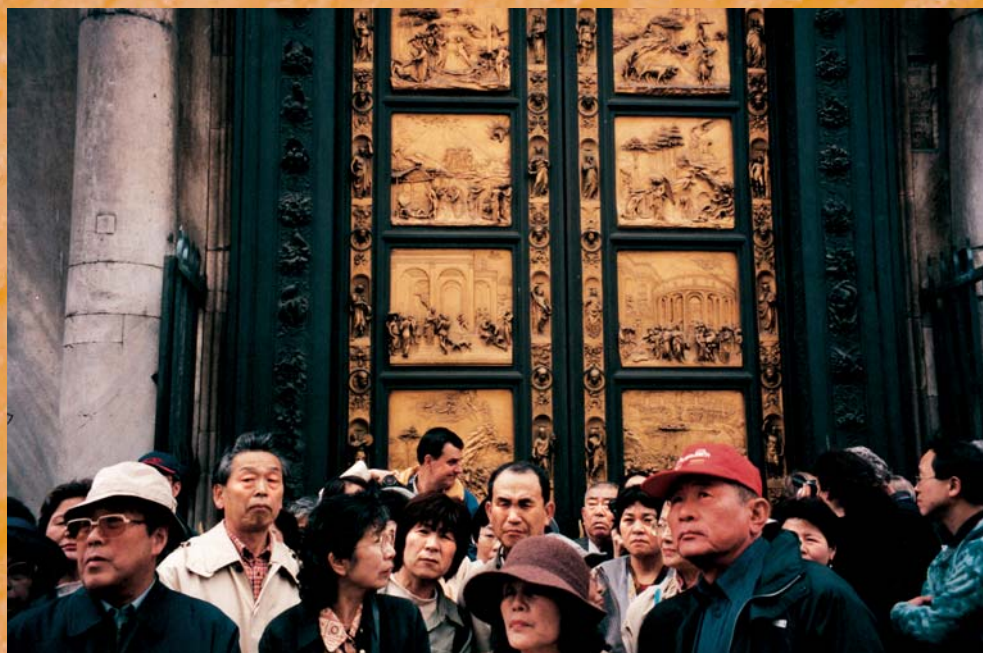


Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other

Bo STRÅTH (ed.)



P.I.E. Peter Lang

This book contributes to the debate on what Europe means by demonstrating the complexities and contradictions inherent in the concept. They are seen most clearly when Europe is viewed from a long historical perspective.

During the closing decades of the twentieth century Europe emerged as one of the main points of reference in both the cultural and the political constructs of the global community. An obsession with the concept of European identity is readily discernible. This process of identity construction provokes critical questions which the book aims to address. At the same time the book explores the opportunities offered by the concept of Europe to see how it may be used in the construction of the future. The approach is one of both deconstruction and reconstruction.

The issue of Europe is closely related in the book to more general issues concerning the cultural construction of community. The book should therefore be seen as the companion of *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community*, which is also published by PIE-Peter Lang in the series Multiple Europes.

The book appears within the framework of a research project on the cultural construction of community in modernisation processes in comparison. This project is a joint enterprise of the European University Institute in Florence and the Humboldt University in Berlin sponsored by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Fund.

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Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other



P.I.E. Peter Lang

Bruxelles · Bern · Berlin · Frankfurt am Main · New York · Oxford · Wien

Bo STRÅTH (ed.)

**Europe and the Other
and
Europe as the Other**

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Contents

Preface	11
Introduction: Europe as a Discourse	13
<i>by Bo Stråth</i>	
Chapter 1	45
The Last Identification: Why Some of Us Would Like to Call Ourselves Europeans and What We Mean by This	
<i>by Luisa Passerini</i>	
Chapter 2	67
The Discourse of Europe and the Search for a European Identity	
<i>by Hayden White</i>	
Chapter 3	87
A European Identity?	
<i>by Lutz Niethammer</i>	
Chapter 4	113
Foundation Myths and Collective Identities in Early Modern Europe	
<i>by Peter Burke</i>	
Chapter 5	123
Decline or Renaissance: The Transformation of European Consciousness after the First World War	
<i>by Katiana Orluc</i>	

Chapter 6.....	157
“The Third World” as an Element in the Collective Construction of a Post-Colonial European Identity	
<i>by Erik Tängerstad</i>	
Chapter 7.....	195
Race as a Construction of the Other: “Native Americans” and “Negroes” in the 18th Century Editions of the <i>Encyclopædia Britannica</i>	
<i>by Silvia Sebastiani</i>	
Chapter 8.....	229
Doing Christianity and Europe: An Inquiry into Memory, Boundary and Truth Practices in Malta	
<i>by Gerold Gerber</i>	
Chapter 9.....	279
In-between Nations: Ambivalence and the Making of a European Identity	
<i>by Patrizia Isabelle Nanz</i>	
Chapter 10.....	311
Leningrad into St. Petersburg: The Dream of Europe on the Margins	
<i>by Svetlana Boym</i>	
Chapter 11.....	325
The Social Construction of “Europe”: Life-Cycles of Nation-State Identities in France, Germany and Great Britain	
<i>by Martin Marcussen & Klaus Roscher</i>	

Chapter 12.....	359
The Swedish Image of Europe as the Other	
<i>by Bo Stråth</i>	
Chapter 13	385
Multiple Europes:	
Integration, Identity and Demarcation to the Other	
<i>by Bo Stråth</i>	
Chapter 14.....	421
Coal, Steel and Spirit. The Double Reading	
of European Unity (1948-1951)	
<i>by J. Peter Burgess</i>	
Bibliography	457
About the Contributors	515

Preface

The decision by PIE Peter Lang to respond to the continuous demand for *Europe and the Other* and *Europe as the Other* ten years after it first appeared raises the question of what has changed in this decade. How relevant is the book still for today's reflection on Europe?

Some of the chapters are fixed to the time in which they were written and in that respect they illustrate how much has changed in the last ten years. However, most of the contributions including the Introduction address questions which are still with us and which have not yet got an answer. Although the concerns of too strong a European centre have declined considerably with the decline of the European capacity of government and management, the question of immigrant control at the borders of the EU and the question of a European control of volatile financial capital which does not know any fatherland are as relevant today as ten years ago.

Our critical view on the concept of a European identity has not become less convincing. The same goes for the volume's main idea of Europe as a discursive creation. The major difference between now and the year of 2000 is that future was judged a bit more optimistic ten years ago and that nationalism, populism and protectionism have wormed their way into also the core of Europe more than one could imagine by then. Even in the core of the member states of the EU, strong views have emerged of Europe as the Other.

The reflection on Europe in military terms and on its relationships to the NATO, have no longer the collapse of Yugoslavia as its point of reference. The Balkan peninsula was first replaced by Iraq and then by Afghanistan, but the questions remain. The Habermasian question of a European constitutional patriotism and the investments of hopes in the idea of a European constitution instead of a European identity lost relevance in 2005, but the questions remain. The problem of a social Europe and a European solidarity has grown since the enlargement from EU 15 to EU 27, but the questions remain. The main point in a new edition is perhaps the remaining questions under changing framework conditions. Reading the contributions of the book today ten years after they were first published suggests a growing tension between remaining questions and accelerating time with ever bigger problems of political management. The questions of political control ten years ago deal today more with how to slow down the loss of control.

Torrita di Siena, July 2010

Bo Stråth

INTRODUCTION

Europe as a Discourse

Bo STRÅTH

The Question of a European Identity

The intensified discussion about Europe over the last ten to twenty years has, to a large extent, been organised around the concept of identity. As such it is a debate about a highly charged concept with ideological content. This content is nevertheless – or, rather, exactly therefore – extremely vague. As a discourse on identity, Europe is so diluted that it means anything and nothing. European identity is usually seen in relation to national identity, either in tension-filled opposition to it, that is, as an alternative which might replace the nation, or in a relationship where it overlaps and supplements the nation. The structure of national identity is “projected” onto the European identity, and this projection has an ideological underpinning, for no projection is ever non-interested/non-ideological¹. The formal definition of identity is the state of being equal or identical. Identity means sameness. This can only make sense as a belief, a myth, or an identification with

¹ The projection is of different kinds. It can be phenomenological, meaning that the nation corresponds to a fundamental cognitive category or, in other words, humans are considered to be inherently “national”. It can be epistemological, that is, Europe is only intelligible as a repetition/inversion/denial of national structures. It can be ontological: the nation is a form of being, but it may equally be de-ontological, that is, the national structure is ethically appropriate in and of the fact that human rights, in the modern Western sense, emerge simultaneously with the nation. I am grateful to J. Peter Burgess for comments on this point.

something, that is, as a projection of the ego onto something else and the symbolic representation of this “something else”².

Identity is today’s concept for ourselves. It is our concept, and we use it when, through the writing of history, we translate the past in order better to understand ourselves. It is not a concept in and of the past³. It is important to remember this distinction in any discussion of European identity or, indeed, of collective identity in general. European identity is not a phenomenon in an essentialist sense, in which our task would be to investigate its content and forms of expression. Rather, European identity is discursively shaped in a specific historical situation, and our task is to investigate under which circumstances this formation took place, and to reflect on the fact that an obsession with “integration”, the buzz word in the 1950s and 60s, was replaced in the 1970s, and increasingly from the 1980s, by the obsession with “identity”.

In this book, Europe is not referred to as a territory, but as an idea and normative centre⁴. Europe is a discourse which is translated into a political and ideological project (for a development of this argument, see in particular Eric Tängerstad’s chapter on Europe and the Third World). Europe does not have an essence beyond one which is shaped by language. If Europe has a meaning, it is as a political programme. In this sense the decision to establish a European identity at the EC summit in Copenhagen in 1973 was very successful, although the development of the concept took directions different from those envisaged by its architects. A political programme does not mean *the* political programme. It is, rather, something under continuous negotiation and re-negotiation. Both as politics and ideology, Europe must be seen in the plural, always contested and contradictory.

In the following chapter, Luisa Passerini prefers to see Europe as a cultural, intellectual, and even emotional programme, as opposed to a political programme. Her Europe is an imagined territory, which is the *locus* of shortage, absence, and doubt, critical to pompous and declamatory versions. Europe is also ambivalent in her eloquent

² For a discussion of the difference between having an identity, and being identical with, in social representation, see Ankersmit, 1998. Cf. also Ankersmit, 1994 and Ankersmit, 1995.

³ See Niethammer, 1999. See also Stråth (Introduction) and Niethammer, in Stråth 2000e.

⁴ Cf. Frello, 1999.

approach. In order to create this Europe considerable intellectual energy of constructive criticism must be invested. In this way the painful historical connections between Europe and violence will not be forgotten but dismantled and uprooted. Although Luisa Passerini's emphasis is on Europe as a self-reflecting critical culture of identification and not identity, her approach is also quite compatible with views that underline Europe as a political programme.

The aim of this book is to shed light on Europe and on the question of a European identity by focusing on the limits and demarcations of Europe. The image of a European identity necessarily contains a demarcation of the non-European. This is the Janus head of every distinction, which necessarily is both exclusive and inclusive. Europe is seen in the mirror of the Other. It is often something outside Europe that is focused upon. A distinction is made between Europe and the Other, a projection that might in fact say more about Europe than about the Other, but where, nevertheless, the Other incorporates in its self-identification the xenostereotype imposed upon it.

Xenostereotypes also become autostereotypes. It should be emphasised that such processes of projection occur in a competitive context in which contradictory and contested views of the Other emerge.

We should recognise that Europe can also emerge as the Other from within, that is, from within what others consider to be Europe, as a kind of self-imposed exclusion. This is the case, for example, when Europe is referred to as "the Continent" in Great Britain and parts of Scandinavia. It is this internal demarcation in particular that we mean by Europe *as* the Other. In this sense, images of Europe are like a Janus head that looks into both the mirror of the world outside Europe, e.g. Africa, Asia and America, and the mirror of the nation, where Europe represents the alien and foreign⁵. In the mirrors, the viewers could look at themselves and find the kind of contrast which reinforced still more their feelings of superiority and self-confidence *or* find grounds for self-criticism and shame, with the implicit suggestions that they should mend their ways. The various chapters collected in this book problematise these different demarcations, and demonstrate how contested, complex and contradictory their historical construction has been, from the image reflected in the Asian and American mirrors to

⁵ Cf. Thunander, 1997.

the question of where the eastern limit of Europe should be drawn, *i.e.* “is Eastern Europe really one of Us?”.

In his series of lectures, “*Reden an die deutsche Nation*” delivered in Berlin during the Napoleonic occupation, Johann Gottlieb Fichte conjured up the image of a German *Volk*, based on a language community, as a nation that still did not exist. For many exegetes it has been problematic that, both before and after these lectures, Fichte expressed a certain enthusiasm for the idea of Europe as a cultural entity. “What is the *Vaterland* of the educated, Christian Europe?” Fichte asked rhetorically, before providing the answer to his own question, “Europe!”. However, this concept only becomes problematic with the assumption that sympathy for Germany leads to antipathy for Europe, and an opposition such as this is too simplistic⁶. This unsophisticated view of opposition between the nation and Europe, with the re-establishment of the nation at a European level as its ultimate goal, has been repeated often, not least in the integration and identity rhetoric since the 1960s on whether Europe should be a superstate or interstate co-operation/co-ordination, a federation or a confederation. History, however, is much more complex. As this book shows, Europe has been used both as pluridirectional demarcation between Us and the Others, and as an incorporated element in different projects of community construction.

As an ideology, the question of what a European identity really means is contested. This means that a European identity cannot be defined in a unanimous way. In a process marked by conflict, various histories are mobilised in order to legitimatise a European identity, the majority with the pretension to represent *the* true story. The question of how history, philosophical thinking and theorisation in social sciences have been mobilised is discussed in several chapters. See, for instance, Peter Burgess contribution about the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community. Lutz Niethammer is sceptical of the entire identity rhetoric, not only European identity, but of the idea of collective identity in general. He regards collective identity as a (political) instrument for deviating and defusing angst and emotions, since the concept reduces feelings of insecurity and diverts them towards the exclusion and expulsion of others. Luisa Passerini is also critical in her chapter, but is nevertheless inclined to see a more hopeful scenario – whether in the name of European identity or not –

⁶ This example is taken from Dahlstedt and Liedman, 1996.

in a European Other of a utopian kind, based on critical reason and democracy. Othering obtains a third meaning in her view, not as inward or outward demarcation, but as a projection into a better future.

Hayden White, in his chapter, is as critical as Niethammer to the question of a European identity. He regards Europe as a signifier connected to a host of various and often contradictory signifieds. "Europe" holds its place in a metadiscourse where other figures can be collected and endowed with "Europeanicity" in meaning-producing processes. White takes Roland Barthes' theory of the variants of identity as his point of departure in the discussion of what Europe and a European identity might be.

Although the idea of a European identity connotes unity and consensus, it has, paradoxically, dissent as its point of departure. The political struggle over how to shape the future is contingent upon processes of social bargaining and "muddling through". The precondition of a European political culture is not consensus, but the transformation of dissent into compromises by means of the symbolic co-ordination of norms and values, and the establishment of institutional arrangements for the resolution of conflicts. In such processes, ideological stabilisation emerges through an emphasis on community and a recourse to higher values. An illustration of such a transformation is the EU member states' fight over the allocation and distribution of resources, a competition in which every government tries to describe itself as successful, while none want to see themselves as losers when the compromises are finally negotiated. The arena in which the debate takes place moulds together the political culture through its institutions and values. Another illustrative example is the campaigns in national – or European – elections. (The latter, thus far unable to generate anything near as much general interest as the former.)

Religion and social science are two obvious fields where community is constructed and legitimated. Dissent is given expression, and is simultaneously stabilised through ideas of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, of the "right" belief and what constitutes a deviation from it. Reproduction is possible even as it is questioned. Klaus Eder has emphasised not only the role of dissent and conflict present during the emergence of images of community, but also the transformation of this conflict into compromise. Social scientists have tended to emphasise *either* consensus and (teleological) function rather than historical contingency (a tendency that runs from Durkheim to Parsons and

Habermas), or conflict (an approach shared by social scientists from Marx to Touraine). In Eder's view, the solution would be to bridge the two approaches by concentrating on the very transformation into compromises (rather than consensus), and thereby see how disagreement and agreement constitute one another⁷.

Cultural orders are not coherent and they contain contradictions. The unity of a European culture would not derive from universal values but rather from a critical and reflexive distance to value production, where the values are under constant negotiation and transformation. The interaction between ideas of heterodoxy and ideas of orthodoxy, between protest and absorption of protest, could, in this view, be seen as social and cultural integration through the communication of contradictions. The integration does not follow from the internal coherence of cultural codes, but from pragmatic bargaining processes where traditions of community can merge with traditions of dissent. When a community is identified, this is less through history *per se*, in the sense that history carries within itself a certain direction, and more through the communication of this merging. This communication has two dimensions: it is both a translation of the past to our time, and a retrospective "projection" *from* our time, of images of concord and dissent in the past.

Thus the question of a European identity and a European political culture is closely linked to issues of communicating and mediating conflict in a European public sphere through institutional arrangements. A European public sphere where social and political contracts can be constantly contested and rewritten is probably much closer to being the precondition of a European polity than is a European identity. Or, rather, feelings of a European identity would follow from a European public sphere.

The idea of a united Europe – which, it should be emphasised, is not the same as the idea of a European identity – although it is already a few centuries old, this idea developed a particular political dynamic after World War I with the Paneuropean movement founded by Richard Coudenhove-Kalergie in 1923, and the proposal by Aristide Briand in 1929 for a United States of Europe in the framework of the League of Nations. This idea, at a time when there were still many expectations invested in the Soviet Union as a social and political model for emulation, was connected to the hopes of a long-lasting

⁷ Eder, 1999.

pacifist peace. It was an idea based on self-contempt and humiliation in the wake of the catastrophe of the war. However, as Katiana Orluc shows in her chapter, confidence in Europe gradually returned, and the image of a declining West was transformed into a Renaissance of the virtues and ideas of European *grandezza*. At the same time, the pacifist peace was transformed into an armed peace. In the 1930s, the Nazis and the fascists appropriated the idea of a unified Europe while, for the resistance movement during World War II, the European idea took the form of a dream projected onto an uncertain future, a myth of exile⁸. In the years immediately after World War II, the dream of a pacifist Europe returned, but, as was the case following World War I, the idea of a pacifist peace was soon absorbed by the rhetoric of armed peace, this time within the context of the Cold War. This was the palpable framework in which the European idea took political form in the 1950s.

Up to this point, the idea of European unity was not supported by the identity concept. A few references to a “European identity” were certainly made in the 1920s, but if the utopia was ever described in social psychological terms, it was more often as a “European consciousness”. The concept of “European identity” was spread in the 1970s in the framework of experiences of a state of crisis, when the whole international order established after 1945 (Bretton Woods) broke down (the dollar collapse in 1971 and the oil price shock in 1973). The political decision to establish a European identity, taken by the EC summit in Copenhagen in December, 1973, must be seen as an attempt to re-establish an international order with a central place for Europe. From this point of departure, followed attempts to establish a European tripartite order of corporatist bargaining with which to replace the collapsing national frameworks. The concept of a European identity emerged in a situation of experienced crisis for national economic governance.

The launching of the idea of a European identity meant, of course, that such a phenomenon had not existed previously. Identity is a problematic and fuzzy concept. If taken literally, it means, as mentioned above, equality, sameness, the quality of being identical. It is a concept used to construct community and feelings of cohesion and holism, a concept to convey the impression that all individuals are equal in the imagined community (for an elaboration of this point, see

⁸ Passerini, “Introduzione”, 1998. Cf. Lipgens, 1986.

in particular the chapters by Lutz Niethammer and Hayden White). Utopian dreams of community, cohesion and holism which are all contained in the concept of identity are mobilised precisely in situations where there is a lack of such feelings. Identity thus becomes a problem when there is *no* feeling of cohesion and community, and this is particularly the case in situations of crisis and turbulence when established ties of social cohesion are eroded or broken down. Political management of economies (“political economy”), went unquestioned during the first decade of European integration, and the idea of a European identity no more came to mind than the idea of unemployment. At that time, European integration in political practice was understood in terms of the political co-ordination of national economies rather than as an identity project⁹. The EC did not stand for the European Community but for “Communities” in the plural. Integration was the concept of the 1950s and 60s which was used in the Cold War context to conjure up images of European unity, a theme which I discuss more fully in my chapter on European integration and identity. At that time, integration was the key concept for translating Europe into a political project. It was when integration failed as an instrument of mobilisation that identity came to be promoted.

Luisa Passerini has recently drawn our attention to the way in which European identity was designed at the Copenhagen EC summit in December, 1973¹⁰. The identity idea was based on the principle of the unity of the Nine, on their responsibility towards the rest of the world, and on the dynamic nature of the European construction. The meaning of “responsibility towards the rest of the world” was expressed in a hierarchical way. First, it meant responsibility towards the other nations of Europe with whom friendly relations and co-operation already existed. Secondly, it meant responsibility towards the countries of the Mediterranean, Africa and the Middle East. Thirdly, it referred to relations with the USA, based on the restricted foundations of equality and the spirit of friendship. Next in the hierarchy was the narrow co-operation and constructive dialogue with Japan and Canada. Then came *détente* towards the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. At the bottom of the list came China, Latin America and, finally, a reference was made to the importance of

⁹ Cf. Milward, 1992 and 1994. For a discussion of the connection between the experiences of economic crisis and the emergence of the European identity concept, see Stråth, 2000b.

¹⁰ Passerini, 1998, pp. 4-5.

the struggle against underdevelopment in general. The fact that the Middle East was ranked before USA in this hierarchical otherisation demonstrates the impact of the dollar collapse and the oil price shock.

Passerini is surely correct in her assertion that this mode of argument formulation for a European identity demonstrates the danger contained in the concept. Beyond this recent emergence of a rhetoric of European identity, seemingly of a rather innocent kind, history shows in more general terms how risky the ideological charge built into the identity concept can be, and how entrenched the processes of exclusion and inclusion which it involves can become. Alternatively, the fact that demarcations are disputed and challenged can also lead to a development where identity means anything and nothing. We should regard this process of stripping away ideology as hopeful, and we aim in this book to contribute to the dilution of the concept of European identity by deconstructing it and showing the multiplicity of its historical meaning. To de-ideologise identity categories involves looking for positions closer to pragmatism than fundamentalism¹¹.

Is such a de-ideologisation of identities important? The naive belief in the end of history around 1990 has become more realistic, but at the same time, the Western model in the form of the European Union stands in stark contrast to the economic, social and political problems in, for instance, Russia, Africa and much of Asia. Nevertheless, there do not seem to be any grounds for an 'overblown' European identity, and the trend among those in the European Commission who are concerned with constructing identity seems, following after the language of the neo-liberal market, to be to emphasise diversity and mutual recognition ("anything goes"). But even as "diversity" becomes a watchword, the process towards a single market without internal frontiers and border controls means the fortification of the perimeter wall against the Others, those who do not belong to the "European House" (to which its Russian designer has not been allowed admittance). Economic mass migration towards rich Europe ("refugees"), and a financial world order that seems ever more vulnerable as the movement of capital becomes increasingly free, both provide potential structural incentives for the mental fortification of this wall, and this process is underpinned by strong popular support (for a discussion of this problem, see Lutz Niethammer's chapter). The

¹¹ For this distinction between fundamentalism and pragmatism in multiple processes of modernisation, see Eisenstadt, 1992, 1998 and 1999. Cf. Sørensen and Stråth, 1997 (Introduction).

fact that, for the moment, the nation rather than Europe seems to be invoked as the place for political legitimation only means that national identity should also be de-ideologised. This can be achieved by relativising it to other forms of identity, not least a European one. European and national identities could, in an optimistic scenario, mutually de-ideologise one another in order to produce more pragmatism and less fundamentalism.

The point of departure for our discussion of a European identity and its limits is a general understanding that “identities”, *i.e.* feelings of belonging, are constructed in political and cultural processes by means of language, emotions¹² and symbols. In other words, we consider the construction of identities not only in the anthropological/sociological sense of the “invention of traditions” (Hobsbawm), “imagined communities” (Andersen) and so on, but also in a deeper, more philosophical sense. In this way, the distinction between a “real” European identity and a “symbolic” one is uninteresting.

Our approach is historical, long-term, and multidisciplinary (that is, it incorporates history, philosophy, political science, and sociology). Instead of limiting the topic to the debate concerning a European identity in connection with the ideological underpinnings of the European Union, we will examine the historical and present “use” or “invocation” of Europe and investigate when and how an image – rather than identity – of Europe has emerged in scholarly discourses or among elites in Brussels. In other words, image and identity, the “symbolic” or the “real”, may very well be indistinguishable. The aim is to investigate not only the concept of European identity as such, but also the historically constructed image of Europe in more general terms.

Of particular interest is what categories of Us and the Other have been historically mediated by images of Europe, and how Europe is demarcated from the community of the nation. However, as emphasised above, Europe can also be incorporated into the nation, that is, Europe can form an element of the nation. A case in point is the Italian eagerness in 1996 and 1997 to meet the criteria for participation in the EMU. The political debate was reminiscent of a kind of European championships in which the aim was to become the *primo della classe*. This is not Europe as the Other, but Europe as an element of Us. This means that Europe is a category of both inclusion and

¹² For the role of emotions in this context, see Passerini, 1998.

exclusion which provokes tension in communities constructed around the concept of the nation.

These demarcations are not static but in perpetual transformation. Patrizia Nanz demonstrates in her chapter that identifications with Europe or with other entities are constantly negotiated and renegotiated in a flux in inter- or transcultural movements. Positions of in-between are based on communication and require a “pluricultural literacy”. It is not the matter of *the* European identity mixed up with other identities, but nevertheless clear boundaries between “We Europeans” and the Others, the Turks, the Muslims, and so on, emerge. There are several interacting images of Europe that compete, supplement or overlap with each other. An important issue is the degree of permeability in the demarcation between Us and Them in the Janus mirrors. This demarcation must necessarily be porous – in other words, Europe is what it is because of its porous self-constitution.

Identities and images of Us and the Other are culturally constructed by means of language and symbols. The results in such processes are contingent, but to say that these identities and the images are culturally constructed does not mean that they are completely arbitrary inventions or the outcome of the manipulation of gullible populations. The construction of community is never construction in the sense of a subject who applies his or her will to raw materials and creates the “desired” object. The constructor is always forced to make use of the materials at hand¹³, and so construction is never free invention. It is always derivative, never original, always the best version of a thing made with materials that come from another “author”. This is the sense of the term *bricolage* which Levi-Strauss popularised in the 1960s: construction determined in part by the materials at hand and not simply by the traditional relation between constructor and construction¹⁴. However, although bound by these preconditions, successful constructions have the capacity to convince and mobilise beyond that of competing models. This means that the image of Europe has to do with the power of ideas, where ideas are provided by intellectual and political elites and where some ideas are more resonant than others (see in particular Gerold Gerber’s chapter on Malta, Patrizia Nanz’s on

¹³ See here my discussion of the emergence of myths in Stråth, 2000f.

¹⁴ Cf. White, 1999.

Italian immigrants in Frankfurt, Martin Marcussen and Klaus Roscher's on the construction of an image of Europe in France, Germany and the UK, and my own on the corresponding construction in Sweden, in this respect). Such ideas constitute knowledge structures and belief systems ("reality", "truth"), which take form in the name of science and religion.

Once these knowledge structures, or epistemes, are established, they tend to be relatively uncontested. In the long run, however, they are susceptible to change through new challenges in various forms (political, ideological, empirical, theoretical, ontological, spiritual, academic, military and so on), because intellectual activity in the name of science, art, religion and politics is a competitive endeavour, in which new approaches to the debate are constantly sought in order to establish positions of power. These epistemes both inform and legitimate elite discourse with regard to the organisation of society, providing a framework for understanding what can legitimately be said and done and define the limits and set the agenda for debate. The analysis of "elite discourse" leads us quickly into the analysis of institutions (which are, of course, organised, managed, financed and ideologised by elites). Several of the contributions in this book deal with institutional history, or better, the history of institutionalisation.

In a specific sense the process of construction underlies all interactions between human beings, not least because time is in continuous flux and we want to, or even must remain the same. Construction in this sense is not so much invention or manipulation, but rather the interpretation of situations and the management of interaction. From this perspective, construction is communication. There are various types of construction, for example, political construction by states, institutions and military and economic powers, inventions and images suggested by intellectuals, and cultural construction in everyday life. But irrespective of its nature, construction is always linked to communication. Construction and communication are not unanimously understood categories. Indeed, their inherent controversy has the long-term effect that "Europe" – like epistemes in general – is revised, renegotiated, and reformulated. Europe is a discourse about a *territorium*, the demarcation of which is contested, as are the extent and content of its institutions.

Therefore, in this perspective of various levels of "reality" and various types of construction, and with reference to Alfred Schütz, a distinction should be made not only between elite and mass, but also

between various forms of *geistige Zustände*, that is, between “reflection” and “taking for granted”, between the problematic and the matter of course, between the conscious construction (“reflection”) and “unconscious” construction (everyday life practices) of limits and realities. Although intellectuals have a specific role as professional producers of ideas, their contribution is only the visible tip of an enormous iceberg which consists of the ritual reproduction of knowledge and limits in the *Alltag* practice. Ernest Renan’s well-known definition of the nation as a daily plebiscite also fits within this framework¹⁵.

In other words, images of Europe are necessarily and productively controversial. The long-term impact of this competition is the revision, erosion and transformation of the structures of knowledge¹⁶. This is why traditional “democratic” institutions, which operate according to the principle of vote-and-go-home-and-wait-for-two-years, are generally at a loss as to understanding the practice of European image production, to which, of course, this volume hopes to contribute.

Our aim is a historical deconstruction of the construction of Europe by means of the careful selection of examples and the identification of various levels of “reality” in a continuum between a reflective reality, where the term identity is used, and an every-day one, where no use is made of the term, a continuum between reflection and the taken-for-granted. The key question is, to what extent actors consider themselves to be part of Europe. On the other hand, a question like, “Is Turkey a part of Europe?” is impossible from this perspective, because it is a question without any clear answer. Nevertheless, since the question is repeatedly put on the political agenda, it has to be considered in the same way as all the other questions that have been thrown up in the wake of the European categorisation of Us and the Other, for instance, whether Islam as a European religion (given the many immigrants and the religious aspect the language of ethnicity acquired during the civil war in Bosnia), or Judaism is easier to accept. It should be kept in

¹⁵ I am grateful to Gerold Gerber for comments on this point. Schütz, 1962. Cf. Zølner, 1998, 2000, for a discussion of the *Alltag* of the intellectuals. Concerning the nation as a daily plebiscite, see Renan, 1992 [1887].

¹⁶ For a discussion of the connection between competing elites and knowledge structures, see Marcussen, 1998, 1999a-c and forthcoming.

mind that Christianity was one of three monotheisms, with the same God, rooted in Asia.

Europe as Dystopia and Utopia

Cultural constructions of community through the demarcation between Us and the Other express longings for cohesion and holism. This can be seen as a reaction to the experiences of atomism and meaninglessness which have repeatedly been ascribed to the modern project, indeed, which have formed as much a part of it as technological optimism and the belief in progress and evolution. There is a pessimistic, deconstructive line of continuity leading from Novalis and Schlegel, via Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Bergson, up to the catastrophes of the 20th century, catastrophes which did not need any philosophers to explain, or, rather, which not even the philosophers could explain. In this respect, “post-modernity” has been an element of modernity since at least the early 19th century¹⁷. As a matter of fact, “post-modernity” in this sense is a fundamental precondition of modernity. That was Nietzsche’s message when he warned of the hidden bomb in modernity. From Nietzsche it is not difficult to see the connection to one of the most prominent interpreters of the modern project, Max Weber. However, it should also be noted that Nietzsche, given his pessimism as to the potential of progress and the possibilities of science to improve the world was, after all, less pessimistic and world-denying than his teacher, Schopenhauer, whose pessimism Nietzsche tried to transgress. Nietzsche was sceptical of romantic pessimism and all forms of escatological philosophy. Pessimism was for him, a sickness provoked by the will to possess absolute knowledge. The remedy for this sickness was art and laughter. He emphasised the *mutual* precondition of one for the other between pleasure and suffering, identity and alterity, normality and abnormality. On this point, see the last part of Gerold Gerber’s chapter on Malta and Europe.

Pessimistic and optimistic scenarios about future, dystopian and utopian world images have interacted and conditioned one another. Optimistic and progressive scenarios of the future have emerged in

¹⁷ Cf. J. Peter Burgess’ chapter in this book and his reading of Schuman. See in particular Burgess’ citation of Bergson, who argued that democracy owes its essence to Christianity. In this context, Schuman justifies European solidarity as a variation of Catholic solidarity.

order to overcome pessimism. Holistic views are constructed where feelings of social atomism prevail. Criticism in the name of romanticism at the beginning of the 19th century, *Kulturkritik* at the end of that century, and post-modernity at the end of the 20th century, can all be seen as continuous correctives of the idea of Enlightenment and progress, but correctives that could have catastrophic consequences. The end of the *Kulturphilosophie* was marked by the split between Heidegger and Cassirer in the 1930s¹⁸, or the split between Husserl and his student Heidegger. Husserl talked about Europe as a *geistige Gestalt*, a spiritual outline based on critical reason derived from ancient Greece. This critical reason was Europe's expression and *raison d'être*¹⁹. However, when it came to give content to the "spiritual outline", various approaches emerged, and Heidegger's was different from Husserl's²⁰.

In processes of tension between atomism and holism, Europe and the nation were not only important building blocks, but points of departure for criticism. For instance, there was both a positive and a negative view of Europe. Europe was controversial and one saw what one wanted to see in the mirror of the Other. Schlegel argued that mankind cannot sink deeper than it has done in Europe: life in Europe was exposed to an increasing division of what organically belonged together, and man had almost become a machine, he complained. In India he looked for a unity of reason and feeling, poetry and science²¹.

This infatuation with India continued with Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer in turn influenced Nietzsche, who also set Europe against India. In particular, it was Buddhism that attracted Nietzsche. Its denial of the world seemed to him more aristocratic than the Christian denial in the *Dämmerungsland* of civilisation he experienced. Both religions were nihilistic, but the nihilism of Buddhism was freer and more *kultiviert*. Through its godlessness, Buddhism better fit

¹⁸ See Cassirer, 1980 [1942]. This field more or less disappeared after World War II to be replaced in the 1950s and the 1960s by cultural psychology, and then by cultural sociology and cultural anthropology in the 1970s. Cultural Studies, as a sort of off-shoot of literature theory, was *the* place in the 1980s with interesting cultural and philosophical discussion (the important contributions of Derrida, de Certeau, Lacan, for instance). I am grateful to J. Peter Burgess for comments on this point. Cf. also Stråth, 1997.

¹⁹ Semprón, 1999.

²⁰ Cf. Concerning Husserl's talk in 1935 Luisa Passerini's chapter.

²¹ Schlegel 1808 cit. in Ambjörnsson, 1994, pp. 56-58.

Nietzsche's image of the free individual than did the demanding god of Christianity. Nietzsche even saw himself as a European Buddha, as a prophet and pioneer of a new culture and a new future. This culture was different from that prevailing in Europe, and it was this difference that made Nietzsche drape himself in the mantles of both Buddha and Zarathustra²².

Europe as a Concept

As the name of the continent, Europe was used in the Middle Ages, but at that time it had only a geographical content. During the Renaissance, Europe emerged as a parallel concept to Christianity. Gradually, however, it came to be loaded with other meaning. For Machiavelli, for instance, politics were important to describe and define Europe. Later on, technical inventions, art and science were used to demarcate Europe from the other continents.

In his chapter in this book, Peter Burke demonstrates, however, that it was not Europe but the (Catholic) Church that was the carrier of universalism and "trans-statism" in opposition to the emerging centralised and territorially organised states (although a myth existed about a European – as well as Asian and African – origin in the sons of Noah). This universalism became problematic with the emergence and spread of Reformism/Protestantism in the 16th century. Christian universalism was increasingly integrated into and identified with the centralised state regimes and the foundation myths they developed for legitimatisation. In 1648, after thirty years of religious warfare, the universalistic and state-transgressive pretensions of the Catholic Church had become impossible. There was not one church, but many. It was with the discourse of the Enlightenment that Europe emerged to fill this void. The idea of Europe as a community belonged to the Enlightenment project²³.

Europe is therefore a relatively modern idea which gradually replaced the earlier community concept of Christendom in a complex

²² Ambjörnsson, 1994, pp. 57-58.

²³ Voltaire argued that Europe is a kind of value system based on rationality, and Montesquieu said that Europe is a certain kind of culture. However, basically Europe came to follow the same old plot as the national myths which Burke, in his chapter in this volume, describes. And the European myth is still a part of this plot. A case in point which Peter Burke mentions is the Quincentenary commemoration of the birth of Charles V in 2000 celebrated as the birth of Europe.

intellectual process that lasted from the 14th to the 18th century. The decisive period for this change was in the late 1600s and the early 1700s, after generations of religious conflict. In this early phase of the Enlightenment, the concept of Christianity no longer connoted community, but expressed struggle and discord. Europe came to fill the need for a designation with more neutral and, at the same time, universal connotations. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 was the last major occasion when public reference to the *Res Publica Christiana* was made. Gradually, there emerged the idea of a European confederation that would guarantee a lasting peace²⁴. In 1751, Voltaire described Europe as: “[...] a kind of great republic divided into several states, some monarchical, the others mixed [...] but all corresponding with one another. They all have the same religious foundation, even if divided into several confessions. They all have the same principle of public law and politics, unknown in other parts of the world.”²⁵

With Enlightenment, Europe took over the role of a universal civilisation project from Christianity. In the view of Voltaire, Montesquieu and their fellows, the image of a despotic East emerged in contrast to a civilised Europe. The Christian mission was later transformed into new contexts, where the missionary imperative was labelled by Kipling as the white man’s burden. It was this Enlightenment image that Schlegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and others inverted.

In a contradictory way, and in contrast to Muslim Asia which, during the 18th century, was increasingly referred to as the Orient, Christian Europe came to be seen as both the ideal and the focus for contempt. Different discourses superimposed themselves one upon the other to gradually form the image of Europe as a specific civilisation.

The construction of Europe through demarcation of the Other contained contradictory feelings of both superiority and admiration in the American and Asian mirrors, while in the East European and African mirrors superiority undoubtedly dominated. In all these mirrors there was an absorption of the Other through the European pretension to universalism. This was not, of course, a unidirectional monologue in which Europe addressed the Other: the Other also spoke to Europe. This becomes apparent, for instance, in the chapters by Svetlana Boym, Gerold Gerber and myself in this book. Also consider

²⁴ Davies, 1996, pp. 7-8.

²⁵ Voltaire, 1957 [1752], p. 123.

in this context Erik Tängerstad's chapter on the concept of the Third World, which provokes us not only to question who is constructing, but also who "we" are: Is Europe seen from "inside" or "outside", and what do these different perspectives mean for the idea of Europe?²⁶

Enlightenment and the quest for absolute knowledge was followed by a European obsession with classification. This classification was the wedge that divided, and organised hierarchically, the empirical world. The apparatus of knowledge allowed for widely varying interpretations of the Other oscillating between contempt and esteem, between stereotypes of the barbarian and the noble savage.

The basis of this scientific Enlightenment construction was an aesthetic canon emphasising neo-classical ideas of the balance of the parts, proportionality of form and regularity in the identification of human beauty. Silvia Sebastiani reflects on this development in her chapter. The concept of race emerged as a branch of this process when investigations and the inventions of the investigations of anatomists or naturalists resolved the classification problems which remained obscure to Enlightenment historians of philosophers. The classification was transformed into a Darwinian language with the linkage of biological knowledge to the concept of progress and anthropology was supplanted by biology as the trend-setter. Aesthetics were shifted to science. This discourse then shifted from the beauty of race to the purity of blood. This development was underpinned in nationalist rhetoric, by the elevation of the concept of *ethnos* in the name of science.

Europe as the Other and as Us

Today, the idea of a linear development from the European nation-states, as they were established in modernisation processes between the 16th and 19th centuries, to a single European nation-state at an imagined higher level of polity seems scarcely realistic. It is more relevant to consider what the border lines between the European nation-states and the European Union will mean when the physical checkpoints

²⁶ A very recent example is the talk by the President of Iran Seyed Mohammed Khatami at the European University Institute in Florence in March, 1999, where he, in an attempt to break out from the isolation of his country, suggested a bi- or multipartite approach to the truth and to mutual understanding, and where dialogue "is not a property of those who think they are the sole proprietors of Truth". Cf. Khatami, 1999.

disappear as a result of the Schengen Agreement. Will Schengen also mean the internal erosion of mental and cultural barriers at the same time that a wall is built against the Other outside the Union? What role will religious-political heritages play? Consider, for example, the self-image constructed in the 1930s of a Protestant, progressive, and labour-oriented Scandinavia juxtaposed against a xenostereotype of a Catholic, conservative and capital-oriented Europe (“the Continent”), or the British demarcation of Europe under the same name?

One answer to such a question, an answer that indicates in what direction a more satisfactory solution might be found, would be that auto- and xenostereotypes are constructs rooted in specific historical situations. For instance, in the 1920s, the Social Democratic leadership in Sweden was made up of true internationalists, in contrast to the inward-looking Swedish Conservatives who argued for Swedish neutrality based upon a strong army. The Social Democrats on the other hand believed that they could obtain peace and progressive politics for social justice through international co-operation and disarmament. The League of Nations was their political instrument. Their hopes must be understood in the context of a situation in which three imperial thrones had collapsed, and the young Soviet Union still was regarded as a model for social change. Subsequently, confronted by the developments that took place to the east and south of Scandinavia in the 1930s, they felt forced to reconsider their hopes and political dreams and transform them into a consolidated image of Scandinavia through the construction of a European Other.

A European Union that demonstrates a growing responsibility for social welfare, labour regulation and the environment, a Union that uses the Euro and the European Bank as instruments for politics rather than as the dumb messengers for the prescriptions emanating from theorising (and ideologising) economists, could provide incitements for the redefinition of bonds of solidarity and mental demarcations. Long years of hard social bargaining saw the state emerge in the 1930s with the responsibility in areas like employment and social welfare. But recently, with the new language of flexibility, these conventions have collapsed. It remains to be seen what role the European Union will play in the ongoing re-negotiation of the social contract²⁷.

However, the mental barriers between Europe on the one side and countries like Sweden, Norway and Britain on the other, is just one

²⁷ For the transformation of the responsibility conventions, see Stråth, 2000a.

aspect of the multifaceted relationship between Europe and the nation. Indeed, it is probably a rather marginal aspect. After 1945, in countries like Germany, France and Italy, and after 1975 in Spain, national unity is very much linked to Europe and to European integration, as Martin Marcussen and Klaus Roscher show in their chapter. The erosion of the demarcation between Europe and the nation in these countries, where Europe is incorporated as an element of national self-understanding, is much more important than the invocation of the border in Britain, Sweden and Norway. In Germany, France, Italy and Spain, Europe emerges as an element of Us rather than as the Other.

The growing emphasis on “the region” in Europe also contributes to the erosion and transformation of boundaries. The regions emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as a response to the problems of political legitimacy at the national level provoked by the collapse of the Keynesian and Fordist models. Politicians from Corsica to Scotland see in Europe potential salvation from the nation-state structures to which they presently belong. Also in less ideologised regions like those around Torino and Lyon, Europe emerges as an attractive supplement to the nation-state administration, because of the prospects of cash from Brussels²⁸. At this geographical level, Europe is thus an instrument in the construction of regional identities.

The contributions by Martin Marcussen and Klaus Roscher, Gerold Gerber, and Peter Burgess show from a historical point of view, beginning in the 1930s, how the European level in national politics is contested, negotiated, contextual, contradictory and shifting. They make the common point that Europe is used as an active component when national identities are transformed. On the one hand Europe supports and reinforces national identities, while on the other it stands in opposition to them. Since 1945, Europe has brought meaning into national interpretative frameworks in terms of both Us and Them rather than operating as an independent category of collective identity. In other words, European identity has diverse forms that lie along a broad political and religious spectrum based on various histories. These different forms, rather than providing alternatives to national identities have been incorporated into, or, at least demonstrated a considerable degree of overlap with these national identities²⁹. This is

²⁸ See, for the development of the region as an idea in this view, Pichierri, 2000.

²⁹ Cf. here Møller, 1995.

obviously an alternative view to that of a clearcut demarcation between Europe and the nation.

In the view promoted in this book, the concept of frontiers, and the territory they enclose, is a historically determined notion that, over the last few decades, has been undergoing a profound transformation. One expression of this transformation is the parallel emergence of the concept of “globalisation”. But even if the transformation is new, there is an enduring element in the fact that Europe cannot be clearly defined either in cultural or in geographical terms. Turkey was admitted into NATO as one of Us during the Cold War and was, at the EU summit in Helsinki in December, 1999, admitted as one of the applicants for membership of the EU. The debate in Israel in the 1960s over whether to pursue an application for membership in the EC and its participation in European institutions and arrangements such as the Eurovision Song Contest or the European football championships is an example of a different kind of both belonging and not belonging. Malta exhibits a third pattern, as Gerold Gerber demonstrates in this book. In the 1980s, the Council of Europe, a kind of champion of human rights, stretched from Finland to Cyprus (but excluded Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary). Paradoxically, although the Council’s area of competence included the non-democratic Vatican state, it did not extend to democratic Israel. The Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, created in 1947 under the aegis of the US, with the aim of managing the Marshall Plan and promoting co-operation among the nations of non-Communist Europe, was reshaped in 1961 into the OECD. The original twenty members were made up from the countries of Western Europe (Turkey was included in this group) as well as the USA and Canada, NATO’s North American states. Finland (1969) and the Pacific “Western” states of Japan (1964), Australia (1971) and New Zealand (1973) followed. In a second wave of expansion Mexico (1994), the Czech Republic (1995), Hungary (1996), Poland (1996) and South Korea (1996) joined the group. Spain, although a founding member of the OECD, was excluded from European institutions until after the death of Franco in 1975. Authoritarian Portugal under Salazar was granted full membership of NATO in 1949 and, with British support, entered the European Free Trade Association in 1959, together with Social Democratic Scandinavia. The Cold War scenario of the Europe of two halves was transformed after 1989, and a new image emerged, institutionalised in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). This organisation included the new polities of the former Soviet Union from the Baltic to the Pacific, as

well as the USA with the states of Alaska and Hawaii. In the OSCE there emerged a Europe that stretched from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The issue of Russian participation in the NATO/UN peace operations in Kosovo demonstrates how fragile such institutions are, however, and moreover, the trend is not exclusively towards unification: in institutional terms, the governments of Norway and Iceland have chosen to stay out of the European Union, and the government of Switzerland has chosen to remain outside most European institutions³⁰. These choices have been made in situations of considerable political tension. In short, Europe as a set of values, or as a region of shared history, has no clear demarcation. There are many competing claims to constitute its historical core, while the values inscribed in the concept are contested and contradictory.

The nation-states of this evasive Europe have long occupied a space much more clearcut than the area to which they supposedly belonged. Their boundaries were historically constructed. Through a concept of clearcut frontiers, people were divided by means of envisaged lines, where the civilisation of one “people” was unambiguously delimited from that of another. As Charles Maier has observed, this was in contrast to the American construction of a frontier image as a rolling zone which marked the end of settlement and civilisation. The American historian Frederick Jackson Turner has argued that it was in this borderland that the whole American way of living was moulded³¹. Once the continent had been explored and appropriated, however, a frontier concept more like the one between nations and states in Europe emerged, clearly expressed already before this “end stage” in the Monroe doctrine of 1823, for instance. On the other side, the continued United States interest in world politics, interrupted by

³⁰ Wallace, 1999.

³¹ Maier, 1999. Cf. *Idem*, 1987. Frederick Jackson Turner was professor of history at the University of Wisconsin and at Harvard 1892-1924. In a lecture in 1893 about the importance of the frontier in American history he developed the thoughts which recur in his later works and which are usually referred to as the frontier hypothesis or the Turner thesis. Before Turner, American historians had mainly drawn attention to the industrialised eastern part of America and emphasised the European influences. Turner, who was himself from the Midwest, argued that in order to understand American history, the focus should be on the borderland in the West, a borderland which was in constant movement towards the West. It was in this zone, in Turner’s view, that the typical characteristics of the American people and its political institutions emerged. The frontier hypothesis had a far-reaching influence not only on American historiography but also on the American self-image.

phases of “isolation”, demonstrates the continued role of the image of a rolling zone. What long-term impact the globalisation rhetoric will have on this image is a question for the future.

The European construction of frontiers started early. An important step in this creative activity was taken with the great explorations in the 16th century. When the oceans and the new world were mapped, the boundaries of the old world were drawn. The maps which emerged in this context should not be taken for granted, for they were produced to control space and to dominate it conceptually. Their reduction of space and extent to readily apprehensible planar models was characterised by a highly metaphoric quality³². This development was reinforced by the emergence of centralised state bureaucracies that claimed physical dominion over the subjects in their demarcated *territorii*.

From the mid-19th century, political space was intensified and compressed by means of new communication technology (most importantly telegraph and railways). The periphery came closer to the centre at the same time as the extent of *territorium* brought under control through colonisation expanded. In this sense, concentration was compatible with expansion. The idea of territorial regime and practice was sharpened when politics were linked to the concept of nation, and the concept of ethnicity emerged as a parallel to race in the Enlightenment classification (see Silvia Sebastiani's chapter). In this context, nation was regarded as competing with nation in a struggle for survival. By the end of the 19th century, the concept of class was offering an even greater challenge to the territorial regime and practice, a challenge from within that provoked intensified national integration politics. The first culmination of these processes was the outbreak of World War I, when the labour movements were stopped in their international ambitions (“international” rather than “transnational”, since the nation was the given point of departure). 1914 marked the final nationalisation of socialism and a new awareness of bounded space. It was in this process that Weber saw the state as the form of human community that, in a specified area (*Gebiet*), successfully claims a monopoly of legitimate physical violence³³. In the 1930s, the social bargaining around the national demarcation of insiders and outsiders, public and private, transformed social consciousness. The view on *territorium* as bounded space, with its long history, peaked

³² Maier, 1999.

³³ Weber, 1972, p. 514. Cf. Maier, 1999.

again in the Cold War. But this culmination was not only based on the division between good and evil, West and East: it was also founded on the idea of the political management of the economy in order to guarantee affluence and full employment, which in turn promoted the emergence of experiences of national communities of destiny.

All this changed in the 1970s. Since then, populations and elites have lost their constructed feeling of managing and controlling territorial space and public life³⁴. “Globalisation” and “post-modernity” are two key concepts which have been employed to cope with this development. They, together with other notions such as “market”, “network”, “individual”, “decentralisation”, “flexibility”, “virtual reality”, “cyberspace” and “internet”, form a conceptual hierarchy that provides the basis of a new *episteme*. The metaphors and the mentalities fostered by the new communication technology do not result in a focussing on border lines as did the new communication technology of the 19th century. On the contrary, frontier lines are blurred and transgressed by concepts like network and internet.

The danger inherent in this development is that the question of power relationships is not addressed in the new language. We envisage elites and masses arranged in concentric circles rather than tapering pyramids³⁵. The new elite at the centre reaps the rewards of their transnational control of information and symbols. However, there is also a new proletariat emerging in the low-paid service sector; cleaning offices, hospitals or city streets, or taking care of other people’s homes and children. For too long, this emerging proletariat has been kept hidden behind the ritual rhetoric of unemployment which had characterised the last quarter of a century. “Third World metastasises have moved into the First: enclaves of glitz and misery, the boutiques and the barrios exist cheek by jowl in New York as well as Latin America.”³⁶

Since the 1970s, the traditional adjustments and confrontations between Left and Right have been dissolved in this development. Charles Maier discerns a new political reorientation between two “virtual parties”. On the one side are those who accept, confirm and profit from the transnational flows of wealth and information, convinced that only going with this global current will allow the

³⁴ Maier, 1999.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

markets to enrich us all. Against them stand the “territorialists”, who advocate the reunification of time and space, of identity space and decision space. They argue that, whether inside the nation-state as we once knew it, or inside the new region, as it must now be created, people must reconstruct meaningful frontiers³⁷.

It is easy to agree with the solution suggested by Charles Maier:

[...] a reconstruction of politics that listens to the laments of the territorialists without succumbing to their xenophobia and aligns with the globalists without merely surrendering to mere market orientation. Such an endeavour would involve reinforcing supranational institutions with political capacities and political representation – not merely a web of NGOs [Non-Government Organisations], for no matter how attractive that vision is, it will remain elitist and feeble³⁸.

Environment politics could be added on to social political areas of institutionalised regulation. This Europe is not a social, state-centred Europe as one recent thinker has suggested³⁹. A Europe that rests only on citizenship and on the normative basis of a vaguely defined collective identity will, in the long run, not be particularly social. The EU should not be conceived of as a nucleus with affiliated members, a core and a periphery, but should be envisaged as a set of commitments to redistribution and the environment with no geographical reference. In this framework, social responsibility would be raised from the level of the individual, towards whom it seems to have been moving since the break-down of the national welfare states in the 1970s, to become increasingly harmonised and subject to European treatment. Over time, any nation should be made welcome to share these community arrangements provided they are committed to social responsibility and redistribution as well as to human rights. An approach such as this would necessarily mean an emphasis on institutions and regulative norms rather than identity and frontiers⁴⁰, indeed, frontiers would no longer be required. The transformation of the OEEC into the OECD in the 1960s is a historical example of just such a process. It should be noted that the institutional arrangements of the EU are at quite a different level at the point of departure than they were in the OEEC/OECD. However, the difference in this respect would only

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Delanty, 1995, pp. 27-31.

⁴⁰ Cf. Stråth, 2000a.

serve to facilitate such an expansion. This argument for a “de-territorialisation” of the concept of Europe is, as a matter of fact, rather close to Luisa Passerini’s argument in the next chapter for a critical meta-geography combatting residual Eurocentrism, where Europe is seen as an area defined as a cultural region, although she operates with territorial concepts (meta-geography, area, region). Although she refers to Europe as both a discursive and a material space, she is not interested in fixing any borders, just the opposite.

Images of collective identities are generally constructed in processes of collective bargaining based upon very different courses of events, each dependent on different historical and other cultural preconditions and frameworks. The role of Europe has varied in the elite construction of collective identities not only from one historical moment to another, but also from country to country. Over time and across countries, the image of Europe has taken many forms: Europe as a community of nation-states (*e.g.* De Gaulle’s vision of Europe “from the Atlantic to the Urals”); Europe as a set of values; Europe as a “third force”, a kind of democratic socialist alternative to both capitalism and Communism; a modernising (Western) Europe as part of the Western community, based on liberal democracy and social market economy, experiencing a greater or lesser degree of tension with the US; or a Europe based on Christian, and in particular, Catholic values, including strong social obligations.

This historical scenario is an instrument intended both to de-ideologise the concept of European identity and to make it a means for action-orientation and institutional development in the ongoing rewriting of the social contract⁴¹.

In an era of ethnic cleansing, identity policy, in general terms, has become problematic. However, this is not the main problem to trouble the European Union on the threshold of the third millennium. The threat is another one: even the least chauvinistic expressions of solidarity couched in national terms might threaten transnational projects which, in the view of processes called globalisation, are scheduled to serve the interests of a wider population. National solidarity diminishes one’s responsiveness to the needs of the Others. Having said this, David Hollinger has demonstrated for the USA that the Progressive Era around 1900, the New Deal in the 1930s, as well as the Great Society in the 1960s were predicated exactly on a strong

⁴¹ See here several of the contributions in Stråth, 2000a.

national “we”, as were the triumphs of the civil rights movement⁴². The question is whether this “we” can be founded on the idea of a socially progressive programme rather than on territoriality.

Hollinger’s solution of “multiple identities” should also offer an opportunity for Europe. Moreover, since nations obviously will not have had their day for the foreseeable future, it becomes important to distinguish critically among various national projects rather than dismiss them all as equally problematic. In the European national projects, Europe and the nations have, with a few exceptions, reinforced one another, becoming interwoven rather than separated. Europe is being down-loaded into national communities where multiple identities (in the sense of feelings of belonging) are discernible. This process of identity (trans)formation must be seen in the framework of the threats provoked by the Cold War and, in more recent years, by “globalisation”, which is a shorthand term for a cluster of problems. The response to these threats has been a Europeanisation of institutions, norms and regulation through forty years of decision-making in Brussels. The connections between the development of norms and laws, the development of institutions and the transformation of identity has, in the framework of multiple identities, lead to a merging of Europe and the nation to a certain extent. This Europeanisation of norms and institutions could be a point of departure for a social Europe without boundaries.

Conclusion

The historical discourses mapped out here constitute a particular construction of Europe, an invented Europe, an image. The emergence of this Europe, or rather, these multiple Europes, cannot be understood simply in terms of hegemony or something that can easily be defined. The concept of hegemony is just as burdened by ideology, by an invisible hierarchy of values, as the system it pretends to demystify. Who defines the poles of the hegemonic? Constructed Europe is contradictory and ambiguous. Its perceived nature is always dependent upon whatever mirror it is reflected in. Indeed, even in the same mirror, be it the Asian, American, East European or national one, is it possible to discern different and antinomic Europes.

The construction of Europe has been a pluralistic undertaking whereby, often in the name of science or religion, various cultural and

⁴² Hollinger, 1998

ideological views have been promoted, negotiated or imposed. It is this process of social bargaining that we call cultural construction. Political and intellectual elites, in competition to gain popular support, have tried to provide the “best” and most convincing interpretative frameworks. Together they have produced this multifaceted and contested view of Europe.

Can this construction be considered as a European identity? Did it ever, or will it in the future, transgress national identities? Rather than transgression, it would appear that we currently discern a merger with national identities, which even goes as far as to reinforce them. What are the relationships between the elite and the mass levels in this construction?

Although national feelings of belonging and sameness are tenacious, this does not mean that they were given by nature or that they have essential proportions. Just like the European discourse, these structures of demarcation between Us and Them are in permanent transformation and transition. Although the structures change, they are nevertheless called upon to lend legitimacy to a political organisation with centralised administrative resources and the power necessary for the resolution of problems within a particular territory. The issue is not to avoid these structures or to replace them with a similar structure at a European level. Rather, the question is how to “de-ethnify” these structures. Race was the scourge imposed by biology in the name of science in the 19th century. After the culmination of the race rhetoric during World War II, anthropologists, ethnologists and historians took over with the concept of “ethnicity”. Rather than culminating in 1989, this discourse has accelerated since then, liberated from the challenge of its main competitor in scientific classification and categorisation of individuals and societies: “class”, which has, perhaps definitively, disappeared as a marker and maker of sameness.

The question of a European identity is very much related to what image of Europe is constructed and how the demarcation between Us and the Other is shaped. Who is included and who is excluded, and on what grounds? How sharp is this division? To what extent is Europe embedded in utopian promises?

Unlike the United States of America, where, in the view of Shmuel Eisenstadt, the Promised Land already exists in the earthly form of the USA, in Europe, the Promised Land, has, time and time again, been drawn down from heaven. The nature of this European utopia has

meant that fundamentalism has often been linked to Jacobinism⁴³, while, historically, Jacobinism is absent from American fundamentalism. On the other hand, in European political cultures much more than that of the US, fundamentalism has been kept in check by pragmatism. Is pragmatism elite or anti-elite? Who is more pragmatic, a French farmer or a Brussels bureaucrat? This unresolvable question precludes neither a “working” European identity nor political action, and it is *this* which represents Europe’s historical hope.

Will it be possible, on the basis of this tradition of pragmatism, to develop a European *Verfassungspatriotismus*? How would the Eastern border line and the demarcation from America and the Third World then be drawn? For the discussion of this question, see the chapter by Hayden White, who seems inclined to see Europe and the West as synonymous categories, of which the USA is a part, or at least a European offspring. To what extent would a European *Verfassungspatriotismus* constitute the basis along the lines of the identity favoured by Jürgen Habermas for Germany? To what extent would it transgress national identities, or rather, to what extent would it keep them in check through the European merger which has already begun? Is such a constitutional patriotism possible without a European public sphere? How would such a public sphere be constructed? Could it be more than an elite undertaking? Lutz Niethammer’s sceptical view in the light of the enlargement negotiations between the European Union and the membership applicants is particularly interesting in this respect.

If a European identity in this sense emerges, it will probably not be the result of introducing a European anthem, a European Day, a European flag and so on. The abolishment of national border check points and the introduction of the euro might touch upon deeper value orientations. In any case, a point of departure in the discussion of a European identity should be a historical humbleness based on the insight of how complex and contradictory the construction of Europe has been. Perhaps the talk of a European identity is too exclusive and linked too closely to the EU. The image of Europe should be an image of openness.

Richard Waswo has described the European myth as a plot starting with Virgil’s *Aeneid* and the mythical foundation of Rome by the

⁴³ Eisenstadt, 1999.

Trojans⁴⁴. The plot argues that history has a direction from the east to the west, and this line of thought is easily discernible in the discourse of the Enlightenment. According to Herder and Hegel, Asia was the cradle of culture. Asia was Europe's childhood, but by around 1800, this childhood was drawing to a close. It is the same 2000-year old plot and the same direction that we discern today in the enlargement negotiation with the European Union. Perhaps a new starting point for the discussion of the image of Europe could be the massive denial of the belief that history has a direction, accompanied by the rejection of chiliastic utopias in favour of pragmatism.

But if we are to consider pragmatism, it is essential to consider at what point the rhetoric on a European identity becomes dangerous and pragmatism turns into fundamentalism. It is difficult to see the concept of Europe as it was launched in 1973 in order to re-establish the international order built in Bretton Woods, and to save eroding welfare structures as dangerous, but, on the other hand, was the hierarchical listing of the Others in the Copenhagen summit in 1973 quite so harmless? Again, it is difficult to see the danger in the competition over the fulfilment of the Maastricht criteria and about being good Europeans. This political contest within the EU about the future redistribution of resources and the reshaping of institutions is, in the public debate it produces, seen as a game with winners and losers, where the struggle in itself kneads together interests and produces pragmatism. However, the same summit in Berlin in April, 1999 which found a temporary solution in this continuous bargaining process also unanimously declared war on Serbia. Why has the military dimension been, and why does it continue to be so absent from the discourse of intellectuals on Europe? Should war with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia be seen as a kind of founding act of the new EU? If so, it was a founding act under US auspices.

Of course, politics of ethnic cleansing and genocide must be condemned and, if necessary, prevented by force, but why did the intervention in Kosovo come when it did and not earlier? Why did the EU wait until it suited President Clinton to launch an intervention? Why was a solution not imposed upon Milosevic in the context of the end of the Bosnian War? Why are, despite the campaign for human rights and a new morality, war criminals like Karadjic still free? If human rights represent a higher principle than the sovereignty of

⁴⁴ Waswo, 1997.

a state, how can the league for international order accept that Milosevic – in the name of state sovereignty – remains head of state after the cease fire? State sovereignty, it would seem, regained its position as the superior principle. Why was the “just war” interrupted before justice had been seen to be done? If Kosovo is an example of a “just war”, why then was no one prepared to make any sacrifice? If the idea of human rights is superior to the idea of a state’s sovereignty, who decides on interventions for the defence of human rights, if the UN is ruled out as it was in the case of Kosovo? Is this to be NATO’s new role? NATO itself has defined its future role in terms of “crisis management”. Is this the label to be applied to the war in Kosovo? Who is the enemy and what constitutes the threat in NATO’s future scenario? Who are “We” and who are “They”? As the editing of this book comes to a close another uneasy question is emerging, linking Europe to the world beyond. How in reference to human rights abuse and responsibility can a differentiation between Kosovo and East Timor be constructed? Is the Timor and Indonesian crisis possibly a matter of “Europe-extraterritorial”, the residual of two European colonial heritages?

Within the current trend in international relations towards the guarantee of moral and human rights, without doubt, an element exists which is reminiscent of a “Wild West” mentality. In the name of law and order, sheriff’s stars are handed out to a posse of deputies, often far from upstanding citizens themselves, who will buckle on their guns, saddle up and ride off in search of the outlaws. The role of the sheriff is, more often than not, assumed by the USA. How then does the European Union define its role with respect to this trend?

The Kosovo War provokes a number of uncomfortable questions which, ambiguous, unclear and potentially divisive as they are, must be openly debated rather than swept under the carpet. The War has demonstrated that the former colonial powers of Britain, France, Germany and Italy constitute the core of the European Union. This in itself is hardly surprising, since the administration of Europe would be virtually impossible without these “big power” experiences. The problem emerges when “big power” experiences are, without reflection, transformed into new forms of “big power” aspirations, both within the European Union and in relation to the Others outside it. In what respects is the new wave of moralism different from the old colonial/imperial gunboat diplomacy?

It is the role of intellectuals to raise the questions of dangers and opportunities, and to recognise utopias and dystopias. It is the role of the politicians to answer these questions. Identity as a concept proclaiming sameness cannot, of course, be taken literally. “You are poor and I am rich, but we are nevertheless the same”, is a frequently employed example of the ideological dimension inherent in the pretension of sameness. Moreover, as I have argued above, the concept of European identity is so diluted that it means anything and nothing. Its only meaning is as a contested political programme or project, which must continue to be contested and questioned. The danger arrives when the questions cease.

CHAPTER 1

The Last Identification: Why Some of Us Would Like to Call Ourselves Europeans and What We Mean by This¹

Luisa PASSERINI

*Era un'Europa ingenua di speranza
Mai più, mai più – giurava
[...] l'Europa mentita
dove Königsberg fu Kaliningrad*

Giovanni Giudici, *Elegie della sera*, 1999²

“Europe is absent”, wrote W. H. Auden in a poem of 1936, at just the same time as the civil war was starting in Spain – prologue to the European civil war of a few years later. Today, the absence of Europe is perceptible once more, although this time it takes a different form. In the 1930s Europe was a torn space and a contested idea, for some representing a void between the USSR and the USA, for others between fascism and anti-fascism. Yet this void could be taken at that time to indicate a third way, towards a future open to new forms of human relationships and love, as the poets in the Spanish civil war expressed in their poems. It was thus possible for utopians to transform the absence of Europe into a dream of peace and justice. But this

¹ I am grateful to Antonis Liakos for having suggested to me the writings by Georgios Theotokas and to Augusta Dimou for having done the translation of some of them. I would also like to thank Tom Kirk and Nicki Owtram for their help with the English version of this essay.

² The two poems quoted are “Guardando fotografie di Paul C.”, p. 49 and “Diabolus” 2, p. 60 (Giudici has translated Paul Celan into Italian).

dream was shattered by the Cold War and a division of the continent as extreme as ever, by which Europe came to be restricted to its West, experiencing a caesura more political than geographical, and more ideological than cultural³. Following the European wars of the last ten years, Europe's absence has come to mean impotence and a lack of initiative, with a sense of uncertainty about its own territory, and confusion and subordination in relation to the United States. These wars have shown that we still live under the repercussions of the checkmate of the European Defence Community in the 1950s⁴, which was the defeat of a project of an independent European military force. Europe, which after 1989 might have finally become such in a full sense, is still in fact elusive. After the "naive Europe of hope" and the "belied Europe" of ideology and oppression, as the poet says in his *Elegy of the Evening*, can there be any Europe at all for us? In particular, one which is a Europe meaningful at the level of subjectivity and intersubjectivity?

Having recently written on the question of European identity both from a historical⁵ and from a theoretical point of view⁶, I will here take a more personal approach, which will allow me to treat important questions with relative lightness.

Who Identifies with Whom? A First Meaning of "Last"

I agree with many interpreters that, the challenge of the absence of Europe, the task should not be met by a quest for identity. Certainly not for an identity understood as harmony (Dumoulin), and not even for an identity understood in its basic sense as a coincidence with itself, with ourselves (Benslama, in *Penser l'Europe à ses frontières*). Europe is by definition supposed to be never identical with itself (Balibar, *ibidem*), and therefore the paradox of its identity is, in the best of cases, an allusion to the future: "European self-reflection is already the index of its non-self-identity. It constitutes a self-knowledge, yes, but also a sign of a Europe to come, a Europe which must be chosen"⁷.

³ Matvejevic, 1998.

⁴ Frank, 1998.

⁵ Passerini, 1999.

⁶ Passerini, 1998.

⁷ Burgess, 1997.

If we want to call ourselves Europeans, for reasons I will try to explore, we should be aware that this cannot mean adopting any old form of identity. A crucial step, I believe, is to take seriously a suggestion by Homi Bhabha and to substitute “identity” with “identification”. In fact, one of the biggest risks is that of reifying identity, in other words treating it as though it were a thing, as is implied in expressions such as “having/assuming/abandoning an identity”. These expressions must be understood as possessive metaphors that make the identification processes rigid rather than flexible as they are in reality. Through such processes, individual subjects constitute themselves on the basis of common interests, ideologies and memories, and recognise themselves as part of a group cause. The relationship between the individual and the collectivity is crucial in this matter: “l’identité pose la question de la relation entre l’individu et la collectivité”⁸; “une identité implique la reconnaissance d’une appartenance à une communauté”⁹. Use of the idea of identification allows one to highlight the relationship between the individual and various collectivities – and therefore the relationship between, and the nature of, historical subjects – avoiding, or at least reducing, the risk of reification implicit in the term “identity”. Furthermore, it can bring to light the differing degrees of investment placed in identity in different historical periods (for example in the process of constituting a social movement in its earliest phases, *statu nascenti* – or during the period of decline of a collective identity). Already decades ago, Freud preferred to use the term “identification”. I do not, however, wish to suggest any form of taboo regarding the term “identity”, both because the heated debate that has been going on for years cannot be resolved in a nominalistic manner, and because this term represented a great deal, in a progressive sense, for the political movements of the 1960s and 1970s, in spite of their exaggerations and degenerations. At any rate, use of the term “identification” seems more pertinent for the historian’s work, since it emphasises both the dynamic element and the factor of personal choice.

The processes of identification can be more or less intense, more or less partial, more or less dressed up with fanaticism. They are part of a broader process of subjectivation, by which one becomes subject of one’s own life in a given time and place, gaining the ability to

⁸ Pfetsch, 1999.

⁹ Dumoulin, 1998.

formulate decisions, strategies, alliances and loyalties. The idea of property implicit in the reification defect cannot be overcome by simply excluding words such as “having” or “possessing” from the language; it reappears, in fact, in expressions like “to take part” or “to belong” in relation to the experience of a feeling of belonging. In these last cases, however, the direction is inverted: it is not the subject who possesses something defined as an identity, but rather it is the subject who is possessed in one way or another. The question of property has to do with profound feelings, and therefore it cannot be eliminated so easily, nor can it be ignored. Here too, though, it would seem more promising to try to configure these phenomena as processes of investing affection – or, as I prefer to say, of affective investment – where “possession” and “belonging” take on a more fluid and complex meaning, that is as intersubjective relationships related to psychological dynamics rather than states which are defined once and for all in isolated subjects.

Processes of identification are historical processes, in the sense that they follow, overlap and modify one another. While reflecting on the present paper I bore in mind my own experience, which is held in common with much of what is often referred to as the 1968 generation (this is not meant as a privileged vantage point, except when speaking in the first person, and it would not be surprising if this held no interest at all for some readers). In this experience, the identification processes that took place during the 1960s and 1970s included forms of self-consciousness and self-recognition that went beyond and against possible European forms of identification, at least on a conscious level. Beginning with local and regional identification and often refusing the idea of nationality, that generation’s processes of identity investment arrived at subjective figures based on class and political orientation, but also – in a more innovative way – on gender and generation. That meant, for example, not feeling Italian, given the aversion to the nationalistic rhetoric of the fascists and later of the Christian Democrats. It did mean, on the other hand, basing identification on belonging to or frequenting places much smaller than the nation, such as a city or a university – often elective places rather than places of birth. It also meant identifying oneself with anti-imperialist and internationalist movements, in whose eyes Europe appeared exclusively as a subject of colonialism, accomplice to the United States, which was in turn referred to as the *gendarme* of world imperialism. Calling oneself European would have been the same as identifying oneself with the neo-colonialist project, and accepting the meaning of

“European” as white. It also meant creating those segments of the left and the new left that referred explicitly to the working classes as the privileged subject of social and political change (a more or less dilated proletariat depending on the various interpretations of the term). The identification processes eventually led many members of that generation to recognise themselves implicitly as young and explicitly as women or as gays, and to base alliances and primary collective identities on this self-recognition.

These processes implied a continual redrawing of the individual and collective subjects’ self-representations. Europe was excluded, except for a few references – such as the discourse on the mirror-image similarity between the revolt against the bureaucracies of eastern Europe and that against the capitalism of western Europe – and a few particular moments, for example when certain elements of the 1968 student movement recognised the importance of the events of Prague in that year, even though in a contradictory and incomplete fashion. Edgar Morin has written of the slow process of his becoming aware of the European dimension of politics – slow, but precocious in comparison to the 1968 generation, since it dates to the early 1970s. For workerism – a widespread attitude in the new left of the 1970s – relationships with the working classes of various countries, including the United States which were considered just as important if not more than Europe in this respect, were of primary importance. As for feminism, the movement only took on a full European dimension after 1989; previously the exchanges between French, Italian, British, German, Dutch, Scandinavian and Spanish women (to name a few of the international networks that I am aware of, which in the 1980s often shifted from feminist politics in its strict sense to academic, publishing and organisational activities) took place in an exclusively western European theatre.

In this amalgam of turbulent itineraries of political and existential engagement, which tried to find a “meaning” capable of bringing the individual and various possible collectivities together, identifications mixed and hybrids emerged. A young woman struggling for the emancipation of the proletariat or of her own gender, for example, encompassed various possible identifications which manifested themselves at different times or in various constellations of value. These processes were neither suggested nor imposed by conditions inherited at birth, even though they were strongly conditioned by living in a certain place at a certain time. With the exception of the gender

movements, such processes were influenced by a strong pan-politicism, traces of which can still be seen in the publications and the attitude of the remaining exponents of the new left. Those formations always gave pride of place to political motivations, even in the formation of individual subjectivity, including its artistic and existential manifestations. Even as strong a component as religiosity was seen primarily in a political light when taken as a founding element of identity. Only in a second instance was it seen as justification for social action. Feminism alone was able to avoid being weighed down by the pan-political bias.

Those processes of political identification are outdated and belong, for the most part, to the past, given the decline of the collective subjects that they referred to. Other identifications which had been either buried or denied (national belonging, for example) or which had been completely unconscious (such as an interest for the environment) have appeared. Another important example in this sense is that many members of that generation have discovered belonging, for instance, to Jewish culture only after the experience of identification with the working class and/or with women. Words like “belonging”, “loyalty” and “allegiance” have therefore taken on new meanings and new adjectives. Even what I defined in the title as “the last identification” has been able to appear. The adjective “last” in this expression has many possible meanings: the first is that of the most recent, the Latin *novissimus*, the last to be born. Indeed only recently have intellectuals, but also a general public with more or less cultural baggage, begun to talk again about Europeanness, after having – for decades – nearly completely forgotten the debates on the idea of Europe and its utopian potential.

What motivated the 1968 generation to begin developing, slowly and unsteadily, a European identification? I feel that the following are at least a few of the reasons for this “last” identification:

- The discovery of the cultural dimension of public action, beyond or independently of strictly political engagement, and the discovery, through works of cultural history, of the utopian dimension of the idea of Europe, which had been strong in the period between the two world wars¹⁰ with a potential which was then annihilated (though re-discoverable) by the Second World War.

¹⁰ Passerini, 1999.

- The lasting desire for internationalism combined with an awareness of the need to proceed one step at a time, and to find intermediate forms between the kinds of belonging possible today and those of the future alluded to in the left's metaphor "citizens of the world".
- A feeling of reconciliation with the generation of the Resistance and in particular a re-evaluation of the liberal-socialist branch represented in Italy by Gobetti and the Rosselli brothers, a branch with a very strong sense of European culture and Europeanness (Communism, with the exception of a few of Lenin's catch words and Trotskism in general, was never Europeanist).

This new, tentative identification could literally be the last for us, including West and East Europeans of the 1968 generation, but not for future generations. One of the reasons for expressing and elaborating it is precisely the need for each generation to take a position on crucial issues and to hand over a position to later generations as a term for comparison. Other identifications with Europe are possible – new generations will have other ways of founding, understanding and giving meaning to their investments in identification, just as there have been others in the past that we no longer find valid. Our very identification with Europe remains to be defined and the debates now under way will help us to do just that.

An example may be useful to make this task more concrete. Surveys and studies show that a gender gap exists in public support for the European Union and that it emerges particularly in countries where the EU is perceived as depriving women of their social and political achievements, such as Denmark and Greece¹¹. This consideration, as well as that on the "other" democratic deficit, *i.e.* the one concerning women in the EU¹², indicate that there is a specific need to connect possible new identifications as Europeans with the type of social and political identities based on gender (but the argument could be extended, I believe, to age- or generation-based and to ethnic identities) which have emerged, through many transformations, since the 1970s. There are reasons for believing that identity understood in the sense of the women's movement, that is based on specificities that include the body and individuality together with the acceptance of differences, and is explicitly critical of false universalism, could provide a good basis for an identity investment in favour of Europe.

¹¹ Liebert, 1997.

¹² Mushaben, 1994.