

# Robert Menasse, *The Capital*. A satirical novel on the European Union

Teresa Martins de Oliveira\*  
University of Porto - ILC

**Abstract:** After a short introduction to Menasse's ideas about the European Union presented in different theoretical texts, the paper will concentrate on the novel *The Capital*, published in 2016. It will focus on the idea the reader will react with strangeness to the diminished narrative space taken in the text by topics like migrations, terrorism and islamofobia, which are generally accepted as the main issues affecting the EU today (Griffen 2019). Nonetheless, a more detailed analysis of three moments of the novel that critics tend to consider as subsidiary according to their place in the textual economy will show the importance of the aforementioned topics and their (possible) recognition as the new challenges that mark the EU.

**Keywords:** Robert Menasse, European Union, *The Capital*, migrations, terrorism

**Resumo:** Após uma breve introdução às ideias de Menasse sobre a União Europeia apresentadas em diferentes textos teóricos, o artigo concentra-se no romance *Die Hauptstadt* [*A Capital*], publicado em 2016. Parte-se da ideia de que o leitor reagirá com estranheza ao diminuto espaço narrativo ocupado no texto por tópicos como migrações, terrorismo e islamofobia, que são geralmente aceites como os principais problemas que afetam hoje a UE (Griffen 2019). No entanto, a análise mais detalhada de três momentos do romance que a crítica tende a considerar como subsidiários de acordo com o lugar que ocupam na economia textual mostrará a importância dos tópicos atrás referidos e o seu (eventual) reconhecimento como novos desafios que marcam a Europa.

**Palavras-chave:** Robert Menasse, União Europeia, *A Capital*, migrações, terrorismo

Among the many German-speaking writers, philosophers and intellectuals who dealt with the issue of Europe or more precisely of European Union after the fall of the Berlin Wall stand out the German Jürgen Habermas and Hans Magnus Enzensberger, the Swiss Adolf Muschg and the Austrian Robert Menasse. All of them seem to agree in the criticism of the supremacy of the economic in the European integration and Community policies (Lützel 2007: 47), but other critics arose, some of them with great repercussion,<sup>1</sup> among which one might highlight the opinions of the writer and essayist Robert Menasse.

Menasse was known for his successful novels as well as for his direct attacks on Austria's recent history and politics (remember his controversial essay *Das Land ohne Eigenschaften. Essays zur österreichischen Identität*<sup>2</sup> (1992) [The Country without Qualities. Essays on Austrian Identity]), when he started writing about globalization and Europe, after his poetic lectures at the University of Frankfurt in 2005. These lectures, published under the title *Die Zerstörung der Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* [The Destruction of the World as Will and Representation], present for the first time arguments that he will develop and reconsider over the following years: euro-sceptic and euro-critical, Menasse as many other German speaking intellectuals (f.i. Habermas and Enzensberger) consider the European Union a political artifact without democratic legitimation.

In 2010 Robert Menasse settled in Brussels for four years to observe on the spot and to rethink the procedures of the European Union, with the aim of writing the first great novel on the Union, an intention that bears fruit only in 2017, with the publication of *Die Hauptstadt* [The Capital]. The immediate result of his Brussels's experience is the long critical essay *Der europäische Landbote. Die Wut der Bürger und der Friede Europas oder Warum die geschenkte Demokratie einer erkämpften weichen muss* [Enraged Citizens. European Peace Must Become One We Fight For. The European Messenger] published 2012 (English translation 2016), that catapults Menasse into the forefront of the discussion on Europe. (One year later, he will publish "Manifesto for a European Republic" together with the German political thinker Ulrike Guérot, in which they call for the foundation of a European republic, based on a Europe of regions).

*Enraged Citizens. European Peace Must Become One We Fight For. The European Messenger* is controversial as are (almost) all Menasse's texts and projects, following the true tradition of the 'essay-genre' in Germany: exaggerated, irreverent, but therefore innovative and noteworthy (Büssgen 2013: 203). In line with its author's previous arguments, the target of *Enraged Citizens'* criticism is the present state of the European Union. However, after a period of observation in Brussels, the Austrian Writer changes his opinion, at least on the European Commission: concentrating on the triad of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, he points out the last one as a transparent, efficient and low-cost institution;

its officials, representatives of a highly fruitful cultural heterogeneity and bearers of a truly European spirit: “polyglots, highly qualified, enlightened, anchored in their native culture, but free from the irrationality of the so-called national identity” [(...) polyglott, hochqualifiziert, aufgeklärt, verwurzelt in der Kultur ihrer Herkunft, allerdings befreit von der Irrationalität einer sogenannten Nationalen Identität” (DEL, 23)]. Inversely, the European Council, reinforced by the Treaty of Lisbon, is accused of being the main bulwark of national interests that impedes the action of the Commission and Parliament, which are European-oriented institutions. Menasse considers the Council, as it is organized, also contrary not only to the principle of subsidiarity but also to the ideas of the Union’s founding fathers.

From a quick and surgical analysis of the last two centuries of European history, especially the history of Germany, the author concludes that nation-states necessarily lead to nationalism, and nationalism has led to multiple crimes and wars. The abolition of nation-states is therefor, in his view, inscribed in the founding spirit of the European Union.

As for the crisis in which the European Union plunged, Menasse argues that it too is rooted in nation-states, that replace the European ideals of a post-national or transnational democracy by the selfish defense of national interests, and was carried out by the representatives of the states sitting in the European Council and by the deputies elected by the national states. These are not only committed to a nationalist policy of their countries of origin: many of them assume to be anti-Europeanist. Selfishness and conflicts of interests between officials and between the Council and the Commission mirror the opposition between the member states and EU. Proposed solution: the return to the zero hour of the European construction, when, after the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, in visionary inspiration, a project was set to stop the forgetting and repeating of the atrocities of the Shoa.

The novel *The Capital* illustrates how this project has been distorted in the meantime.<sup>4</sup> The action takes place in Brussels - with brief visits to Auschwitz and Vienna - probably in the first half of 2016, as the preparations for the European Commission’s 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee is about to begin. This project, the Big Jubilee project, occupies the center of the plot, with other plotlines developing around it.

The preparations of the jubilee reveal the EU as an organization where personal and corporate interests are competing and fighting and where the commission (marked by a supranational and European perspective but also by the career obsessions of the officials) and the council (marked by national interests and lobbyists) antagonize each other, replicating the opposition between interests of the EU and those of member states that each of the bodies advocates for. Furthermore and following Menasse’s theses, the memory of the past threatens to disappear or be distorted - we will come to this motif later. However, the novel not only denounces what is wrong, it also presents a project for the future, in the solutions Prof. Erhart (in whom

the reader easily sees an alter ego of the author) presents to the economic think tank in the EU: The old professor from Vienna argues for a truly post-national economy and a new order for a federalist Europe that will be able to transform a collective of competing interests into a Europe of equal citizens, where nationalism is no longer the identity builder. Like Menasse, Erhart proposes to return to the memory of Europe, drawing the attention to the distortion applied on the initial project. Stressing the exploitation of Auschwitz as a business of memory and its crystallization in a 'lieu de memoir' à la Pierre Nora, Erhart suggests to make of the memory of the Shoah a "constructive /productive" memory. Like his compatriot Martin Susman, who wants to organize the jubilee project around the memory of Auschwitz, he proposes the creation of a new capital for the European Union in Auschwitz. According to the professor, it is there, where the idea that led to the construction of the European Union is very present, where "history is felt and visible" and where the categorial imperative "Never again Auschwitz" can be easily understood, that will be possible to build a multicultural, transnational, and truly democratic society beyond the nationalisms of nation-states.

As it was the case with *Enraged Citizens, European Peace Must Become One We Fight For. The European Messenger*, after its publication the novel *The Capital* received a widespread praise of the critics - 2017 Menasse was awarded with the German Book Prize, the most prestigious prize in German-speaking countries<sup>5</sup> - but it also obtained severe critics, not only from the more conservative political ail but also from both moderate and radical sides of the left wing and from the literary field and memory studies. The critics go from ideological blindness and incapacity of transcending a certain left-wing ideology to the accusation that Menasse, closed in a centre European problematic, failed to comprehend Europe's ideological and political course (Moravcsik 2020), namely the real challenges it confronts in the XXI century: migrations, islamophobia, terrorism (Griffis 2019) (we will come to this later).

Specially compromising and embarrassing was the accusation Menasse twisted the historical truth to defend his thesis when he attributed to the first President of the European Comission Walter Hallstein a rage anti national states that is his and when describing the delivering of Hallstein's first speech in Auschwitz, which proved to be historical incorrect.<sup>6</sup> Menasse will later acknowledge his mistake and vaguely apologize for it when criticism grew. Anyway and after heated discussions Menasse received 2019 the Carl Zuckmayer Medal, with a reference to the literary quality of the text.

Indeed *The Capital* is above all a literary text, as highlighted by the novel itself: Overloaded with references, motives and leitmotivs, well analysed and convincing figures and plotlines, that only gradually approach or intersect to form a central plot. A careful reading reveals the fictional dimension is often pointed out in the novel, not only through direct references to this feature but also through metatextual com-

ments, addressing issues ranging from mere ironical comments (f.i. the opening of the first chapter: “Did you invent mustard? This is not a really good start for a novel”) to the discussion of issues that are dear to Menasse (f.i. the ephemeral character of art or literature as a reflection on the historical time in which it is inserted and which it aims to influence), or to intertextuality and allusions (f.i. the palimpsestic presence of Robert Musil’s novel *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften*). Less interesting is the trend to inner explanations that some readers will certainly find not only unnecessary, but real spoilers.<sup>7</sup>

The author himself classifies his text as a satire – in this regard, Menasse speaks about the contrasts between a destructive cynicism and a healthy and productive irony, that he claims characterise his text. In fact, the text is ingenious, fun, ironic and dripping with dark humour, easy and thrilling to read. The unusual episode that opens the novel and occupies the whole prologue stretches and introduces this satirical ductus: a pig runs through the streets of Brussels and is spotted by the figures who will turn to be the protagonists of the different plotlines, thus establishing a first and absurd relationship between them.

Scenes that go from comic or absurd to cruel cynicism (in spite of what Menasse says: recall the reference to the pig farmer swallowed by the mincing machine) rotate with truly hurtful and tragic stories and the tragic end: many of the figures that spot the pig in the epilogue find their dead in a bomb attack, that the reader recognizes as the terrorist attack in the Molenbeek station in Brussels on 22th March 2016.

This paper will focus on the idea the reader will react with strangeness to the diminished narrative space taken in the text by subjects like migrations, islamophobia and terrorism, which are generally accepted as the main issues affecting nowadays the EU (Griffen 2019). Nonetheless we believe and we hope that it will become clear these subject matters gain a higher importance in the text for the way they are handled, mainly in moments of more literary investment and when the provocative tune rises.

This analyses will focus on three moments of the novel, mostly treated by the critic as subsidiary according to the place they occupy in the economy of the narration, but whose importance for the image or situation of Europe construction will be pointed out. Two of these issues can be seen as direct illustrations of Menasse’s well known proposals and ideological position, the other one is a speaking literary device. They will be treated individually, in spite of their evident intersection.

First we will look at the plotline around the Polish catholic terrorist Ryszard or Mateusz Oswiecki, charged of liquidating hypothetical terrorists by a secret organization linked with the Vatican and NATO, who in the beginning of the novel commits a murder (the commissioned execution of a terrorist) in a hotel in centre Brussels. Oswiecki is son of a man tortured by the soviets, grandson of a man tortured by the nazis and is frequently dealing with the fantoms of his past. This character

introduces the theme of the memory of communist domination in east European countries, known to be a central issue in central and east European literature and in memory studies after the fall of the Soviet Bloc. One might recall, in this connection, contemporary opinions on the construction of Europe's memory according to which, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe's memory should be presented in the figure of an ellipse, organized around two vertices: Auschwitz and the past of the Eastern countries under Soviet rule. However, in Menasse's novel, the caricatural features of the Catholic murder figure, his background and his education, as well as the less attention paid to this line of action (some critics speak of an unconvincing tour à la Dan Brown) diminishes the traumatic experiences of these countries, which again suggests the author's closure in a left wing Western experience and his inability to understand the evolution of history from a truly global perspective. The same ideological option is at the origin of the parodic and provocative parallelism between the actions of the Catholic Church and of the National Socialist and Soviet regimes. If this plotline is understandably used by Menasse's critics as an example of his ideological blindness, the following scene seems to illustrate an opening to a polysemic reading of the text, truly inspiring a fruitful discussion.

This scene introduces a pressing theme for Europe, surprisingly almost absent of the novel, an important question treated in the mentioned text Menasse published together with the German political thinker Ulrike Guerot: the migrants and refugees' issue in Europe.<sup>8</sup>

Coming back to the expression "sharing the world" from Luce Irigaray, according to which equally born people have an equal right to live anywhere in the world, Menasse and Guérot sustain Human Rights should guarantee this freedom to everybody. so that in the future, "everyone must have the right to cross national borders, and settle where they want". It is not here the place to discuss the polemical proposals of Menasse and Guérot for the settlement of these migrants in closed communities where they can replicate their original cultures nor the inclusion of the new proposals in a Europe of regions.<sup>9</sup> I want to draw attention to a short but impressive episode of the novel around the arrival of migrants to Europe.

Florian Susman - brother of the EU official Martin Susman - is the owner of the largest pig production company in Austria and president of the "European Pig Producers", provocatively called by its acronymous EPP. He came to Brussels as a lobbyist to discuss EU's agriculture economy on pork and was driving to Budapest when he was stopped on the highway by a refugee track that is about to pass the border between Austria and Hungary, and while he was advised to stop, a taxi crashed into the back of his car and Florian gets seriously injured. He ends up having his life saved by a Muslim woman, who carefully takes him out of the car, and holds him in her lap. Through the media went the image of the veiled woman with the fainted man on her lap.

Through an ironical and ingenious inversion and deconstruction, the text anticipates and turns invalid hypothetical critics some readers might arise about the damages caused by migrant waves and the danger of their appropriation of the most sacred symbols of European culture. At the same time, criticisms on European behaviour are activated: it is not the invasion of the highway that origins the accident, but the taxi driver's greed, trying to make profit out of the migrants' difficult situation, as it is the cannibalization through the media that out of a help gesture creates the kitschy parallelism with a religious symbol of Christianity, promoting mistrust and resentment.

Truth is that the impressive image of the Muslim woman who arrives in Europe with her children and looks after the injured pig producer like a Pieta of modern times is a polysemic image, challenging critical imagination. If some readers feel shocked with the parody of a sacred scene of Christianity, which this image is as well, others will recognize the salvific because renovative capacities of these migrants (we will come to this later).

The third issue we would like to highlight concerns the recurring use of two partially interconnected literary motives. The first one, the theme of forgetting, is admittedly one of the central themes of the novel. The novel points out that forgetting Auschwitz is forgetting Europe's most intimate purposes and moral imperatives (which, according to Menasse, is the overcoming of national states, that prevents repeating the nazi crimes) leading necessarily to its end. Fact is that in the novel, forgetting seems to prevail memory. Fenia, head of communications for the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, an ambitious Cypriot who wants to move closer to the centre of decision and power and "away from culture" and Martin Susman, her subordinate, a sympathetic and melancholic bureaucrat, not only have great difficulty in finding out the names of the survivors of Auschwitz still alive but they also see their project, based on the imperative of keeping this memory alive, sabotaged by bureaucratic treachery from a tactful chef de cabinet. (Truth is, the Jubilee Project's first purpose was not getting Auschwitz memory preserved but in fact the consequence of Xeno's struggles to impress powerbrokers in the European Commission as a form of increasing her visibility). Forgetting arises also as a leitmotiv around David De Vriend, who recently moved to a rest home and turns out to be an Auschwitz survivor, with growing senility traces that steel his memory. Forgetting threatens spaces as well, even memory places, not only through the action of time (the mausoleum of unconditional love and other graves signalled as perpetual are in ruins), but through exploitation both political and economic, as points out the musealization of Auschwitz. The novel also treats forgetting in a metatextual level, with the discussion on the ephemeral character of art.

With the motif of forgetting intersects another motif which in its omnipresence seems to decisively mark the novel, premonitorily overshadowing the image of

Europe's future. It is the motif of death, presented in different variations from the beginning to the end of the text: murder, suicide, bombing, accident, disease, age, war, extermination, terrorist attacks. One might also remember, in a parenthesis, how the definitive character of death is emphasized by the absence of the drive for love that Freud opposed to the drive for death: the only love story lived in the novel is the mix between attraction and careerism that pushes Fenia into Fridsch's arms, and true love stories are but evocations of the past.

The novel ends under the sign of death, with the terrorist attack on Molenbeek station. Fenia, Susman, De Vriend loose their lives; the catholic terrorist gets killed in a train that violently stopped. Thus, the death of almost all figures that were introduced in the prologue contributes to stress the epilogue-character of the scene, suggesting not only the conclusion of the novel but the ending of the world they represent, which seems to fulfil the aims of the terrorist attacks: to hurt Europe in its deepest heart.

Thus, the novel does not end with the terrorist attack that cost life to many of its main characters. The epilogue comes back to the central motif of the introduction: challenged by a newspaper to choose a name for the pig that continued to haunt Brussels, the most voted name is Mohammed - the newspaper withdraw the contest, as a way to prevent problems (The reader thinks of Charlie Ebdó, that had just happened (January 2015)). Fact is that not only readers who have lived the terrorist attacks in Brussels will react with strangeness and disgust to this proposal to whiten and excuse Moelenbeek attacks.<sup>10</sup> Many readers perceive it as an unacceptable provocation, as is also the parallelism between the fictional Catholic terrorist's murder and the real Islamic terrorist acts.

However, the words «à suivre» that concludes the novel (at the end of the epilogue) can be read as more than an ironical aftertaste: should the terrorist attack be seen as a zero hour for the construction of Europe or at least as a turning point in its path? Could the brief allusion to the migrants arriving at Europe be seen as a sign of its renewal and salvation?

Menasses comments on his proposal to change the capital of Europe to Auschwitz: "This is not a realistic or viable project: it is an ironic proposal that arouses discussion, an utopia to be discussed" and this proposal can and should be generalized to the whole novel.

The fate of Europe thrown between a European Union as a bound of personal and national egoisms, the forgetting of its funding origins and the fictional murders of the fictional catholic fundamentalism and the real (historical) terrorist attacks, does all this plunged in an atmosphere of ending and death configure a proposal of conciliation and a true utopia, as Menasse points out? Or is it after all a mere manifesto with a very critical but self-centred left-wing west European perspective, without considering new realities of history and politics and new evolutions of memory?

Fact is the novel proves to be more interesting in the questions it arises than in the answers it provides, and, in this sense, it accomplishes the aim that Menasse himself seeks for his literature. Although Menasse's political theses are clear in their orientation, the novel with its polysemic motives inviting the reader to a wider reading seems to overtake the author's ideology, as art often does. Despite some less successful twists, too indebted to a close ideological program, or because of them the challenging and provocative capacity of the text wins out.

## Notes

\* Teresa Martins de Oliveira is a retired Associate Professor of the Department of German Studies at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto, where she taught in the areas of German Literature and Culture in undergraduate, masters and doctoral courses. PhD in German Literature (1998) with a comparative-oriented thesis, she has been dedicated to German-speaking literature (from the 19th century to the present day), with a special focus on Gender Studies, Holocaust and Memory Studies and also on Studies on Europe. She is a member of R&D - Margarida Losa Comparative Literature Institute, where she is part of the Inter/Transculturalities project, and where she created, together with Maria Antónia Gaspar Teixeira and Gonçalo Vilas-Boas, the data-base "Passagen. Fleeing the Holocaust: German-speaking artists and intellectuals in Portuguese exile". She has also collaborated in several national and international research projects. She published widely in Portugal and abroad, standing out among the books she published: *A Mulher e o Adultério nos romances O Primo Basílio de Eça de Queirós e Effi Briest de Theodor Fontane*, Coimbra, CIEG-Minerva-FLUP, 2000; *Eveline Hasler in Porto*, Coimbra, CIEG-Minerva, 2002; *Ao encontro de Max Frisch*, Porto, Deriva, 2012. She was also co-editor of the following books: (with Gonçalo Vilas-Boas) *Kafka. Um livro sempre aberto*, Porto, Deriva, 2011 and *Macht in der Deutschschweizer Literatur*, Berlin, Frank & Timme, 2012; (with M.A. Gaspar Teixeira), *De passagem: artistas de língua alemã no exílio português*, Porto, ILC-Afrontamento, 2018, (with Fátima Outeirinho), *Práticas e memórias de exclusão: o romance de adultério do século XIX*, Libretos do ILC, nr.º 25, 2019, online.

<sup>1</sup> This Antje Büssgens highlights how Enzensberger's accusation that European institutions lack democratic structures carried out through the media came to decisively influence public opinion (Büssgens, 2013: 196-7).

<sup>2</sup> Many titles of Menasse's works include intertextual references to canonical texts of some of the most outstanding German-speaking authors, which clearly shows the literary ambitions of the author.

<sup>3</sup> Menasse also argues at the root of the crisis will be, beyond the nation-states, the lack of solidarity of rich countries with poor countries and the well-known North-South opposition. The target of his main attack are now Germany (he remembers, as Habermas often did, the historical debt of Germany to Greece) and Angela Merkel, who, due to her origin, he says, is incapable of understanding true European spirit. According to Menasse, the solution lies in a new form of post-national or transnational democracy, with Europe of nations replaced by Europe of the regions.

<sup>4</sup> The well known specialist on European Integration Andrew Moravcsik writes about Robert Menasse and the EU critics, which, according to him, divide in two camps:

Both assert that the EU aims to replace nation-states, but the first group resists this goal, while the second applauds it. Resisters include Eurosceptics behind Brexit and their right-wing populist and nationalist allies in France, Hungary, Italy and Poland.(...) *The Capital*, completed before Brexit and concerns of Russian meddling in European democracy, largely ignores these views.

Instead, Menasse focuses on (...) those who complain that EU does not go far enough. Members of this group are generally left-wing in political orientation (...) [and] believe that Europe should move toward "ever-closer union" by enacting more generous pan-European fiscal and social policies, cushioning the harsh effects of globalization and liberalization, limiting environmental pollution and corporate prerogatives, defending human rights, and combating nationalism and right-wing populism. (Moravcsik 2020: 2)

<sup>5</sup> Among the prizes Menasse received in the last years stands, besides Deutscher Literaturpreis for *The Capital: The European Book Prize* (2015) for *Enraged Citizens, European Peace Must Become One We a prize Fight For. The European Messenger*; Niederösterreichischer Kulturpreis (2015); Walter-Hasenclever-Literaturpreis (2018); Carl-Zuckmayer-Medaille (2019); Prix Littéraire des Lycées Français d'Europe (2019); China's annual foreign novel award (2020).

<sup>6</sup> In several essays, speeches, interviews and in *The Capital*. Menasse marked as quotations from Hallstein several sentences supporting his arguments about overcoming nation states that couldn't be found in the speeches of the first President of CEE's commission. The historian Heinrich August Winkler first denounces these false quotes in an article of Spiegel in 2017; the discussion continued in December 2018 in "Die Welt" (Kostial 2021: 139).

<sup>7</sup> A good example is the explanation about the polysemic significance of the pig (from a symbol of most antagonistic human emotions, clichés and devices to anti-semitic attacks or pork-barrel polit) (M 286).

<sup>8</sup> Griffin considers that Menasse's "general disinterest in Islamophobia, migrants, and refugees (...) means that Menasse misses a crucial feature of European nationalisms today"(Griffin 2019: 5).

<sup>9</sup> Guérot and Menasse question current EU refugee policy. According to them, refugees in Europe should be given a free land to reconstruct their old cities, where they wouldn't be bothered to assimilate to European ways of living and where they could live their otherness in peace, getting from Europe support to get started. 'In short: what is needed is a multi-coloured Europe, proximity with respect, an alliance

of alterity under the same European law, a creative network of diversity” (Menasse/Gérot, “Europe: the reconstruction of the free World”).

<sup>10</sup> An Amazon customer writes in a review titled “Disappointing”: “(...) for someone that was in Brussels at the day of 2016 islamist terrorist attacks - it is not only disappointing as a plot device, but really almost feels insulting, given what we went through and the following days”, amazon.com (accessed 14.11.2020)

## Works Cited

- Büssgen, Anne (2013), “Der Europa-Diskurs von Intellektuellen in Zeiten der Krise. Zu Robert Menasses und Hans Magnus Enzensbergers Essays der Jahre 2010 – 2012”. In: Hanenberg, Peter/ Isabel Capeloa Gil (eds.), *Der literarische Europa-Diskurs*. Festschrift für Paul Michael Lützeler zum 70. Geburtstag, Würzburg, Königshausen und Neumann, pp. 193-216.
- Freudenstein, Roland (2018), “Robert Menasse schreibt Europa kaputt“, <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/die-zukunft-von-europa-wie-robert-menasse-europa-kaputt-schreib> (accessed 06.06.2020).
- Glencross, Andrew R. (2010), “A Post-National EU? The Problem of Legitimising the EU Without the Nation and National Representation”, *Stay Connected: Political Studies: SAGE Journals* (sagepub.com) (accessed 06.02.2020).
- Griffin, Andrew (2019), “Postnational Europe and other Bureaucratic fantasies”, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/post-national-europe-and-other-bureaucratic> (accessed 14.11.2020)
- Kostial, Vera K. (2021), “Robert Menasse und der Hallstein-Skandal. Zu Werkpoetik und Rezeption eines politischen Schriftstellers“, In: Podskalsky, Vera/Wolf, Deborah (Hg.), *Prekäre Fakten, umstrittene Fiktionen. Fake News, Verschwörungstheorien und ihre kulturelle Aushandlung*. Philologie im Netz Beiheft 25/2021, pp. 139-162. <http://web.fu-berlin.de/phn/beiheft25/b25t06.pdf>. (accessed 14.11.2020).
- Lucas, Isabel (2019) “Um porco passeia por Bruxelas...”. Entrevista a Robert Menasse, Um porco passeia por Bruxelas e é o fim da Europa tal como a conhecemos, Livros, *PÚBLICO* (publico.pt) (accessed 06.06.2020).
- Lützeler, Paul Michael (2019), “Robert Menasse und Europa. National ist nicht gleich nationalistisch”, <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/kultur/robert-menasse-und-europa-national-ist-nicht-gleich-nationalistisc>.

- Menasse, Robert (2012), *Der Europäische Landbote. Die Wut der Bürger und der Friede Europas oder Warum die geschenkte Demokratie einer erkämpften weichen muss*, Zsolnay, Wien.
- (2014), *Heimat ist die schönste Utopie. Reden (wir) über Europa*. Edition Suhrkamp, Berlin.
- (2017), *Die Hauptstadt*. Roman, Suhrkamp, Berlin.
- Moravcsik, Andrew (2020), "Ever-Further Union. What Happened to the European Idea?", *A Review of "The Capital" by Robert Menasse*. Foreign Affairs (accessed 10. 02.2020).
- Wetenkamp, Lena (2017), *Europa erzählt, verortet, erinnert. Europa-Diskurse in der deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur*, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann.
- Zylinski, Leszek (2011), *Deutsche Schriftsteller und Europa*, unirede\_198.pdf (uni-oldenburg.de)