TENSIONS OF EUROPE
(ToE)
NETWORK NEWSLETTER

(4) July 2007

Theme: Third Plenary Conference of the ToE Network

Rotterdam ca. 1928
(Rotterdam: City of Rotterdam)
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Word from the Editor

This summer started with a bang as the ToE network opened the season with its third plenary conference. The two summer schools taking place in Germany, and in Greece and Turkey, make clear that the summer, rather than a quiet period, will be very active for ToE. This newsletter focus is **Rotterdam Reflections** and includes other topics of interest to the community.

The ToE conference was held jointly with the Launch of the ESF EUROCORES Program *Inventing Europe*. Both the ESF and the Foundation for the History of Technology sponsored and organized it. We are grateful to all sponsors of this stimulating event. It was my pleasure to participate in both the Program Committee and the Local Arrangements Committee. In the earliest stage of planning, the Program Committee was pleased to see that the proposed sessions reflected a variety of research topics significant to understanding technology and European history. Ultimately, the contributions of conference participants insured that the shared intellectual framework of the ToE community was discussed and debated. The Local Arrangements Committee made certain we were well-fed and rested not to mention entertained. I would like to thank all the members of both committees, together with conference contributors, for their efforts to make the Rotterdam conference a success.

For this newsletter, I invited attendees of the conference to write about their impressions of the Rotterdam days. I am grateful for their contributions that present a spectrum of views. You will also see the first Archive Report in this newsletter. My intention is to include information about archives of interest to ToE researchers in each newsletter. I would like to thank all of you who have shared your Rotterdam reflections as well as contributors to other sections of the newsletter.

The next ToE Newsletter will focus on this year's two summer schools. All summer school participants are welcome to send me their musings about technology and environments, circulation, and/or the Cold War. I invite all participants in the ToE Network to keep us informed on topics of interest by submitting pieces to me for the next newsletter by 21 September.

Donna C. Mehos
Editor
Eindhoven University of Technology
d.c.mehos@tue.nl

News

ToE Summer Schools 2007

Technologies and their Environments: The Circulation of Materials, People, and Knowledge in Twentieth-Century Europe
8-13 July 2007
Ockenheim, Germany

The Second ToE Summer School, organized by the Graduate School *Topology of Technology*, Darmstadt, in collaboration with the *Tensions of Europe* Network, just took place. The discussion subjects were:

- Circulation and Metabolism as Interpretive Concepts, with lectures by Dieter Schott on *Circulation, Public Health and the Infrastructural Networking of Cities in the 19th and 20th Century*, and Sabine Barles on *Material Flow Analysis and Urban Metabolism Past and Present: Stakes and Methods*
- Resource Management in Europe and Overseas, with lecture by Wilhelm Urban on *Water Resource Management in Europe, Namibia, and China*
- The Industrialization of Nature with lecture by Cornelis Disco on *The Rhine as Multiplex European Commons: Traffic, Tensions, and Tourism*
- Streams of Waste in the Consumer Society, with lecture by Heike Weber on *Out of Sight, Out of Mind? Topologies of Trash in a Historical Perspective*
- The Spatial Turn in Technology Studies: Summary and Outlook with lecture by Mikael Hård on *Inner and Outer Environments: The Concept of Hygiene Revisited*

For further information, contact:
Mikael Hård
Darmstadt University of Technology
hard@ifs.tu-darmstadt.de

Cold War Technology in Europe
27 August-1 September 2007
Chios, Greece, and Izmir, Turkey

Thirty-five applicants from fourteen countries have applied to this summer school that will be hosted by the History of Science and Technology Division, Philosophy and History of Science Department, University of Athens, Greece (www.phs.uoa.gr/ht/), and organized by ESF's *Inventing Europe* in collaboration with *Tensions of Europe.* Aristotle Tympas and Yaprak Gulcan, the summer school conveners, are finalizing the program. Details concerning the list of participants, the program, the pre-assigned material by the teachers, the proposals submitted by the participants, and all other relevant information will be available soon on the web, and will be updated throughout the summer (www.phs.uoa.gr/ht). This web page will be linked to the *Inventing Europe* and *Tensions of Europe* websites.

For further information, contact:
Aristotle Tympas
National and Kapodistrian University
tympas@phs.uoa.gr

Conference

History | Gender | Computing
30-31 May 2008
University of Minnesota

This workshop-conference is being organized and hosted by the Charles Babbage Institute

Papers and Poster Proposals Deadline: 1 December 2007

Please see project website for conference information:

http://www.umn.edu/~tmisa/gender/

Hot off the Press (almost)

Urban Machinery

Edited by Mikael Hård and Thomas J. Misa, *Urban Machinery: Inside Modern European Cities* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press) is due to appear in the fall. Richly illustrated, this book is the result of the productive Cities Theme of the first ToE phase that Hård and Misa coordinated. It describes European cities as complex technological constructions. I, like many of you, certainly look forward to reading this.

National Identities

Don't miss the upcoming special issue of *History and Technology* (Volume 23, September 2007) on National Identities of Engineers, guest edited by Y. Antoniou, M. Assimokopoulos, and K. Chatzis.

Archive Report

Charles Babbage Institute: European Records

The following article is condensed from one appearing in the Spring 2007 Charles Babbage Institute Newsletter *<www.cbi.umn.edu>. Each of the collections referred to below has a finding guide published on-line and available through the CBI website. Detailed keyword searches through an on-line search page can also turn up specific documents or folders from other CBI collections.*

The Charles Babbage Institute at the University of Minnesota has 250 different collections. Three of CBI's largest collections are the Burroughs Corporation Records, Control Data Corporation Records, and the National Bureau of Standards Computer Literature Collection. These U.S.-based collections might suggest that CBI's archival records are heavily concentrated on the U.S. In fact, CBI records also contain an abundance of rich materials on international computing, with a strong pan-European aspect.

International Federation of Information Processing

The International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) was founded in 1960 and has long been an important force for international cooperation in research and education in the computer and software fields. CBI holds a wealth of information on this important organization, particularly in the pivotal years from its founding through the mid-1970s. The Europe-oriented IFIP was born in large part from the dedicated effort of Isaac Auerbach. Materials in CBI's Isaac Auerbach papers include materials on the founding of the organization, the biennial congresses and the growth of the organization, the relationship between IFIP and other associations, strategic planning documents, and other related materials.

CBI also has a collection entitled International Federation for Information Processing Working Group 2.1, *ALGOL Bulletin* records. ALGOL (Algorithmic Language), a family of programming languages developed in the second half of the 1950s by a joint committee of European and American scientists and computer specialists, was used widely by computer scientists for decades. The *ALGOL Bulletin* grew out of a 1959 conference in Copenhagen, and served primarily European users. In 1962 IFIP created Working Group 2.1 and the *Bulletin* became an IFIP publication. CBI holds *Bulletin* numbers 1-8, 10-16, and 19-39 (1959-1976).

National Bureau of Standards Materials

The U.S. National Bureau of Standards (NBS) Computer Literature collection contains an immense

number of reports and documents collected by NBS from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s. The collection contains many reports on or about the major Western European countries as well as Japan.

Burroughs International Operations

The bulk of the Burroughs Corporation material is on U.S. operations and issues. Nevertheless, there is a significant amount of material on international sales operations and foreign subsidiaries. This includes Burroughs correspondence with the British Board of Trade from the mid-1950s; financial analysis on most Western European countries between 1965 and 1969; international marketing studies from the late 1950s and early 1960s; subsidiary literature from Asia, Austria, Chile, Jamaica, Nicaragua, and Spain in the 1960s; and Burroughs International Group 10-Year Forecasts from 1965-1979.

International Computing Collection

The International Computing Collection contains a geographically diverse set of materials. Part of the collection is arranged by continent and region, with materials organized by individual countries. The other part of the collection contains reports of international surveys on computing. For the major Western European nations and Japan, there are a substantial volume of reports, journals, and other literature. This is especially true with the United Kingdom, where there are records from Cambridge University on EDSAC and EDSAC 2 and from National Physical Laboratory on the ACE computer and the Division of Computer Science. There is also documentation on many British computer firms, including Elliott Brothers Ltd., English Electric, Ferranti Ltd., LEO, Powers-Samas, ICT, ICL, and others. For many other countries,

such as Egypt, South Africa, Brazil, China, Israel, India, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden there are a small number of reports and literature.

The collection also contains roughly three boxes of materials of international surveys and conference reports that concentrate on computing in Western Europe. A few examples of the dozens of surveys and institutionally supported reports include those from NATO, the European Computer Manufacturers Association, IFIP, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe. These reports include Mina Rees' *Applied Mathematics in Western Europe* (1948) and a report by the Commission of European Communities (1980), with the bulk of the material from the 1960s and 1970s.

International Y2K Records

The International Y2K Cooperation Center (IY2KCC) was established in December 1988 by representatives from more than 120 countries at the First Global Meeting of National Y2K Coordinators at the United Nations. The organization's mission was to "promote increased strategic cooperation and action among governments, peoples, and the private sector to minimize adverse Y2K effects on the global society and economy." Materials in the collection include: country reports, popular press clippings, country questionnaires, country telephone directories, background materials on Y2K and IY2KCC, audio visual materials, conference reports and presentations, sector reports, and the relevant papers of Bruce W. McConnell, the director of IY2KCC.

Soviet Union, Russia and Eastern Bloc Computing

CBI's Russian, Soviet, and Eastern Bloc Computing Collection primarily comes from Mosaic Group, an interdisciplinary organization founded by Seymour Goodman in 1977 at Princeton to regularly collect documentation and study the development and application of computing in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China. The collection is nearly 50 cubic feet and was housed at the University of Arizona prior to Goodman's donation of the material to CBI in 2000. Additions have subsequently been made from material donated by Willis Ware (grey literature) and the American Institute of Physics (books). Overall, the collection contains technical reports, trip reports, foreign language books and serials, product literature, dictionaries and glossaries, meeting/conference materials, dissertations, technical manuals, and grey literature. The bulk of the material is on computing in the former Soviet Union between 1960 and the 1980s.

Catalogued Reference Collection Material

There are also resources on international computing in CBI's non-circulating reference collection of books and reports. Some of these are relatively rare such as Computer Consultants Limited, *The European Computer Users Handbook* (1967). This contains information on the number of installations of various computers (U.S. and non-U.S.) throughout Western Europe. It also provides lists and short descriptive notes on European-manufactured digital and analog computers. Other sources in CBI's reference collection are extremely rare, such as James Connolly's *History of Computing in Europe* (IBM World Trade Corporation,

1967). CBI holds the *only* copy of this informative volume listed on WorldCat (OCLC).

CBI hopes to further expand upon its rich set of research materials on international computing in the coming years and decades.

Jeffrey R. Yost
Charles Babbage Institute
yostx003@umn.edu

Reflections on Rotterdam:
Reports on the Third Plenary *Tensions of Europe* Conference, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Notes from a ToE EUROCORES Participant:
Warm Sun and Rain in Rotterdam

In the foggy morning of Thursday, 7 June, I approached Rotterdam and the third *Tensions of Europe* plenary conference by rail. My expectations were high, as I am in the lucky group of people that has been awarded funding for the European Science Foundation's EUROCORES program *Inventing Europe: Technology and the Making of Europe*. This was going to be the first opportunity to meet my fellow members of the funded *Eurocrit* project. Furthermore, my *Tensions of Europe* experience over the last six years is distinguished from my several other network fora by its focus on facilitating collaboration.

Arriving at the Rotterdam railway station that morning I was struck by two facts: the square next to the station was an open building site for the extension of the metro to enhance Rotterdam's infrastructure, and the hotel I was heading for - the Westin Rotterdam - was just across the building site and next to the conference building. I steered my luggage through the building site and before I had completed my check in, I was caught in discussion with a couple

of fellow *Eurocrit* members, planning collaborative elements of the project.

One reason for the Rotterdam conference was the launching of the four funded *Inventing Europe* EUROCORES projects, and simultaneously it was the Third *Tensions of Europe* Plenary Conference. This duality influenced the conference, where the role of *Tensions of Europe* with its large community grew as the conference went by. Thursday was preparatory. The members of the four awarded projects met for the first time, each enthusiastic project group planned their own project and ESF started facilitating collaboration between the four projects to improve project results and develop new project ideas. I experienced this process to be fertile. Notably, potential collaborations came to encompass people from the four project proposals assessed fit for funding by ESF's expert panel process that the national funding agencies did not fund. ESF had invited the members of these projects to the conference. Though understandably disappointed, members from these project teams established promising contacts to funded projects.

Also being a member of the *Tensions of Europe* Advisory Group, I was among the people responsible for developing the full *Tensions of Europe* project with its many more participants and broader research agenda than the scope of the four funded *Inventing Europe* projects. We decided for a *Tensions of Europe* meeting at the SHOT conference in Lisbon in 2008 and for a new *Tensions* conference in 2009. Furthermore, the history of technology summer school in Bordeaux in 2006 and the two summer schools in 2007 are very encouraging. The advisory group also encouraged Johan Schot's plans to establish a system for working papers on-line and we discussed how to advance the research agendas of the *Tensions of Europe* fields not covered by the

awarded *Inventing Europe* projects. I think *Tensions of Europe*'s broad history of technology scope is essential for its established dynamics.

The program Friday and Saturday featured a large set of excellently combined *Tensions of Europe* research and collaborative sessions illustrating the network's intellectual scope and drive. As customary, the out-of-session activities were prominent in Rotterdam. The lunches and coffees were served in an open space equipped with small tables that facilitated networking with several people during a break.

On the last night of the conference, we were a group of *Tensions* regulars who were excited to see how Johan Schot and his team would live up to the party expectations from the theatre party in Budapest and the sauna and island parties in Lappeenranta. Fortunately they had chosen to stay indoors that night, as we got heavy rain. First, Judith Schueler and Andreas Fickers guided us through a gorgeous European-song-contest-style European Taste Festival with introductions. The final surprise was a well-prepared and excellent band of Dutch residents and *Tensions of Europe* participants who insured the dance floor was crowded.

Finally, on Sunday morning at 11.45, a somewhat weary group of people started on a great tour of Rotterdam's impressively busy harbor. The sunny weather facilitated an easy-going parting as people gradually left during the day for their way back home. The four funded *Inventing Europe* projects got a great start, and all of us got another opportunity to develop our network and common *Tensions of Europe* research agendas.

Lars Heide
Copenhagen Business School
heide.lpf@cbs.dk

Notes on the EUROCORES Presentations: Inventing meets Tensions

Who are they? What will they say? On what will they be doing research? The presentation of the Awarded *Inventing Europe* Projects formed the apotheosis of a period of multi-layered uncertainty.

For over a year, nobody knew what the outcome would be of designing a EUROCORES project with the European Science Foundation (ESF). What would happen after the gradually-acquired intellectual property of the *Tensions of Europe* (ToE) network would be transformed in a proposal from which all scholars in Europe could potentially profit? What would become of the existing, lively, friendly network that ToE had become through its multiple subgroups and its meetings in Budapest and Lappeenranta? Would it be possible to establish a link between the ESF project and the ToE network? Did ToE throw something to be scrambled? Entering EUROCORES seemed like an adventurous bet in which something was to be gained, but also something to be lost.

The uncertainty marking the institutional endeavor, slowly transformed into uncertainty for all groups of scholars that tinkered with wonderful proposals. So many relevant research proposals with highly-praised reviews lost in the first round from even more highly-praised proposals. A new period of doubt started for all these proposals invited to write an elaborated project plan for the next round. A complex and opaque game started in which the European Science Foundation and national research councils decided on the fate of many scholars.

Not long before the Rotterdam Conference, ESF announced the awarded projects. This sudden certainty, created a strange kind of curiosity for us to meet those scholars that emerged victors of the battle. As a result, the conference became a laboratory in which the old and the new network, the ESF winners and losers, the bottom-up and top-down approach, the *Tensions* and the *Inventions* would meet.

During the plenary presentation, the new EUROCORE projects were given face(s). ESF representative, Rüdiger Klein and ToE's source of inspiration Johan Schot opened the grand show. Milena Veenis had interviewed the main applicants of the four awarded projects: Gerard Alberts, Arne Kaijser, Jordi Mati-Henneberg, and Ruth Oldenziel. These interviews, mixed with video fragments and images, presented the four projects. After these wonderful presentations, all the participants in each project had a turn on stage to be questioned critically about their scholarly intentions by, respectively, Robert Bud, Pascal Griset and Luda Klusakova. Many of the people, on screen or on stage, could already have been spotted during the conferences in Budapest and Lappeenranta. Luckily, new people also entered the stage, with exciting and challenging research proposals.

The uncertainties slowly faded away. The distinction between the old and the new appeared smaller than feared; winners and losers forged strategic new alliances, there was room to vent frustration with a smile; and *Tensions* and *Inventions* merge into the beautiful new Intensions.

Judith Schueler
Netherlands Study Centre for
Technology Trends
schueler@stt.nl

Notes from a ToE Newcomer:
One Europe or Multiple Europes?

What is Europe, a transnational unity or an assembly of heterogeneous entities? This question was a recurrent – though often implicit – theme of the *Tensions of Europe* conference. Having grown up in Germany and moved to Philadelphia five years ago, this question holds particular significance for me. On the one hand, I identify strongly as a Rhinelander and as a German, for example when I celebrate carnival or cheer for the German soccer team. In comparison, my European identity finds little traction except in those instances when bureaucrats in Brussels are deciding, for example, about the privacy of my personal data on transatlantic flights. On the other hand, living now on the other side of the Atlantic, I know how appealing it is talking about "Europe" as a whole, without being bogged down by considerations of confusing regional and national identities, histories, and policies.

Over the course of the conference, Europe and Europeans were repeatedly conceived of differently, depending on whether they were viewed from the inside or from the outside. As historians, we need to take seriously these different perspectives, and how they have changed over time. Rather than seeking a "capital E" Europe, in our studies we need to contextualize and multiply our historical notions of Europe and Europeanization.

The opening keynote lecture and discussion illustrated early in the conference various perspectives. In his address, Charles Bright invited the audience to situate Europe in the new global history. This implied a shift in periodization: Europeanization, as globalization, is no longer understood as an ongoing process, but as a done deed, accomplished some time between the seventeenth and the mid-nineteenth century. At the same time – and Bright emphasized this aspect less strongly – Europe became a homogeneous entity in the world because competition between European empires turned into an afterthought. Taking the viewpoint of the new global history, one will speak of Europe rather than of European empires or nations.

Helmuth Trischler responded to Bright's global view with a provincializing one. Presenting the results of a recent survey of German history departments by Dominic Sachsenmaier, Trischler noted that German historians rarely address Europe as a whole. Four out of five historians pursue traditional German history, and of the remaining fifth, more than half study Western Europe with the tiny remainder being split between Eastern European and global history. European history in Germany is, at the most, an assemblage of studies of smaller entities. Trischler thus reminded the audience of national and regional biases within Europe. He also cautioned that any research which addresses Europe as a historically developed entity tends to stabilize a Eurocentric bias.

In the presentation of the *Inventing Europe* projects and in related *Tensions of Europe* conference sessions, these tensions between the European and the regional or national perspectives persisted. For example, the *Software for Europe* EUROCORES project (SOFT-EU), brought to the fore heterogeneity within and outside of Europe. The SOFT-EU project will investigate the appropriation of the European-based programming language Algol and of IBM applications software. During the project presentation on Friday morning, Robert Bud asked whether the European computer industry was

challenged by the 'défi Américain' or the 'défi IBM.' In other words, he wondered whether Europeans faced the competition of a group of US computer manufacturers or of IBM only, thus viewing Europeans as a group commonly challenged from the outside, while suggesting that outside computer manufacturers, rather than being a unified group, were to be distinguished into IBM and others. In the ensuing discussion, Ivan Tchalakov confirmed Bud's suspicion when he reported that Bulgarians did not see computing in the Western world as a monolithic whole; rather, Bulgarians distinguished between different Western approaches, for example between the French Machines Bull and IBM.

In related conference sessions on the history of computing on Saturday, presenters mainly emphasized regional and national biases within Europe. For example, Petri Paju, in his presentation on the first computer in Finland, the ESKO, alluded to the different agendas of Swedish and Finnish speaking communities who were associated with the national computing center in Helsinki where the ESKO was installed. Adrienne van den Boogard, in her analysis of the appropriation of high-level computing languages, argued that even within a single Dutch company, Philips-Electrologica, two different styles of computing co-existed: one driven by Algol, a language developed by academic computer scientists in Europe, and one driven by IBM's Fortran. Helena Durnová, similarly, drew attention to differences between Eastern and Western Europe in her analysis of the adoption of IBM technologies in Czechoslovakia. Timo Leimbach, finally, in his analysis of the European response to global competition in the computer industry in the late 1960s, argued that European politicians reacted on the national rather than on the European level; they devised national funding programs to support their own national

champions rather than pursuing a common European initiative. All four presentations provincialized the European and sometimes even the national by emphasizing internal differences.

How are we to reconcile the tensions between the regional, national, and European perspectives? Certainly, the European perspective will not emerge from adding up eight or ten or 27 national case studies. Rather, we need to understand the perspectives of historical actors, in Europe as well as outside of Europe. We need to ask when regional or national perspectives dominate, and when Eastern and Western or even Pan-European dimensions evolve. Also, we need to take outside perspectives into account. How was European technology perceived by colonized people? Could Europeans impose their own self-perceptions, or were they influenced by outside perspectives? Integrating colonial and global perspectives will foster the multiplying and de-centering of our understandings of Europe.

The question, what Europe is, is not an essentialist one; determining a "capital E" Europe would be a fallacy. If we investigate what Europe has meant for different peoples at different times, whether their views agreed or conflicted and how they interacted with each other, and what consequences those views have had, we understand Europe as a historical construct. Rather than taking it Euro-centrically for granted, we can investigate it as a historical force. The question, what Europe is, is a pragmatic one, and we find the traces of its workings in history – regional, national, European, and global.

I gratefully received the warm welcome that the members of *Tensions of Europe* extended to me and other newcomers. *Tensions'* open atmosphere and willingness to experiment with session and discussion formats will save it from

encrusted structures and preserve its informal and vigorous quest for a better understanding of Europe, Europeans, and Europeanization.

Corinna Schlombs
University of Pennsylvania
schlombs@sas.upenn.edu

Notes from a Seasoned Scholar: Unique Flavor of ToE in Rotterdam

The Third *Tensions of Europe* Conference was held June 7-10 in Rotterdam, in conjunction with the launch of the ESF EUROCORES Program *Inventing Europe*. The Netherlands is known for good organization, and this meeting continued the tradition. It combined flawless planning with fun and friendly touches for which the Dutch are known. Intellectually, the meeting was dominated by the launch of the ESF EUROCORES *Inventing Europe* Program. Four large projects received funding under this theme (on European consumption, critical infrastructures, transport systems, and software) with four others recommended but not funded. The funded projects were presented in a plenary session with filmed interviews with the project leaders explaining the scope and aims of each project. The recommended projects were also given airtime in later sessions. In order to promote cross-fertilization, the program committee organized a "speed dating" segment where existing European research networks were put on show in 30-minute segments (complete with cowbells to call the time). I found this to be a very useful networking tool, and would like to have been able to make the full rounds.

The research agendas of both funded and unfunded *Inventing Europe* projects spilled over into the general sessions, which made their influence over the entire conference still more pronounced. Overall, *Tensions of Europe* is beginning to show signs of intellectual maturity, which has both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, the tremendous work and energy that has been put into research on the evolution and impact of technology in Europe, particularly in transnational contexts, has begun to deliver papers and sessions of considerable depth. On the more negative side, maturity usually means more conformity of thought. Nevertheless, some sessions witnessed vigorous debate. The session on "Aeronautical Exchanges: Transatlantic Competition and the Making of Europe" generated an interesting exchange of ideas on the idea of "success" and "failure" in systems like the Concorde. Was it a spectacular white elephant and failure? Or did it have transcendent value beyond its immediate technological form? Should giant cost overruns be accepted as "natural" for cutting edge projects (particularly with military funding) or should they be seen as boondoggles or failures of planning? What path should Europe take vis-à-vis the US when it comes to military R&D funding and cooperation?

My overall impression of the meeting is that it was smaller and less diverse than the Budapest meeting (TOE I), and less intimate than the Finland meeting (TOE II), which some have classified as the best academic meeting of all time, and almost impossible to beat. Yet there were memorable social events at the Rotterdam meeting, particularly the banquet and the dance party following. The banquet was a treat. Each registrant was asked in advance to submit a "European recipe." The recipes were tested by a local Dutch chef, and a panel chose nine recipes in all (three appetizers, three main dishes, and three desserts) for the dinner. As the meal was being served (we all got to try all nine dishes), we heard an explanation of each recipe, and a sales pitch for it, from its submitter, talking through a cardboard TV screen reminiscent of television's

early days. Each table voted, and a final winner was chosen: Tom Misa , for the appetizer recipe, "Drum Roll of Colonial Fish." It was certainly the most memorable banquet I have attended in terms of food. While all the "rubber chicken" banquets of past academic meetings have blended into a kind of generic "bad catered meal" in my mind, I won't ever forget the "stew with reindeer flakes" I ate in Rotterdam. The caterer took some liberties with the recipes, but their underlying uniqueness still remained. They not only covered Europe from north to south and east to west, but they also embodied its history and some current big issues. The "Fortress Europe" cake proposed by Arne Kaiser called attention to Europe's immigration and exclusion problems, while the tasty winning recipe not only reminded us of Europe's troubled colonial past, but was moreover taken from a futurist cookbook. (According to Tom Misa, the futurists turned to cooking in the last stages of their movement, perhaps after realizing they could not remake the world after all.) And to cap off this lovely evening, we were treated to a live performance by a great new band: *Tensations*. Who knew that behind their scholarly, academic daytime demeanors, some of our *Tensions of Europe* colleagues had rock-star talent and a wild side? Alec Badenoch, Judith Schueler and Suzanne Lommers did vocals, with Donna Mehos on sax, Frank Schipper on keyboard, Paul Edwards on guitar, Nil Disco on washtub bass, and Andreas Fickers on drums. We heard some wonderful, danceable classics, my favorite being Proud Mary. This band has talent, and we hope they will perform at upcoming *Tensions of Europe* functions! Encore!!

Within the larger academic universe of technology studies and European integration studies, *Tensions of Europe* plays and innovative and important role. It is helping to create a series of new research agendas linking technology with European colonialism, society, culture and the process of European integration. Its impact has been far reaching and profound, helping to launch and sustain a series of European intellectual and research networks. It is intellectually exciting, with a unique social flavor that sets it apart from organizations like SHOT. The Rotterdam meeting both continued and extended this tradition, and its organizers and sponsors, particularly the Foundation for the History of Technology and the ESF, and the local arrangements committee, all deserve our thanks and applause. (Note to *Tensations*: start planning your next show!)

Eda Kranakis
University of Ottawa
kranakis@uottawa.ca

Notes on Eurofood: Tensions of Taste?

The Third *Tensions of Europe* Conference primary aim was the launching of the European Taste Festival, the materialization of the common dreams and obsessions of an expansive network of committed historians of technology. In spite of the overwhelming number of recipes received by the organizers, the demanding evaluation process only allowed for a happy few to present their proposals in a glamorous dinner at the De Doelen in Rotterdam June 9th, 2007. Judith Schueler and Andreas Fickers were the graceful presenters of a celebration that followed the script of the Eurovision Song Contest and that also shared its high ambitions of forging European cultural identity, not through listening to ABBA or Céline Dion, but by eating instead the sophisticated creations of the Golden Pan Winner, the newly created award.

The memories of family soirées watching Eurovision immediately came

to my mind, specially stimulated by Andrea's hair style incredibly similar to that of the Portuguese Television presenter of the 70s. Those soirées were for me quick lessons on European history as my father and uncles deciphered each vote as a logical consequence from old national political and economic rivalries. But my mother preferred to ignore the men's talk and only pointed the musical virtues or defects of the songs presented in the contest. Her predictions were consistently more accurate. The discussion about jury decisions being dictated either by transnational musical values or by international politics was a common subject arising after every Eurovision Song Contest. The successful first celebration of the European Taste Festival promises no less passionate debates for the future, with the members of the jury formed by all the participants to the conference emotionally discussing the merits and flaws of the different dishes while being the object of multiple bribes (mostly under the form of some national beverage) by the nominees.

Although everybody recognized the great job done by the team of Dutch chefs in converting a cacophony of recipes into a harmonic menu, granting them a collective unanimous applause, the same cooks were repeatedly accused of not treating with due respect the unique behavior of Spanish rice, or of ignoring the immense complexity attached to a Hungarian paprika. The esteem for the international cuisine practiced by the chefs was thus easily turned into exquisite considerations about the role of food as a privileged vehicle of globalization, not only by imposing cross-cultural taste standardization, but also by fixing local identities - with rigid definitions of what is Mediterranean or Scandinavian cuisine - with multiculturalism winning over cosmopolitanism. Behind the criticisms it was hard to ignore some concealed resentment, namely from

representatives of countries that in spite of their rich culinary traditions didn't make to the finals, such as Italy or Portugal, to say nothing about France whose wines were equally absent.

But one big advantage about food is the easy and relaxed tone assumed when discussing around a dinner table such difficult issues as national identity, the global circulation of commodities, or healthy diets. The good mood of the celebration was also greatly enhanced by the smart humor of the presenters and the inspired presentation of each recipe by the respective creator(s). And the truth is most dishes that reached the great final participated in the valuable endeavour of converting Europe into a virtuous community of flavors, where the diversity of local tastes was happily blended in a three-course menu. In this spirit, the *European Roots Salad*, designed by Vincent Lagendijk, Irene Anastasiadou, Suzanne Lommers and Frank Schipper, would be a great starter for every European willing to put the beets, carrots, and radish growing in its soil in service of a healthy body. The *Apples in a Dressing Gown* by Luda Klusakova worked as a perfect homage to the most customary presence in the orchards of all European countries, proving in a simple and delicate dessert the shared taste experiences of Europeans. Dobrinka Parusheva and Aristotle Tympas and their *Sarma* possibly made the strongest case about the continuity of gastronomic traditions in South Eastern Europe, with cooking habits crossing the complicated geopolitical map of the Balkans. Nevertheless, as an outsider to the area, together with the apples, this was a dish that raised my doubts about the ability of international Dutch chefs interpreting local cuisines.

The *Stew on Reindeer Flakes* by Nina Wormbs seemed to be a direct answer to the Balkan continuity challenge and proved the advantages of multiple

European cuisines, presenting us a fusion recipe mixing, in a nice and unpretentious way, ingredients from both the North and South into a harmonious European whole. Ulla Liukonnen and Tanja Karppinen dessert, with their *Yoghurt pannacotta and marinated berries,* followed the same pattern by heavily relying on the high-quality of the ingredients offered by the diversity of European landscapes: if their berries came from Finnish forests, the lemon balm that topped the dessert originated from Mediterranean gardens, and the yoghurt from the pastures of Poland. Instead of one sole product common to entire Europe, as the dressed apples, or one common cooking tradition, as in the *Sarma*, Wormbs, Liukonnen and Karpinnen stress the advantages of living in a continent of multiple age-old traditions of relating to the environment.

Now, a composition of the previous dishes would offer us a rosy menu of Europe, made of continuities and harmonious integration of diversity. From such gastronomy one would never guess that this was a continent strongly divided by national borders, responsible for depletion of world resources, and the place where two world wars originated. But, for example, Pal Germuska's *Chicken Paprika* reminds us that not everything is bad in paying homage to national traditions. His dish, one of the most exquisite dishes of the entire meal, was after all one of the essential ingredients of Hungarian nationalism in the interwar period. And fortunately we also have some unpleasant cooks (all of them male!) always willing to remind us of our common dark legend. Harro Maat went directly to one of the bleakest pages of our history with its *Black Rice with Garlic Sauce*. If rice in all its usual whiteness recalls the purity of things, the black rice tells us a nightmare story of colonial plantations and slave trade. Arne Kaijser in his *Fortress Europe* reworked the classic rosy Swedish cake, known as the

Princess Cake, transforming a fairy tale dessert into a violent scenario where princes and knights have made space for immigrants crossing the Mediterranean in fragile and deadly *pateras*. But the best representative of this new rising school of black culinary traditions is perhaps Tom Misa and his *Drum Roll of Colonial Fish*. Coming from the other side of the Atlantic, he offered his European friends a provocative dish with technology, fascism, and colonialism, as its main ingredients. And guess what? Tom Misa was awarded the Golden Pan.

Tiago Saraiva
University of Lisbon
tiago.saraiva@ics.ul.pt

Photos of the Rotterdam meeting can be found at:
http://www.histech.nl/inventing/

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