For Anežka, Dominik, and Michal

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Preface

'For I go around doing nothing but persuading both young and old among you not to care for your body or your wealth in preference to . . . the best possible state of your soul, as I say to you: Wealth does not bring about excellence, but excellence brings about wealth and all other public and private blessings for men.'

(Plato)[1]

'The human good, the knowledge of which a person at first naively claims to possess while not having even the slightest premonition of its sense, despite its mysteriousness and absence, is in some sense here . . . it is here as absent and yet also as an appeal to refuse all immediate (instinctive, traditional) and individual, fragmented, contingent ends, to refuse everything which pretends to be such an end and the human good. . . . the appeal to live this life is an appeal to live a unified, focused, internally consolidated life; it is the realization of a true and consolidated existence.'

(Jan Patočka)[2]

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[1] *Apology* 30 a6-b3; tr.G. M. A. Grube; cited below p. 37.
[2] 1991/7, p. 115; cited below p. 38.

The Deep Trouble with Europe Today?

The deep trouble with Europe today, and its continuing incapacities to harmonize if not unite the sovereign domains of the European Union's now 28 member states, is its having forgotten the individual and collective ideal of the Socratic care of the soul.

That is just one of the conclusions one might critically draw from the remarkable reflections Martin Cajthaml has retrieved in his outstanding book on the central theme in the philosophy and in the vision of Europe of the eminent twentieth-century Czech philosopher, Jan Patočka.[3]

Among the many merits of *Europe and the Care of the Soul* is its providing the first thoroughly reliable and truly comprehensive account of this unifying theme in Jan Patočka's rich, varied and, in English, still insufficiently known philosophical works.[4]

That unifying theme, in an extraordinarily extensive life-long philosophical work of which only one book was published before his tragic death in the hands of the Czech secret police at the age of 70 in 1977, is the patient elucidation of one idea. And that seminal idea is the claim that the sense and significance of living truly one's life that most basically characterizes the Socratic care of the soul lies finally in the constant inquiry into the nature of the good.

Few philosophers in Europe or elsewhere have suspected the extent, the suggestiveness, and the inner coherence of Patočka's work.

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[3] The most recent biography is the brief one of Martin Cajthaml in *Jan Patočka, Platone e l'Europa*, a cura di G. Reale (Milano: Vita e Pensiero 1997), pp. 255-263.

[4] 'The most recent bibliography, although not entirely up to date, is on the web page of The Jan Patočka Archive at http://www.ajp.cuni.cz/index_e.html. See also two relatively recent bibliographies: I) L. Hagedorn and H.R. Sepp (eds.), *Jan Patočka.Texte, Dokumente, Bibliographie*, München/Prag: Karl Alber/Oikoymenh 1999, p. 523-777; and II) *Jan Patočka, Platone e l'Europa*, a cura di G. Reale, Milano: Vita e Pensiero 1997, p. 267-338' (Personal communication from Martin Cajthaml of October 30, 2013 which also includes some further information from the current specialist assistent of the Archive, Jan Frei). The standard chronology of his work is also on the web page of The Jan Patočka Archive.

For example, when not without difficulty I travelled to Prague in the late Spring of 1978 in hopes of presenting to Patočka's still grieving family a copy of a book with a Patočka article in English that a colleague of mine and I had translated from the French and then of returning to France with a samizdat typescript of Patočka's bibliography, I was at a loss. For despite my extensive researches, I had no proper notion of either the extent of Patočka's disparate philosophical work, or of the unifying role the Socratic ideal of the care of the soul played in that work, or of the richness of that ideal for thinking freshly about Europe's most basic ethical values.[5]

Now, thanks to Martin Cajthaml's work including some work in The Jan Patočka Archive in Prague, those interested in the values of the still struggling emergence of the European Union today finally have on hand an impeccably researched and very plausibly unified philosophical account of Patočka's courageous, thorough, and ceaseless inquiries into the several bases of those ethical values.

But what if anything do Patočka's philosophical reflections on Socratic ethics and the history of Europe in the midst of his own troubled times might have to do with Europe's situation today?

Europe's Troubles Today and the Disagreements about Europe's Basic Ethical Values

Nearly nine years ago, on October 29, 2004, the then 25 European Union (EU) heads of state signed a new formal draft treaty. The draft treaty incorporated for the first time a European Constitution.[6] This proposed constitution was the fruit of an almost two year fractious constitutional

[5] See Jan Patočka, 'The Husserlian Doctrine of Eidetic Intuition and its Present Critics,' tr. P. McCormick and F. Elliston in *Husserl: Expositions and Appraisals*, ed. P. McCormick and F. Elliston (Notre-Dame: University of Notre-Dame Press, 1977), pp. 150-160.

[6] *Traité établissant une constitution pour l'Europe* (Paris: La Documentation française, 2004).

convention of roughly 200 experts under the chairmanship of former French president, Valéry Giscard-d'Estaing.[7]

Eight months later however, on May 29 and June 1, 2005 and after unusually acrimonious political campaigns, popular referenda in the EU member states of France and the Netherlands clearly rejected the proposed ratification of the already signed constitutional treaty. Central to these rejections were refusals on the part of many EU leading political figures and their respective countries to yield any part of what standardly is understood today as a state's political sovereignty. Debate continues today.

Yesterday, the debate seemed to turn finally not on the acceptability or not of the draft constitution's alleged overly-liberal economic orientations and daunting complexities. Rather, the debate turned, perhaps not surprisingly in the very secular EU, on whether the constitution's preamble should or should not explicitly mention Europe's Christian backgrounds.

A more basic issue, however, underlay the debate's traditional and perhaps overly familiar tensions in Europe between the sacred and the secular. That issue was the identity of just those common basic European values,[8] whether Christian or not, that were finally supposed to inform a properly articulated constitutional notion of limited sovereignty.[9]

Today, in late 2013 after the conclusion of Martin Cajthaml's timely work and as I write this Preface, the actual contexts of these issues are mainly not philosophical. Rather, these contexts would appear to be mainly geopolitical. Where Europe now has to steer in order to restore its rapidly declining global status is quite unclear.[10]

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[7] *L'Europe de la construction à l'enlisement,* ed. T. Ferenczi (Paris: Le Monde, 2012), esp. pp. 81-86, and pp. 98-102.

[8] On 'European values' today cf. <www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu> and the specialissue of *Futuribles* (juillet-août, 2013).

[9] Cf. the conception of a future Europe in J. Delors, «Les peuples doivent voir clair dans leur système de gouvernement,» *Alternatives économiques* (*Hors Série,* N° 95, 1er Trimestre 2013), pp. 78-79, and the shifting conceptions in Germany's central views, for example, as reported in *Le Monde,* June 25, 2013.

[10] For a series of recent articles on the difficult future of Europe see *Europe 2013, Alternatives économiques* (*Hors Série,* N° 81, 3e Trimestre 2009) and *Alternatives économiques* (*Hors Série,* N° 98, 4e Trimestre 2013).

For as detailed, recent reports from the European Union, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the International Monetary Fund have continued to demonstrate amply, the European Union is still struggling with the financial, economic, political, and social consequences of the crises that began some five years ago.[11]

More fundamentally, insistent disagreement between the two present leaders of the EU, Germany and France, about whether a new treaty with a new constitution will be required to stabilize the now quite shaky EU with radical institutional reforms[12] raise freshly the question as to just what basic ethical values might eventually figure in a ratifiable EU constitution. But just where do such values originate? For Patočka, European ethical values derive from Greek philosophy.

The Origins of Ethical Values in Europe in the Socratic Accounts of the Care of the Soul

Shortly after the end of the Second World War and before the Iron Curtain's division of Europe, from 1945 to 1948, Patočka worked into his 'Lectures on Ancient Philosophy' a mature version of what he later argued in detail was the philosophical core of Europe's ethical values. This core he identified and then elaborated as what he took to be one of the most basic philosophical insights in Socrates' way of pursuing philosophical inquiry in the deeply unsettled times of late fifth-century BCE Athens. Those times were, he believed, in some important ways very much like his own in Czechoslovakia.

Arguing from close inquiry into the Greek texts of the early dialogues of Plato and orienting his researches largely by at that time the path-breaking philological and philosophical works of German scholarship, Patočka came to hold that Socrates' extraordinary practices of philosophical inquiry arose, mainly if not exclusively, from a singular understanding of

[11] See the most recent numbers from the EU's official statistics office, Eurostat, at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa/statistics, those from the OECD at http://stats.oecd.org, and those from the World Bank at http://databank.worldbank.org. For the continuing fallout on Europe and on the euro-skeptical backlash see, for example, *Le Monde,* April 24, 2013 and *Le Monde,* April 25, 2013.

[12] Cf. *Le Monde,* October 25, 2013.

what Socrates called '*elenchus*' and of what we might informally call here 'friendly philosophical cross-examination.'[13] This complex and demanding philosophical practice, some philosophers today might argue cogently, is probably at the origins of the initial rational articulation of those basic ethical values still governing Europe.

The cross-examination process when taken to its conclusion, which many of Socrates' interlocutors like even the extraordinarily talented and privileged Alcibiades were often unable to accomplish, develops through three successive phases.

The first phase of the cross-examination is one of astonishment and shock. This is the phase of what we might informally call here 'embarrassed self-discovery.'

Socrates brings round an initially mundane public conversation with one of the promising young men in Athens' social and political life to the newly problematic question in their own troubled times of what makes for a good life. Socrates asks just what the politically ambitious young man thinks the good life comes to. And his interlocutor replies with characteristic self-confidence. Then Socrates' further questions make explicit important contradictions in his interlocutor's apparently well-considered opinions about what the good life is.

Gradually it becomes evident to all that Socrates' interlocutor has not examined sufficiently his own opinions on such an important matter. Hence, despite his believing so, in fact he does not actually know what that life consists in. And not knowing that raises serious questions about his eventual suitability to hold public office and be entrusted with trying to realize the common good for his fellow citizens.

Following the exchanges carefully, Socrates, the young man himself, and his intelligent companions come to recognize that, for all his admitted intellectual and social qualities, the distinguished young man is ignorant of

[13] 'Friendly' because unlike the cross-examination most familiar today in legal proceedings, Socratic cross-examination took place in the contexts of highly charged social conventions. Cf. P. McCormick, 'Friendship's Unrequited Loves: On the Alcibiades Speech in Plato's *Symposium*,' *Proceedings of the Fifth Symposium Platonicum Pragense*, ed. M. Cajthaml and A. Havlíček (Prague: Oikoumene, 2007), pp. 293-311.

one of the most important matters, knowledge of what constitutes the good life for the individual, for society, and for proper self-knowledge as well. Moreover, until Socrates' 'friendly philosophical cross-examination,' neither the young man nor his companions have known this to be so.

The second phase of the philosophical cross-examination is one of strong emotions. This is the phase of what we might informally call here 'shame and confusion.'

For on discovering his own ignorance of what he previously had believed to be the case about life's most important matters, Socrates' interlocutor and, in a different way, some of his companions too, most often experience a profound personal and collective shame and confusion.

For previously they have believed they knew what is essential to know if one is eventually to make one's way successfully in social and political life, to live the good life. But now their apparently unobjectionable replies to Socrates' persistent questions have actually demonstrated that their most basic beliefs about just what the good life is are contradictory; their views are simply false. More profoundly, their habitual justifications for leading the self-confident and ambitious lives they are presently leading are now, evidently, utterly unreliable.

In short, these talented and privileged young aspirants to social and political prominence have most basically neglected themselves. They have neglected their spirits, their 'souls.' Despite all appearances, fundamentally they have already failed; they have failed to 'care for the soul.'

Now at the end of this second phase of the cross-examination, as Martin Cajthaml carefully observes, 'there are only two ways out of the extremely unsettling situation which the Socratic examination induces. One must either run away from Socrates with ears blocked, as Alcibiades does [in Plato's *Symposium* 216b5-6]. Or one must accept the hard-to-bear fact concerning one's own condition [as Alcibiades does in the *Alcibiades* 124b6-7: 'Well, Socrates . . . can you show me the way?'], be immersed in the Socratic questioning, and accept the life-program of the care of the soul.' [14]

If Socrates' interlocutor accepts his condition both of being most basically ignorant about the essential thing for leading one's life truly and even

[14] Cf. p. 39; translation slightly altered.

of not knowing that one is so basically ignorant, then the third and final phase of Socratic cross-examination comes into force. This is the phase of what we might informally call here 'perduring engagement.'

For Socrates, coming to lead one's life not falsely but truly is engaging oneself unremittingly in the pursuit of a special kind of knowledge. This is the twofold knowledge of what is the true good for human beings and of what this knowledge entails for living one's life.

Such a commitment, on Patočka's distinctive although not uncontroversial interpretation of the Socratic care of the soul, must be a ceaseless and life-long one. For, as Patočka argues in his 1947 lectures on Socrates and as Martin Cajthaml summarizes, 'the Socratic search for the human good never finds a definitive answer . . . [yet] only such an endless search for the ever elusive good can give human existence its highest perfection.' [15]

Thus Socratic cross-examination aims through embarrassed self-discovery, shame and confusion, and a perduring engagement, to the adoption of a rationally justifiable view that the essential element in what leading a truly human life comes to is the care of the soul. And the care of the soul itself is to be understood as 'an intellectual path marked by a constant refutation of the insufficiently reflective moral convictions concerning the human good. . . .' [16]

But what does such an apparently merely theoretical philosophical view have to do with the practical historical development of ethical values in Europe? By way of reply, Patočka patiently undertook the task of providing an account of the fate of the Socratic account of the care of the soul through the major periods not just in classical thought but in European history generally.

The Historical Development of the Socratic Care of the Soul in Europe

After the initial Socratic insights about the way towards the living of a truthful existence that motivated his habitual cross-examinations of some of

[15] Cf. p. 40.
[16] Cf. p. 41.

the most talented and politically ambitious young men of Athens, the most important moment in the early history of the care of the soul was the fuller articulation of this ideal in the works of his greatest follower, Plato. For Patočka, this articulation assumed a metaphysical guise in Plato's sharpening of the Socratic search for ethical definitions of the virtues and of the good with the ingenious help of his own complex doctrine of Ideas or Forms and especially with the Idea of the Good as the highest of the Ideas.

Despite the great advances Aristotle introduced into the previous understandings of the good in the ethical domains, Patočka saw the next major steps in the development of the care of the soul in Stoic ethical reflections during the Hellenistic period. Then, without investigating the metaphysical byways of Neo-platonic philosophies, Patočka took up the major transformation of the care of the soul in the emergence and protracted dominance in Europe of the spiritual and no longer exclusively metaphysical concerns of Christian philosophy.

As the importance of Christian philosophy began to recede with the rediscovery of the various Greek and Roman philosophical traditions in the Renaissance, however, Patočka thought that what was the ideal of the care of the soul seemed gradually to change into what could be called 'the care for the world.' Further, the several scientific revolutions in the early modern period appeared to give a new precision to the emerging care for the world while relegating most of the traditional care for the soul to the increasingly separate domain of religion.

For Patočka, this strongly mathematical and naturalizing influence on the transformation of an original ethical ideal of the care of the soul to a new scientific ideal of the care for the world, even when Renaissance learning was able to delineate the traditional Socratic ideal with the help of the rediscovery of the classics of ancient Greek philosophy, reached its culmination in the Enlightenment. For then the very form of the care of the soul as a rational and not just ethical ideal changed definitively. This change, Patočka believed, came with the re-construal of the rational itself now exclusively in the new terms of the mathematical, the scientific, and the technological.

This radical transformation of the original European ethical ideal of the care of the soul understood in expansive reasonable and spiritual terms to a scientific ideal of the care of the world understood in exclusive and reductive terms of strictly scientific notions of rationality for Patočka not only domi-

nated the rise to power in the late nineteenth-century of the techno-sciences. Much more importantly for him, this new idea of rationality also made possible the unthinkable immensities of evil and suffering in the twentieth-century's two world wars and the Cold War that followed which framed Patočka's own life.

Born in 1907, Patočka lived through the horrors of the terrible twentieth-century world until his own untimely death in 1977 in the Soviet occupied Czechoslovakia. No wonder then that he came to believe that his historical ruminations apparently led to an inescapable twofold conclusion.

His argued conviction was that the final reduction of the very idea of human rationality to techno-scientific rationality only had come about mainly because of the loss of the original European ethical ideal of the Socratic care for the soul.

Moreover, whatever hope that might still be left for a newly emergent union of European states that he already sensed both in the multiplying signs of incipient revolt against the Soviet hegemony in Central Europe and in his endless discussions with Vaclav Havel and the other co-founders with him of Charter 77, required a critical return to the Socratic ethical ideal of a life lived truthfully through ceaseless inquiry into the nature of the good.

This was Patočka's answer to the question his eminent student, Karel Kosík, raised with me that belated Spring in Prague in 1978 when he counselled me not to bring still more trouble on Patočka's grieving family by trying to give them a book. 'But what could doing philosophy ever look like in times like these?' he asked.

But was Patočka right? That is, did he come to a satisfactory interpretation of the Socratic ideal of the care of the soul, and did he succeed in working out a cogent enough account of the historical development of this ideal in European history?

Critically Appropriating the Socratic Ideal

With respect to Patočka's understanding of the Socratic ideal of the care of the soul Martin Cajthaml has detailed a number of sympathetic yet carefully wrought criticisms. He puts these criticisms on exhibit, however, only after expending a great deal of thought about just what Patočka came to hold

about such difficult matters after years of protracted philosophical investigation and political harassment.

Cajthaml's critical but nonetheless genuine appreciation for Patočka's efforts in working out some of the implications of the care of the soul for the connected ideas of historicity, intentionality, and of the life world, to take but a few of several salient examples, cannot be doubted. Moreover, he has also scrutinized critically but sympathetically Patočka's intellectual debts to his teacher, Edmund Husserl, as well as to the work of Hegel and Heidegger.

In particular, Cajthaml has scrupulously investigated Patočka's claims of how Plato apparently developed the original Socratic doctrine and, hence, of how Plato still merits the title of the father of European metaphysics. For Plato's metaphysics, some philosophers would argue today, still remains, even if not exclusively, at the core of the European philosophical understanding of ethics.

On this central component of Patočka's philosophical legacy Martin Cajthaml reaches the conclusion that the initial Socratic ideal of the care of the soul can be ascribed to Plato only at the finally unreasonable price of 're-Socratizing Plato.' That is, if I understand him correctly, Plato does not in fact take over and develop the metaphysics for the Socratic ethical ideal of understanding the examined life as the only life worth living in the most basic terms of the care of the soul. For, however sympathetic Plato remains to his teacher Socrates, Plato develops his own quite extraordinary philosophical inquiries out of a much more fundamental, and finally independent, set of epistemological and metaphysical concerns.[17]

[17] These points may be made more specific. Thus, 'the essential point of my criticism,' Martin Cajthaml writes in a personal note of October 31, 2013, 'is this: Patočka interprets Socrates as teaching that the good cannot be known (it is present only indirectly in the sense that the life in pursuit of the good is evidently a good life). It is not a matter of course that Socrates is interpreted this way, but since we have the problem with the reconstruction of the historical Socrates, Patočka's interpretation is certainly within the borders of what can be ascribed to Socrates. Thus the problem arises not with this interpretation as such but at the moment when Patočka attempts to interpret Plato as having the same 'Socratic' non-cognitivist approach to the good. For in Plato, particularly in the image of the Sun in *Republic* VI, it is said that the good is megiston mathéma (it is the highest object of teaching and learning). Moreover, if we take the approach of the

The ethical remains of central concern for Plato, of course. But Socrates' perhaps overly narrow focus on the ethical and his overly superficial elucidation of the epistemological and the metaphysical dimensions of the essential definitions of the virtues keep Plato finally from endorsing any absolute primacy for the Socratic ideal of the care of the soul.

But if Martin Cajthaml is right in his strictures on Patočka for re-Socratizing Plato, as I believe he is, then the chronicle of just how the Socratic ideal of the care of the soul develops through European history also requires strictures. For the history of Western philosophy understood here as philosophy in Europe is not a series of footnotes to Socrates but, as the old handbooks used to repeat after Whitehead,[18] to Plato. And if Patočka cannot sufficiently warrant his basic historical claim that Plato most basically refines the Socratic ideal of the care of the soul, then the main stages in the historical development of this so-called Platonic and not just exclusively Socratic ideal must be critically recast.

As Martin Cajthaml writes, although 'Patočka is right in ascribing the care of the soul to Plato, the problem is that he conceives it in certain respects too much along the lines of the Socratic one (as he understands it). These respects are: the notion of the good and its knowability and the nature of the virtues.' [19]

Tübingen school, we have in Plato the theory of Principles, i.e., a metaphysical theory of the One-Good. And, since, Patočka in his texts from the 70s accepts explicitly the approach of the Tübingen school, we have the following contradiction: on one hand Plato is being interpreted as the one who teaches that the good is never to be reached by our cognition, on the other as a metaphysician whose metaphysics reaches its highpoint in the theory of the Good. These two approaches which are taken by Patočka cannot be reconciled. In the book I only argue from within Patočka's perspective in order to point out the tension, if not a contradiction, in his approach. Since, however, I also think that the approach of the Tübingen school to Plato is substantially correct, at one point I also argue that what Patočka says about the knowledge of the good in Plato is simply not to be justified by the Corpus Platonicum and the indirect tradition (*agrafa dogmata*). So the way you render my standpoint here is generally correct, but might be made more specific.'

[18] A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: 1941), p. 63; thanks to M. Cajthaml for this reference.

[19] Personal communication from M. Cajthaml, October 31, 2013.

In this context Patočka's jump from the Stoics to the Medievals without detailing the metaphysical and ethical analyses of the major Neoplatonists is particularly unfortunate. For by plunging into the reception of Platonic philosophy and not just into Plato's works by themselves, Patočka might well have been brought to reformulate more critically his views on the distance between Plato's related but different understanding of what makes for the truly good life and Socrates' own putative views on that very difficult matter.

By way of critically appropriating Patočka's contributions then to our understanding today of what lies at the bases of European ethical values we would need to register some rather important criticisms. Some of these Martin Cajthaml brings out quite helpfully, as for example his discussions of Patočka's unsubstantiated claim that the efforts to understand the good can never fully succeed and hence must be endless. Others we ourselves would have to introduce such as, thanks to the extraordinary developments in the study of Greek philosophy in the last generation, what now seems to be Patočka's uncritical over-reliance on O. Gigon's account of both Socrates and Plato, or, thanks to a more nuanced and detailed understanding of European history today, what now seems also to be Patočka's over-reliance on G. Barraclough's important but quite narrow reading of that history.

But some of the main lines of Patočka's re-Socratization of Plato, however they must be criticized, are suggestive enough by themselves for us now to return quite briefly by way of conclusion to the pertinence of Patočka's extraordinarily rich theme of the care of the soul for current ongoing discussions about Europe's quite uncertain future.

How then might Patočka's understanding of the Socratic (if not Socratic-Platonic) care of the soul be helpful in the ongoing discussions of the EU's uncertain future?

Europe's Troubles Tomorrow?

In 2013, for the first time since 2009, Europe as a whole had fallen into recession. By April 2013 average unemployment in the then 27 member

states[20] of the EU had reached more than 12.2% with more than 19 million people out of work.[21] At the same time, widespread demonstrations of thousands of people broke out once again in Athens, Madrid, Rome, and Paris.

Negotiations among the then 27 member states of the EU regarding the all-important budget for 2014-2020 were deadlocked for months until a basically unsatisfactory agreement was finally reached on June 27, 2013 only. Moreover, the protracted budget deadlock was not over the common economic good for Europe as a whole. Rather, the deadlock was essentially connected with inflated national egoisms,[22] increasing populisms, and politically unacceptable limitations on state sovereignties.[23]

Worrisomely, given Germany's leadership role in the EU today, the most recent German federal elections of September 2013 resulted in quite difficult coalition tractations. Further, the new EU elections scheduled for May 2014 were increasingly haunted by rising skepticism about the EU and the growing importance of EU populist anti-European political parties.

Still, all deeply concerned stake-holders continue to agree today, that without closer economic, financial, and budgetary harmonization if not union among the EU states, Europe itself will almost certainly continue its global decline.[24] Moreover, many political leaders of the EU member states themselves seem to realize that the key to such closer substantial bonds will require something more substantive than, as perhaps too often in the past as in Lisbon in 2007,[25] just one more treaty revision.[26] But just how could such closer harmonization and union be reached?

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[20] On July 1, 2013, Croatia became the 28th member of the EU, and on January 1, 2014, the EU member, Latvia, hopes to become the 18th member of the current 17 member Euro group within the EU.

[21] BBC World News, April 2, 2013; *Le Monde,* April 4, 2013; Eurostat May, 2013 (see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics). The source for the April 2013 percentage of EU unemployment is Haver Analytics cited in the 'Economic and Financial Indicators' of *The Economist* from June 15, 2013.

[22] *Le Monde,* February 5, 2013.

[23] *Le Monde,* November 22 and November 23, 2012.

[24] See for example the articles in the special issue of Alternatives économiques (Hors–Série N° 95, 1er trimestre 2013), esp. pp. 12-29.

[25] The EU heads of state comprising the European Council of the EU signed the draft Lisbon Treaty on December 13, 2007, and the Treaty became effective on December 1, 2009. The quite difficult negotiations tried to incorporate as much as

One essential key would seem to be agreement on and successful ratification of a new European Constitution that would entrench agreed-upon European ethical values. This agreement however seems at the moment quite difficult to reach for a number of different reasons. One of the central reason concerns the nature of the basic ethical values of Europe.

Some basic ethical values in Europe today are already entrenched in the Preamble of the EU Lisbon Treaty that came into effect on December 1, 2009. This treaty tried to retrieve some of the central elements in the rejected EU Draft Constitution of 2005. And among the elements retrieved were the formulations of several of the basic ethical values that had already figured in the Preamble of that rejected draft.

These basic ethical values, however, are currently under even greater critical pressure than they were in the acrimonious political discussions of Spring 2005 that led to the non-ratification of the proposed Draft Constitution. For with increasing EU-wide secularization and the hardening of the interpretation of the peculiar French culture of *laicization,* some quite influential European public intellectuals and political commentators are viewing some of these basic ethical values as essentially involving religious and especially Christian elements.

Since, however, such elements are taken as anathema to the currently reigning understanding of democracy in Europe in terms of a thoroughly secular republic, such ethical values, even if basic, cannot be allowed to be entrenched in any eventual new EU constitution.

But perhaps several new questions about Europe's future now arise. And some of these questions may arise in part thanks to the clear vision that Martin Cajthaml's now work allows us of the extraordinarily suggestive philosophical reflections of Jan Patočka on the nature of the Socratic care for the soul and the fate of Europe in the twentieth century.

By way of conclusion, then, perhaps one of those questions might be put here even if in a necessarily preliminary way only.

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possible of the previously rejected 2005 Treaty of the European Constitution without much success. Accordingly, agreement was reached on the understanding that the Lisbon Treaty was a 'simplified treaty' that merely 'amended without replacing' the major Maastricht Treaty signed in February 1992.

[26] Cf. *The Economist,* 'Amsterdam, Nice, Lisbon . . . ,' April 27, 2013, p. 37.