a part of the global economy, or a supranational legal community. Each of these perspectives is useful and yields knowledge worth knowing, but there is no common, theoretically elaborated concept of Europe.
3. But even a hypothetical science of Europe encompassing all relevant disciplines of the humanities would not help, because it would only perpetuate the tacitly made presupposition, namely that the world consists of individual things that can in principle be completely explicated, i.e. objectively grasped. The idea of the world as a large constellation is based on the objectivist ideal of knowledge of the early Greek philosophers, which excludes whole areas of human experience from reflection, especially that which is affectively close to people, provides them with a foothold in their environment and an orientation for their life planning.²⁴ Hermann Schmitz has traced the aberrations which, in over 2500 years of philosophical history, have so twisted and distorted the *unbiased experience of life* that it could not be adequately thematised.²⁵ The New Phenomenology was created in order to open up – after fundamental critics – the meaningful impressions of life experience for a better understanding with *a new approach*.

A few explanations must suffice here. Today's epistemological positivism can be traced back to the philosophical turn in ancient philosophy, which was guided by the model of scientific construction. The philosophers initially put forward good reasons for this: People caught up in

²⁴ Die Unmöglichkeit, Europa und das europäische Lebensgefühl objektivistisch zu definieren, kehrt bei allen gleichgerichteten Fragen auf wie etwa: *Was ist Frankreich und was ist das französische Lebensgefühl?* Siehe Müller-Pelzer (2021 c).

²⁵ Schmitz (2007), Bd. 1: Antike Philosophie.

mythical thinking found themselves helplessly exposed to gods, demi-gods, heroes, etc., stirring passions and illusions of meaning. Therefore, these philosophers excluded the vague, the confused and the confusing from the realm of reality that promised to bring knowledge. Democritus and Plato were fascinated by geometry and mathematics. Therefore, they accepted only the solid object in the central field of vision as suitable for scientific analysis. The results that could be achieved in this way profoundly changed people and the world, but at the same time forced knowledge into a methodical Procrustean bed and impoverished it. Early Greek philosophy made the separation between an external world of things, which were strictly reduced to objective characteristics, and an inner world, called the soul, which was imagined as the retreat of the subjective, inaccurate, fantastic and libidinous. Through this division of experiential reality, however, entire phenomenal areas of undisguised life experience were cut up, deformed or completely suppressed, such as the living body (Germ. *Leib*) as a medium of affective involvement, living-bodily communication (Ger. *leibliche Kommunikation*), emotional atmospheres and situations. The decisive change is the replacement of an ontology that focuses on the thing, the object, with a *situation ontology*. What is perceived, the *situation*²⁶, is a diffuse but not confused chaotic manifold from which some figures, programmes and problems emerge. To understand their meaning, one must take into account the diffuse background. The situational "halo of meaningfulness" that envelops the figures, programmes and problems is only accessible through hermeneutic sensitivity. The hypotheses then formulated are tested for their intersubjective generalisability.

The objectivist, narrow criterion that only what can be verified by anyone, anywhere and at any time can be considered valid cannot be applied to these areas of experience. That is why the positive sciences are still dealing with a "halved" empiricism. In contrast, life experiences that have not been methodically prepared are subjective, bound to a specific place, a specific time and often to a specific counterpart. Feelings of life can only be objectified to a certain extent,

²⁶ Hermann Schmitz (2005): Situationen und Konstellationen. Wider die Ideologie totaler Vernetzung, Freiburg / München, 22: „Eine Situation im hier gemeinten Sinn ist charakterisiert durch Ganzheit (d.h. Zusammenhalt in sich und Abgehobenheit nach außen), ferner eine integrierende Bedeutsamkeit aus Sachverhalten, Programmemen und Problemen und eine Binnendiffusion dieser Bedeutsamkeit in der Weise, daß die in ihr enthaltenen Bedeutungen (d.h. Sachverhalte, Programmeme und Probleme) nicht sämtlich – im präpersonalen Erleben überhaupt nicht – einzeln sind.“ Consider the following incident: A boy of about five years old, coming from the city to visit his grandparents on a lonely farm in the forest, answers the question what he likes most about the place: *the forest!* When asked what else he liked, he said after some thought: *Everything!*

because the affective essence remains largely pre-reflexive and diffuse, but nevertheless possesses a characteristic stamp. What is close to people's hearts, what is so important to them that they disregard material and symbolic advantages, shows itself in feelings. As poignant atmospheres, they determine the perception of the environment, they influence self-worth, and they control expectations and future behaviour. Jan Slaby succinctly formulates: "Feelings are *ways of being*"²⁷, because only feelings indicate to the addressee, by being affected, *that* something affects the person subjectively and *what* means something to him.

In order to gain access to experiences such as the European living-feeling, the mode of access must therefore be changed. The fixed object in the central field of vision as the epistemological normal case must be abandoned because the high level of abstraction, i.e. the selection of phenomena considered relevant for cognition, is extremely restrictive. Only by forming concepts that allow us to get closer to spontaneous life experience can the hidden or deformed areas be brought into view at all. Thanks to the New Phenomenology founded by Hermann Schmitz, the underexposed part of empiricism can now be better opened up for intersubjective understanding.²⁸ Instead of the falsification vs. verification of hypotheses, people's dealings with each other are about impressions increasingly condensing and consolidating or changing. Living-bodily-hermeneutic understanding does not strive for objectivity in the interest of self and world mastery, but rather varies the hypotheses until intersubjective plausibility is achieved in the approach to the respective life experience. Subjective evidence thus always requires self-examination as well as examination in conversation with others.

If one takes into account the radical change in the approach to the European living-feeling that the New Phenomenology has marked out, it is not surprising that students who want to get to the bottom of the discrepancies in the public debate repeatedly run up against a wall of incomprehension. They suffer *existential discrepancy experiences* that – exemplified by Greta Thunberg – overturn the assumptions, convictions and expectations taken for granted and shake the

²⁷ Jan Slaby: „Möglichkeitsraum und Möglichkeitssinn. Bausteine einer phänomenologischen Gefühlstheorie“, in: Andermann, Kerstin / Eberlein, Undine (2011) (Hg.): *Gefühle als Atmosphären. Neue Phänomenologie und philosophische Emotionstheorie*, Berlin: Akademie, 126 (Emphasis in original).

²⁸ The new approach and the revolutionized understanding of ontology, epistemology and anthropology has necessitated a completely new terminology, which cannot be explained in detail here. See Müller-Pelzer (2021 a), 263-300.

personal frame. Experiences of discrepancy²⁹ arise when questions of truth take the place of questions of power and the usual problem-solving techniques fail. Political considerations of utility no longer work. In this respect, the baiting of young students by university marketing (*You will be one of the winners.*) and the intimidation (*Questioning the existing model means stagnation.*) are more likely to be perceived by these young adults as attempts at foreign domination: Existential questions can only be pushed aside at the price of dishonesty, because they concern one's own way of life here and now.

Putting questions of truth in place of questions of power is often perceived as a provocation by vested interests. The rejection of the hegemonic authority of the EU, which pretends to determine what Europe is, shakes the basis of the EU system and provokes harsh reactions. The criticism of the self-sacralisation of Europe, the identification of the obvious democratic deficit and the rejection of the EU's economism strike at sensitive weak points.³⁰ Against these attacks on the *European project*, the collective *mauvaise foi* is activated with aggressive slogans such as: *Stop the populist erosion of our democracy!* But such slurs are only likely to reinforce the students' experience of discrepancy: *How can it be that what we Europeans are concerned about is perceived as a threat to European democracy? And further: What concerns me as a European? What kind of European do I want to be? What kind of Europe do we want to live in together?*

6 *The MONTAIGNE programme is supposed to provide an answer to this question. How does the name of the programme relate to this? What can be said about the MONTAIGNE programme in terms of a profile, and how should participation in it take place?*

²⁹ Jürgen Straub: „Lerntheoretische Grundlagen“, in: Weidemann, Arne / Straub, Jürgen / Nothnagel, Steffi (Hg.) (2010): *Wie lehrt man interkulturelle Kompetenz? Theorien, Methoden und Praxis in der Hochschulausbildung*. Ein Handbuch, Bielefeld: transcript, 31-98.

³⁰ Wolfgang Streeck (2015), 277 ff.

Indeed, the MONTAIGNE programme offers a framework to deal with experiences of discrepancy in a collective learning experience. Regardless of their national origin, students meet on an equal basis with a common goal. In doing so, they anticipate the affective nostrification between the respective countries and languages and reject the power-political instrumentalisation by governments and other interest groups (for English, German, Spanish, French and Italian). The MONTAIGNE programme on the contrary is based on the affective nostrification of European languages. Transforming a well known quote of the German historian Leopold von Ranke ³¹ in the present context one could say: *Every European high-language is direct to Europe, and its value is not based at all on what emerges from it, but in its very existence, in its very being*. So, nostrification is not to be misunderstood as an act of language policy: Rather, the term emphasises that it is not a matter of learning just any foreign language, but a "brother language" ³² that is close to one's heart" comparable to the mother tongue. Languages are not to be reduced to mere instruments of communication, to systems of arbitrary signs and the involved cultures are not to be distanced as "umbrella collectives" (Ger. "Dachkollektive") that can be deconstructed and reconstructed as needed (multi-level social collectives according to Klaus P. Hansen).

The name *MONTAIGNE programme* is intended to mark the fundamental difference to the ERASMUS programme, i.e. to make it clear that the concern of the MONTAIGNE programme cannot be brushed aside with a reform of the ERASMUS programme. The fact that Erasmus of Rotterdam was a restless traveller and that this, at first glance, resembles the mobility of European students, may be accepted as a PR measure. But factually, the allusion to the historical Erasmus pretends in vain to have something in common with EU policy: His work as a humanistically minded classical philologist and reforming theologian, his fight against ecclesiastical grievances and for an internalised faith have nothing to do with striving for better competitive opportunities in the global labour market. On top of that, Erasmus' language was Latin.³³

³¹ „Jede Epoche ist unmittelbar zu Gott, und ihr Wert beruht gar nicht auf dem, was aus ihr hervorgeht, sondern in ihrer Existenz selbst, in ihrem Eigenen selbst“ - Über die Epochen der neueren Geschichte. Vorträge dem Könige Maximilian II. von Bayern im Herbst 1854 zu Berchtesgaden gehalten. Vortrag vom 25. September 1854. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe, hg. v. Theodor Schieder und Helmut Berding, München 1971, p. 60.

³² Trabant (2014), 34f.

³³ Nevertheless, hardly any official ceremony today goes by without a reference to the great European humanist to whom one feels obliged. There is a method to this attempt by the EU to adorn itself with false laurels, as the programmeme of the « self-sacralisation of Europe » (Hans Joas) has shown.

Furthermore, there are three programmatic reasons for the naming. The first is the fact that the intellectual awakening of modern Europe in the 16th century finds an appropriate expression in the jurist, politician and philosophising author Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592). He left behind the reassuring limitations of the Christian humanism of Erasmus of Rotterdam and experienced the storms of a world that had largely shaken the traditional orientation in metaphysical, political, scientific and anthropological terms. Today's Europeans may find points of reference in Montaigne. The second reason is that Montaigne wrote his *Essais* in French : at that time, French was in transition from a vernacular (colloquial) language to a high-level language modelled on High Italian and High Spanish. Montaigne did not write in the Latin of the scholars, which he had learned from childhood in accordance with his father's humanist educational ideal. In this way, the term *MONTAIGNE programme* testifies to the fact that being European is inseparably linked to the acquisition and use of living high languages based on affective proximity. Thirdly, his work, the *Essais*, represents an early critical instance against the emerging scientific-technical dynamism, for whom the subjective experience of life,³⁴ examined in its facets by Montaigne, is irrelevant as a source of orientation in the environment. Today's Europeans who strive for a self-determined life can, however, discover points of contact with the thinking of this much-travelled French author.

In brief, it is an exchange programme for European students who care about Europe. The central component is the so-called *European semester* spent at a partner university. It also includes a preparatory semester, an optional internship and an optional study semester.³⁵ One language can be selected from five lists of European target languages. As a rule, the *European semester* should take place in a summer semester (3rd or 4th semester); a commission decides on admission, taking into account the progress of the studies. The European semester is designed as a semester off, so that students from all fields of study can receive a joint study offer. During the semester abroad with a workload of approx. 50 hours per week, only semester-accompanying achievements are required; the semester is concluded with the comment "the requirements were

³⁴ Werner Müller-Pelzer (1983): *Leib und Leben. Untersuchungen zur Selbsterfahrung in Montaignes „Essais“*. Mit einer Studie zu La Boétie und dem „Discours de la Servitude volontaire“, Diss., Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang.

³⁵ Müller-Pelzer (2021 a), part III; also by the author (2021 b): *Europa als affektiven Raum erleben*, Rostock: Rostocker Phänomenologische Manuskripte, and (2021 c): „Das MONTAIGNE-Programm: Ein neuer Weg nach Europa“, in: *DEDALUS Portuguese Journal of Comparative Literature* 24-25, 2021.

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fulfilled / not fulfilled " and specified in the *diploma supplement*. The optional internship does not have to be a professional internship : It can include any community-oriented activity in the respective language area. The optional study semester takes place on the basis of a standard *learning agreement*; the achievements are also recorded in the *diploma supplement*. It is obvious that this demanding study abroad is more feasible in the eight-semester B.A. format (240 credits).

An opportunity for students to get to grips with the MONTAIGNE Programme is in the first half of their studies, when the question of studying abroad arises for them. To choose an ERASMUS stay abroad is easy: The home university only has to sign a *learning agreement* on the courses (mostly in English) offered by an available partner university. Students continue their professional studies and with the transnational experience they add to their academic profile a benefit in the form of flexibility, team work in international working groups and know how to manage different cultural standards. Europe as an affective space is not on the agenda.

In the MONTAIGNE programme the usual courses do not matter. Instead of continuing their domestic studies the students make a break: The MONTAIGNE programme takes the discrepancy experiences of European students seriously and offers support in dealing with them. Within the framework of the semester off, a general exploration of Europe as an affective space will be the focus of the European study cohort. The newly conceived acquisition of the respective national or regional language is given a key role here: Unlike in school and university language teaching, the embedding of speaking in preceding, meaningful situations plays a decisive role. Based on the findings of the New Phenomenology, pre-linguistic, living-bodily and atmospheric group experiences are taken up and further developed with the support of a pedagogical team; from these group situations the first occasions for speaking arise. Here the pragmalinguistic research on acquiring the mother tongue becomes a model for designing living-bodily exercises. During the European semester, experimental and explorative learning (independent discovery) is given wide scope. On the other hand, young adults have already had conventional language learning experiences and have their own learning method. Therefore the lived-bodily exercises will be supplemented by cognitively conceived learning units.

Nevertheless the analytical detection of linguistic rules will be embedded in the primary affective experience.

7 How can one acquire significant linguistic and cultural competence in the course of only one semester, moreover, if one starts with no prior linguistic knowledge?

Conventional study abroad programmes are guided by the need to be able to manage the studies in the new environment as smoothly as possible. What counts is the acquisition of the prescribed credit points, passing the exams, establishing the necessary social contacts for successful team work and looking a little beyond one's own cultural horizons. Global English and, if necessary, B1 level in the target language are usually sufficient. But mostly ERASMUS students are left alone with the issue of the encounter between cultures. Intercultural communication courses do address the differences between implicit social and cultural norms and preferences and the probability of misunderstandings. But this usually leads to the recommendation to be aware of different cultural standards and cultural dimensions as well as to train attitudinal changes such as tolerance of ambiguity, empathy, and decentering. The goal is to master uncertainty in puzzling situations by reducing them to a net of constellations : Intellectual distance is trained to mitigate affectively disturbing "critical incidents". Even more ambitious programmes as those of *French-German University (DFH-UFA)* don't hesitate to equip students with an *inter-cultural tool box*, without relativizing the cognitivist top-heaviness.

Opposed to this activist attitude the interest of the MONTAIGNE programme is to expose oneself to the strange and bewildering multifaceted impressions, i.e. to adopt a *pathic attitude* towards them. Without being provided at the beginning with the respective language, the student's situation resembles to that of a child growing into its – at first disconcerting – cultural and linguistic environment. The first type of experience with the surrounding world is not linguistic communication, but *lived-bodily communication*, in the theoretical framework of New Phenomenology called *encarnation* (Ger. *Einleibung*). This experience (methodically developed in the European semester) enables the learners to have an affective, non-analytical access to the respective language, which is always present in the following learning steps. The

difference to school and university language learning is therefore qualitative and quantitative. To grow into an unknown variant of the European experience of self and the world is such a demanding challenge that for this purpose, subject-specific studies are to be suspended and attention is focused exclusively on becoming lived-bodily resonant to the host culture, without being able to comprehensively explicate it.

In the MONTAIGNE programme, the respective national or regional language is acquired from scratch; in the understanding of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFRL), these students seem to be less "competent" at the end of the European semester than those with a linguistic preparation. But this assumption is fragile. Developed subject specific linguistic ability of those students in no way means that MONTAIGNE students will have less cultural competence. The difference between the restricted and the elaborated level of linguistic expression (the so-called Bernstein hypothesis³⁶) can be applied to the present context. Bernstein has shown that lower-class speakers compensate for the differentiated, freely movable and transferable linguistic expression of upper-class speakers, which can be detached from common situations, by embedding what they experience in common, affectively charged common situations. In the present case, these are the situations in which Europe opens up as an affective space *via* lived-bodily sensing and communicating *without being able to make this comprehensively explicit*.

In contrast to university language teaching³⁷, it should be noted: *The European semester is not a simulation of reality* : It is the real new beginning to leave behind heteronomy and to take life into one's own hands. To grow into a European brother- or sister-language and culture begins with the attunement in implicate norms of the European type of civilisation through lived-bodily experience. The special feature of the MONTAIGNE programme is that the students are not put off to a better future, but begin to regenerate Europe as an affective space for themselves during their daily being-together.

³⁶ Rolf Oerter (⁹1971): *Moderne Entwicklungspsychologie*, Donauwörth: Ludwig Auer, 485 ff.

³⁷ There are impressive examples of lively language teaching offered to exchange students in double degree programmes at some partner universities. But the basis is usually practice material that has been extracted from real-life situations.

8 *But how does fit the "restricted level of linguistic expression" with the ambitious goal of "growing into the unknown culture" ?*

So far the special feature of the MONTAIGNE concept of competence has only been outlined ; now we will see how it is methodologically deepened by the insights of New Phenomenology. The main thesis is : The new language is not a system that has to be intellectually grasped but it emerges from emotionally affecting situations. The following sketch will illustrate how language is to be taken first as a lived-bodily situation, itself embedded in other situations.

In addition to the first spontaneous, aleatoric impressions of the participants on each other, they learn to cope with their *vis-à-vis* in pedagogically staged arrangements. They meet on the common ground of discrepancy experiences in Europe and of the willingness to sense living-bodily what is going on with themselves in the new situation: getting involved in movement games, playing pre-linguistic situations, developing rituals, handling tactfully repulsive reactions, etc. Analogous to the child, orienting itself in the environment (people, things), processing and working on the impressions that affect it, the European students of the MONTAIGNE group begin with movement games, music, impromptu games, choral singing and choral speaking. Feeling rhythm and melody, living-bodily tension and swelling awakens sensitivity to living-bodily widening and constriction, which is the fundamental polarity underlying all immediate experience of meaningful impressions: Joy widens and lifts, sorrow narrows and depresses, fear narrows, confidence widens, etc.³⁸ Correspondingly, the living-bodily sensing (Ger. *eigenleibliches Spüren*) is also stimulated by the linguistic sound sequences: rhythm and melody of language, words, word groups, speech-answer sequences, acoustic word plays, etc. initially impress the living-body as soft, hard, swelling, floating, stimulating, calming, attracting, bulky, rumbling, washed-out, etc. Living-bodily experiences grow into the personal situation of the students via *bridging qualities* (movement suggestions, synaesthetic characters) and change it.

What is aimed at the child³⁹ can be transferred to the European students: In the predimensional directional space, the gesture occurs in unity with the linguistic impulse (e.g. "Look !", "Dad-

³⁸ Hermann Schmitz (2010 a): *Jenseits des Naturalismus*, Freiburg / München: Karl Alber, 277.

³⁹ „Nur durch Einpflanzung seiner persönlichen Situation in solche, gemeinsame Situationen kann ein Kind sprechen lernen, indem es die Muttersprache aus der Bedeutsamkeit gemeinsamer Situationen abzulesen lernt.“ Hermann Schmitz (2010 b): *Das Reich der Normen*, Freiburg / München: Karl Alber, 94.

dy !"or "Paul!"). Learning to pronounce the first words and performing a meaningful movement are one from the origin. From this develops the competence to *read* the implicit meaning of a situation. As this experience, which begins with oral communication, takes place in the group, common atmospheres are created, which are inseparable from language acquisition as a common situation. A detail (a saying, a musical motif, a gesture) is sometimes sufficient to visualize this situation with its respective atmosphere. Generalized this means: By "planting" their personal situation into new, common situations arising with the other students, the students open up an affective, non-analytical access to the respective language; it is the most important play of living-bodily communication (Ger. *Einleibung*). In the following learning steps this is always present: cognitive learning methods are used in a complementary way, but embedded in meaningful situations about *Einleibung*.

These first steps are followed by exercises such as choral speaking and singing without paying attention to the meaning of the lyrics: Here, in addition to the *antagonistic* type of living-bodily communication (initiative - counter-initiative), the *solidary* incorporation comes into play: the participants swing into the common sensing of a feeling up to the emergence of a suggestive atmosphere (Ger. *Gefühlsglocke*), which is a pre-reflexive we-feeling. In these situations, speech does not initially have a communicative function, but rather the social function of growing into the new language as a situation. It is a living-bodily understanding (a "thinking without words" according to Hermann Schmitz ⁴⁰) that arises in the daily togetherness of the European students. Instead of an abstract intersubjectivity, an undeducible "living-bodily in-betweenness" arises here, which is atmospherically charged and "being hang up" (Hermann Schmitz) in the specific group situation. Even the few figures, programmes and problems, which can be taken up by interjections ("Exactly!"), inquiries ("What?"), expressions of displeasure ("Stop it!") and sentence fragments ("Never mind!"), are first felt atmospherically as a melodic-rhythmic impression, before the propositional content can be distinguished from the situation.

The individual feeling thus imperceptibly changes into new, collective, atmospheric associations: Through the time spent together every day, atmospheres are consolidated, durable com-

⁴⁰ Schmitz (2010 b), 213.

munity feelings are formed in the European learning group, and "implanting common situations" (Hermann Schmitz) arise, such as tacit agreement, reliability and trust, which lead to the consolidation of the group feeling and, conversely, have an effect on these situations. The acquisition of the new language is thus primarily a common, a living-bodily-atmospheric affair: language is first perceived as a melodic-rhythmic impression, especially when learning from and with partners, sometimes with imperceptibly affectively striking turns of phrase: Certain interjections, phrases, or rhymes remain inextricably linked to particular people and/or situations and shaped by subjective emotional moods. "Feelings are ways of being" (Jan Slaby). This evidence in the moment allows to say: *this belongs to me*. This is one reason why the new language imperceptibly "seeps" into the personal situation of the person concerned.⁴¹ New implanting (emotionally anchored) situations arise, whereby the new language and culture become, over time, a non-objectifiable ("non-deconstructible") part of the personal situation. Then, singling out individual figures, programmes and problems, speech enables to bridge the gap between what is pre-reflexively sensed and what may be explicated.

The respective language is thus not only a tool for personal emancipation in order to master confusing situations, but first and foremost the medium to become sensitive to an ignored "face" of Europe as an affective space, to encounter it resonantly and then to linguistically explicate relevant phenomena.

The further linguistic-cultural anchoring in situations of the host country will take a completely different direction than the linguistic and analytical perfection of those students who are primarily interested in mastering professional challenges. For these reasons, we will not measure the progress of linguistic and cultural learning at all, for example in the manner of the CEFRL. What students learn interculturally during the European Semester can only be monitored to a very limited extent. For one thing, the "whole" of a civilizational context is never learned, but the respective aspects of the world are learned selectively and successively (Jürgen Straub).

⁴¹ Trabant (2014), 35, berichtet: „Ich habe zwar als erste Fremdsprache Englisch gelernt, aber die Fremdsprache, der ich mich emotional verbunden fühle, ist das Französische. Ich habe es nicht ‚adoptiert‘, es war irgendwann einfach da, wie etwas immer schon Vertrautes.“

This explains, for example, the pedagogical value of the explorative (independently discovering) phases provided for in the curriculum. On the other hand, subjective facts basically elude the view of a third party: The progress of competence in the MONTAIGNE programme is reflected in the flexibility of the setting and the reshaping of the personal situation. The result is a competence for dealing in and with situations that arise when meeting Europeans. Following Schmitz, it is an "organ for situations with a holistic, internally diffuse meaning, in the sense of an understanding and the ability to move in this meaning and to deal with it" ⁴². Thanks to the phenomenologically based sensitivity to pre-personal experience, living-bodily sensing and communicating, feeling, collective atmospheres in common situations, students can take advantage of the opportunity for secondary epigenesis of the person, i.e. for self-discovery in Europe as an affective space.

Thanks to the affective support experienced by the participants in the European study group, they are prepared for the living-bodily-atmospheric-speech communication with the inhabitants of the respective country. Of primary interest is not what is communicated, but *how* it is communicated, i.e. it is not about the exchange of information (right / wrong), but about the atmosphere that is created during the contact with the young Europeans. Since a common European associative space of memories and experiences exists or is mediated by the pedagogical team, the students can in this way approach an unknown form of affectivity in European life. By living in a European brother- or sister-language and culture, there is an overall prospect of distancing oneself from the foreign determination that has been suffered. The MONTAIGNE programme is not limited to the mere acquisition of language, nor is it merely a discussion about Europe: It is the beginning of practice, towards the exchange between concrete persons in search of "good life" with reference to the European type of civilization. This encounter of European students is not in the sign of global strangeness, but takes place in the medium of common situations in Europe.

⁴² Hermann Schmitz (2005): *Situationen und Konstellationen. Wider die Ideologie totaler Vernetzung*, Freiburg / München: Karl Alber, 263. Competence for complex encounter situations in Europe makes use of the complexity reduction that situations generally enable. "Situations reduce complexity." Schmitz (2003): *Was ist Neue Phänomenologie?*, Rostock: Ingo Koch, 277.

9. Is the language acquisition method during the European semester a variant of the immersion method as it is used in Canada, for example?

Compared to the language learning methodology as it is usually practised in schools and universities, there are some similarities with the immersion method. Instead of re-enacting constructed situations with course participants in a role play, the immersion method involves the conversation partners affectively in the situation of searching and finding each other. The MONTAIGNE programme also assumes that the new language should be acquired embedded in meaningful situations. But a fundamental difference has to be mentioned : The immersion method assumes that the linguistic-cultural beginners' course takes place in the perspective that immigrants want to establish themselves in the new country and to leave their past behind. Along with language acquisition, the adoption of the norms and values that apply in the country of immigration is on the agenda in the way of a third socialisation: The primary political goal is civic integration. None of this is the case in the European Semester. Moreover the sociological concept of socialisation ignores the fact that the concept of the social agent is based on an abstraction from the original involvement in common situations. It is wrongly assumed that the individual is ontologically primary and that intersubjective references must first be established through socialisation processes (communitarisation) in social coexistence. On the contrary, the phenomenology of the living-bodily experience starts from common situations and early (even prenatal) living-bodily communication with the surrounding world, i.e. from pre-reflexive living-bodily self-experience in connection with meaningful impressions, embedded in collective atmospheres. The intention to discover Europe as an affective space does not understand the cultural horizon of the host country "dogmatically" in the sense of a citizenship to be acquired ; it is rather another characteristic European "face" to be discovered.

To illustrate the difference between the analytical blowing up of situations and the bodily-hermeneutic "going along" with afferent impressions, Michael Großheim has taken the novel characters of Sherlock Holmes, the "master of constellations", and Commissaire Maigret, the "master of situations"⁴³, to highlight the opposition between the analytical deduction and the living-bo-

⁴³ Michael Großheim: „Von der Maigret-Kultur zur Sherlock-Holmes-Kultur. Oder: Der phänomenologische Situationsbegriff als Grundlage der Kulturkritik“, in: Michael Großheim / Steffen Kluck (ed.) (2010): Phänomenologie und Kulturkritik. Über die Grenzen der Quantifizierung, Freiburg / München: Karl Alber, 52-84.

dily-hermeneutical approach to diffuse, but characteristic lived experience. This contrast can also be illustrated by the relationship between doctor and patient: a doctor who looks only at the objectifiable diseases (constellations) in opposition to a doctor who tries to embed the syndroms in the patient's personal situation. Accordingly, the transcultural-reductive approach can be contrasted with the intercultural-holistic approach in encounters across cultural thresholds.

In the first case, the interest in action filters out the relevant figures, programmes and problems of a situation that is not relevant beyond that; in the second case, the hermeneutic interest leads to feeling out the internally diffuse background, the "halo of meaningfulness" that surrounds the figures, programmes and problems. The background is important because only together with the pre-reflexive content, especially the emotional atmospheres, can the significance of figures, programmes and problems for present, past and future dealings with one another be assessed.

10. The MONTAIGNE programme seems to be a programme with a fundamental, political concern, right?

Fundamental yes, but not political! The choice of the MONTAIGNE programme instead of the ERASMUS programme is an existential, a practical philosophical choice. With the ERASMUS programme, no moral questions arise because the EU has already given the answer. The MONTAIGNE programme, on the other hand, assumes that only those affectively concerned can answer questions such as: *Is it right to follow the mainstream, or am I guilty? What is important in my life: Belonging to the winners or knowledge and justice? How do we want to live together in Europe in the future?* The choice of the MONTAIGNE programme puts the personal decision: *No to the collective 'mauvaise foi'* (dishonesty, subtle self-deception) that dominates the public discussion about Europe. If one wants to speak of a political agenda, then only in the negative sense: The massive interventions from interested sides to decompose the European feeling of life as well as the different styles of civilization and their anchoring in the European type of civilization, respectively to torpedo the attempts of regeneration, must be resisted.

Appendix

Main features of the preparatory module (2nd/3rd semester)

The aim of the course is to open the perspective in such a way that students overcome the "tunnel vision" of EU-Europe and the EU as a global player.

1. The European attitude towards life vs. positive science
2. The EU as a socio-political construct; Jacques Delors: *You cannot fall in love with a common market.*
3. Power fixation vs. European type of civilisation
4. Divide of reality, reductionism, "halved" empiricism
5. Europe as an affective space: *Which Europeans do we want to be, and in which Europe do we want to live together - independent of EU guidelines?*
6. European Nostrification without political contamination: Equality and Reciprocity

Sample curriculum for all degree programmes

| Sample curriculum for Bachelor Studies (6 sem. / 8 sem.) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Sem. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Summer break | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| Ort | Home Univ.: Optional | Home Univ. * | Home Univ. * | European Se- mester (3,5 Months) | European complement: Optional 2,5 Months | Home Univ. or Partner Univ. | Home Univ. or Partner Univ. | Home Univ. or Partner Univ. | Home Univ. |

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| | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| Inhalt | Elective: „EU, Europe and the European type of civilization“ (2 hrs.) | Compuls. Module „The European type of civilization“ (2 hrs.) | Compuls. Module „The European type of civilization“ (2 hrs.) | Elective language: Settling into common situations | Activity e.g. in a non-profit project in the country; recreational vacation | Professional Studies at Partner Univ. or Internat. internship / Studies | Professional Studies at Home Univ. and diploma or Internat. internship / Studies | Professional Studies or Internat. Internship / Studies | Professional Studies and Diploma or Internat. internship / Studies |
|--------|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|--|--|

*The course can also be offered in one semester with 4 hrs.

Weekly schedule of European Semester (3rd / 4th semester)

First Month: Weekly schedule à 20 hrs.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| X Groups of 15 students with 2-4 trainers / coaches on 4 days | <p>Morning / beginner's course: playful phonation / pronunciation, singing, rhythmic, choral speaking, lived bodily loosening, play scenes.</p> <p>Afternoon / Language course: recapitulation of the first linguistic Phenomena (e.g. regularities), taking into account prior knowledge and language learning experience; Teaching videos, mnemonics</p> | <p>Morning / beginner's course: playful phonation / pronunciation, singing, rhythmic, choral speaking, lived bodily loosening, play scenes.</p> <p>Afternoon / Language course: recapitulation of the first linguistic Phenomena (e.g. regularities), taking into account prior knowledge and language learning experience; Teaching videos, mnemonics</p> | <p>Exploration: Meaningful impressions: Lived bodily sensing, voices, atmospheres, free field exploration</p> | <p>Morning: Exchange and discussion of the meaningful impressions gathered the day before.</p> <p>Afternoon: Module "Europe from the perspective of the country X", discussion of affectively sensitive topics</p> | <p>Student video production: documentation and reflection of the experience in the learning group</p> |

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Weekly schedule of European Semester (3rd / 4th semester)

Second Month: Weekly schedule à 20 hrs.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| X Groups of 15 students with 2-4 trainers / coaches on 4 days | <p>Morning: Playful phonation / pronunciation, singing, play scenes, memorising, question and answer, dialogues, emotional expression.</p> <p>Afternoon / Language course: Memory sentences, simple forms etc., memorising, grammar, Syntax</p> | <p>Morning: Play scenes, memories, question and answer, dialogues, emotional expression.</p> <p>Afternoon / Language course: Memory sentences, simple forms etc., memorising, grammar, Syntax</p> | <p>Exploration: Meaningful impressions; lived bodily atmospheres, impulses, resonances, free field exploration</p> | <p>Morning: Exchange and discussion of the meaningful impressions gathered the day before.</p> <p>Afternoon: Module "Europe from the perspective of the country N.N.", discussion of affectively sensitive topics / Socio-political teaching videos</p> | <p>Student video production: documentation and reflection of the experience in the learning group</p> |

Weekly schedule of European Semester (3rd / 4th semester)

Third Month: Weekly schedule à 20 hrs.

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| X Groups of 15 students with 2-4 trainers / coaches on 4 days | <p>Morning: Phonation / pronunciation, singing, recitation of selected texts, play scenes</p> <p>Afternoon: Memory sentences, text reading, grammar, syntax; recapitulation of learner's</p> | <p>Morning: Text production, playful interaction, situational complementation</p> <p>Afternoon: Memory sentences, text reading, grammar, syntax; recapitulation of learner's</p> | <p>Discussion of multiple impressions: Lived bodily sensed atmospheres, impulses, resonances Talks with selected interlocutors</p> | <p>Morning: Exchange and discussion of the meaningful impressions gathered the day before.</p> <p>Afternoon: Module "Europe from the perspective of the country N.N.", discussion</p> | <p>Student video production: documentation and reflection of the experience in the learning group</p> |

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| | experiences including the different countries of origin; Teaching videos, mnemonics | experiences including the different countries of origin; Teaching videos, mnemonics | | of affectively sensitive topics / Socio-political teaching videos | |
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Rough structure of the activities:

- Mon, Tue: morning / beginners' course to sensitise for common situations and atmospheres (group work); antagonistic and solidary incarnation; language acquisition as a supplement to lived-bodily orientation in the world.
- Mon, Tue: Afternoon / systematic language teaching (group work) with reference to the experiences of the morning.
- Wed: whole day with explorative activity, exploration of meaningful impressions
- Thu: Partner work, information and debate in the afternoon
- Fri: Free work, documentation and reflection

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| <p>Fourth to sixth Month (optional) Seventh to twelveth Monat (optional)</p> |
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| <p>Fourth / fifth month (8 weeks):</p> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervised internship in the country (optional) |
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| <p>Sixth month:</p> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational leave • Final Europe meeting, if necessary with interested parties of the following 3rd/4th semester |
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| <p>Seventh to twelfth month</p> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semester of vocational studies (optional) |
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