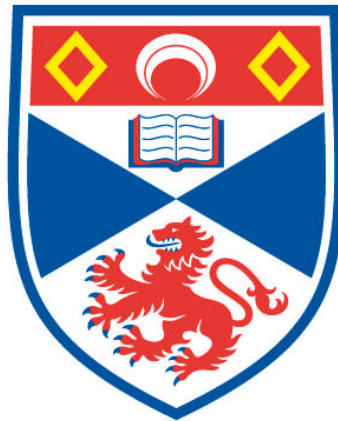


**THE FORMATION OF A EUROPEAN IDENTITY THROUGH A
TRANSNATIONAL PUBLIC SPHERE?
THE CASE OF THREE WESTERN EUROPEAN CULTURAL
JOURNALS, 1989-2006**

Tessa C. Hauswedell

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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**The Formation of a European Identity through a Transnational
Public Sphere?
The Case of Three Western European Cultural Journals,
1989-2006**

Tessa Hauswedell

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, completed in the
School of Modern Languages, University of St Andrews

30 April 2009

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I, Tessa Hauswedell, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September 2005 and as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in September 2006; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2005 and 2009.

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Abstract

This thesis analyses processes of discursive European identity formation in three cultural journals: *Esprit*, from France, the British *New Left Review* and the German *Merkur* during the time periods 1989-92, and, a decade later, during 2003-06.

The theoretical framework which the thesis brings to bear on this analysis is that of the European Public Sphere. This model builds on Jürgen Habermas's original model of a "public sphere", and alleges that a sphere of common debate about issues of European concern can lead to a more defined and integrated sense of a European identity which is widely perceived as vague and inchoate. The relevancy of the public sphere model and its connection to the larger debate about European identity, especially since 1989, are discussed in the first part of the thesis.

The second part provides a comparative analysis of the main European debates in the journals during the respective time periods. It outlines the mechanisms by which identity is expressed and assesses when, and to what extent, shared notions of European identity emerge. The analysis finds that identity formation does not occur through a developmental, gradual convergence of views as the European public sphere model envisages. Rather, it is brought about in much more haphazard back-and-forth movements. Moreover, shared notions of European identity between all the journals only arise in moments of perceived crises. Such crises are identified as the most salient factor which galvanizes expressions of a common, shared sense of European identity across national boundaries and ideological cleavages.

The thesis concludes that the model of the EPS is too dependent on a partial view of how identity formation occurs and should thus adopt a more nuanced understanding about the complex factors that are at play in these processes. For the principled attempt to circumscribe identity formation as the outcome of communicative processes alone is likely to be thwarted by external events.

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Introduction

In Europe, the year 1989 fundamentally altered the political landscape in place since 1945 and throughout the Cold War. The events of the year triggered a process of reassessing the status quo of the political East/West divide and, with it, Europe's self-understanding. For the increasing political integration of the European Union throughout the 1990s demanded new ways of explaining and legitimising this political union by exploring anew its historical, cultural, political and philosophical basis. European self-enquiry and analysis has been a concern for writers, intellectuals, philosophers and historians during many periods of upheaval and change throughout European history and is thus not new or unprecedented. In contemporary terminology, this self-exploration has become increasingly expressed as a search for "European identity", a term which especially in the last two decades has permeated media discourse and the language of political rhetoric alike. European identity encompasses attempts to define Europe's shared past, give a diagnosis of its present state, and present a vision of its future. It can be used for various conflicting political and ideological attempts and purposes, yet despite the vagueness over what European identity is meant to connote, the term has become an indispensable, and fashionable, explicator for post-1989 cultural, social and political developments in Europe.

In a roughly contemporaneous development, the political integration of the European Union has been plagued and sometimes hampered by an ongoing lack of political legitimacy, widely referred to as the Union's "democratic deficit". Especially since the Maastricht Treaty, the "permissive consensus" which had been the tacitly agreed principle of European integration was seen as no longer workable and new ways of ensuring political legitimation for the process of political integration were needed. In this context, the concept of the European public sphere was developed initially as a normative model in order to address this European legitimacy crisis. Based on Jürgen Habermas's original model of a public sphere, it was alleged that a Europe-wide public sphere would serve as a notional space in which the media initiate

transnational debates about European issues, a process which would then lead to more understanding and involvement in the European decision-making structures for its citizens. Eventually, this would enhance the perception of the European Union as a legitimate political entity. Moreover – and relevant to this thesis – it was argued that an EPS would strengthen the vague and inchoate sense of European identity on the basis that discursive deliberation and argumentation over issues of common, European concern, would in turn develop and bring about a more defined sense of European identity.

In this thesis, the notion of a European identity and of a European public sphere provide the respective set of questions and theoretical framework that I will bring to bear on the analysis of three contemporary cultural journals from France, Britain and Germany during the years 1989-1992 and 2003-2006. The key questions which this thesis will address can be summarized as follows. What is the role of contemporary European cultural journals in the writing of European identity? Through which discursive mechanisms and strategies is European identity enunciated and constructed? In what ways do these publications from different European countries address, discuss, (re)imagine, narrate and give meaning to the narrative of the Europe that has emerged since the pivotal events of 1989? What is the relevance of the European public sphere for the formation of a European identity? And finally, can we identify other shaping factors, such as external political developments, which determine how such an identity is articulated?

The theoretical framework will be established in detail throughout the first two chapters of this thesis. This introduction will begin by sketching out the intellectual, national, and political context of cultural journals, and provide a brief individual overview of the journals chosen for this study; the French “revue” *Esprit*, the British “journal” *New Left Review* and the German “Zeitschrift” *Merkur*. I will then outline the contribution this thesis seeks to make, provide an explanation of the research approach and establish the aims of the five chapters in this study.

1. Cultural Journals in Context

Cultural journals inhabit a small niche in the vast field of available printed media today. They might be situated between journalistic and academic publishing, although they do not neatly fit into either of these categories. Like the mass-circulation news-media of newspaper and magazines, cultural journals provide analysis and reflection on current events, but do so by drawing extensively on academic discourses from the realm of cultural, literary, political, philosophical or sociological enquiry. Moreover, journals use the literary genre of the essay as a way of presenting a personal viewpoint on a given theme, combined with an ongoing reflection and discussion of the journal's own position. Typically, about half to the major part of the space within these journals will consist of essays which provide commentary on political, social and cultural events, with the remaining part traditionally devoted to reviews of non-fiction books and novels, films or exhibitions. While social sciences and humanities tend to dominate in most journals, the natural sciences are also discussed – often with a view to discussing the ethical or moral implications of scientific research and discoveries. Although contributors to cultural journals are increasingly drawn from a pool of journalists and academics, the essay format in these journals might be described as the principal medium of expression for intellectuals.

Crucially, journals do not merely chronicle the political and intellectual life of a specific culture, but provide a forum for the development of a certain aesthetic theory, a particular philosophical school, a political movement, or simply a particular intellectual milieu at a certain time and in a particular country, all of which factor as relevant and possible entry points for the study of cultural journals. A cursory glance at the possible range of frameworks within which to study cultural journals reveals that these depend on the historical moment of the journal itself, and on the changing roles and relevance that intellectuals have assumed throughout the - roughly speaking - last two hundred fifty years, when cultural journals first developed.

Their emergence approximately coincides with the European Enlightenment, more specifically with the development of criticism through the use of reasoned argument, discussion and debate during that time. Journals are considered as one of the key breeding grounds for developing the ideal of an impartial truth as fostered by the French *philosophes* in the eighteenth century, which provides, in very broad terms, an ideal template for the ethos of intellectuals. Zygmunt Bauman has pointed out that contemporary intellectuals ideally aim to recapture the “production and dissemination of knowledge during the age of Enlightenment.”¹ The question of the extent to which cultural journals in the eighteenth century lived up to the ideal of enlightened, reasoned debate and dialogue is the subject of numerous, mainly German-language studies which have adopted the framework of the European Enlightenment as an entry point for the study of cultural journals of that time.²

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, journals increasingly developed within their national cultures. Accordingly, there are a number of studies on journals which primarily explore this national context of individual journals. For example, a number of monographs deal with individual British journals from the beginning of the twentieth century, such as *The Strand*, *Spectator* or *Scrutiny*.³ These studies usually adopt a chronological approach and study the inception and intellectual development of a journal, and in most instances study its demise (most commonly due to financial constraints). In the majority, the overall assessment is one of qualified and

¹ Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity and Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), p. 1. In order to limit to a reasonable minimum the number of footnotes in this thesis, a full note reference will be given once after the first reference in each chapter to a book, book chapter or article. Further references within the chapter will be then given after quotations in the text, where necessary with the author's name and an abbreviated form of the title.

² Among them publications such as: Christoph Groffy, *Die Edinburgh Review 1802-1825: Formen der Spätaufklärung* (Heidelberg: Series Anglistische Forschungen 150, 1981); Paul Hocks and Peter Schmidt, *Literarische und politische Zeitschriften 1789-1805: von der politischen Revolution zur Literaturrevolution* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1975); Wolfgang Martens, *Die Botschaft der Tugend: die Aufklärung im Spiegel der deutschen Moralischen Wochenschriften* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1968); Harry Pross, *Literatur und Politik: Geschichte und Programme der politisch-literarischen Zeitschriften im deutschen Sprachgebiet seit 1870* (Olten: Walter-Verlag, 1963).

³ William Beach Thomas, *The Story of the Spectator, 1828-1928* (London: Methuen & Co., 1928); Reginald Pound, *The Strand Magazine 1891-1950* (London: Heinemann, 1966); Francis Mulhern, *The Moment of 'Scrutiny'* (London: NLB, 1979).

measured appraisal regarding the positive contribution of these journals to the “development of a culture”,⁴ and the role of the intellectuals in the task of “writing the nation”.⁵

The positive contribution of cultural journals towards the cultural and intellectual discussion of a country has been questioned much more critically, especially in the context of twentieth-century European postwar history, when this ideal self-image of the intellectuals became tarnished. One of the reasons behind this lies with the failure of Western European intellectuals to respond forcefully to the ideologies of fascism and communism, or at the least to retain a critical distance and independence from these prevailing ideologies. The pro-Communist, and partly pro-Stalinist leanings of a substantial part of the Western European Left in the 1950s and 1960s,⁶ which were voiced in numerous cultural/intellectual publications of this time (including *Esprit*), have, with hindsight, been judged not only by critics but by the intellectuals themselves as a collective failure to act as the “legislators” of enlightened truth and disinterested reason. At the same time, cultural journals were also implicated on the other side of the ideological divide in the “culture wars” of this time. Some publications such as *Encounter* in Britain, *Preuves* in France, *Tempo Presente* in Italy and *Der Monat* in Germany were secretly financed and underwritten by the CIA in order to generate an output of pro-Western debate against the pro-Communist views espoused by their intellectual counterparts.⁷ Although these developments have to be read in the complex context of the polarized postwar Cold War atmosphere, they reveal the often meddling - rather than benevolent and enlightened - involvement of intellectuals in political

⁴ From the subtitle of a monograph on an Argentinean journal by John King, *Sur: A Study of the Argentine Literary Journal and its Role in the Development of a Culture 1931-1970* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986).

⁵ From the booktitle: *Writing the Nation: A Global Perspective*, ed. by Stefan Berger (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁶ Tony Judt, for example, has published on the legacy of the French postwar-Left in *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals 1944-1956* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). See also Jeremy Jennings, ‘Dilemmas of the Intellectual in Modern France’, in *Intellectuals in Politics: from the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie*, ed. by Jeremy Jennings, Anthony Kemp-Welch (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 65-89.

⁷ For a more detailed account see Tony Judt, ‘Culture Wars’, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London: William Heinemann, 2005), pp. 197-226, and in Ulrike Ackermann, *Sündenfall der Intellektuellen. Ein deutsch-französischer Streit von 1945 bis heute* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2000).

and ideological debates, and have partly undermined their public standing today.

The intellectual ethos of these journals, their role in “writing the nation”, and their involvement in political and ideological debates, as well as the changing roles and self-image of the intellectuals in different historical contexts, are all relevant aspects in the study of these journals. Although I will not address these questions as a main concern in this thesis, I would like to exemplify them in the brief introduction of the journals chosen for this study.

Esprit's first issue was published in October 1932 by a group of friends led by Emmanuel Mounier - only 27 at the time - who was the leading intellectual figurehead and editor-in-chief until his death in 1950.⁸ Today, the journal is published on a monthly basis (one bi-monthly issue in the summer months) and operates independently from publishing houses or other media enterprises. *Esprit*, it is said, was founded out of a sense of deep crisis felt by Mounier and his peers in the aftermath of the First World War, the Bolshevik Revolution and the Great Depression. Mounier developed his own school of thought known as “personalism”, which might be characterized as a blend of humanist, Christian and communitarian ideals.⁹ The collapse of Christianity and Rationalism in Mounier's view called for a “spiritual and social revolution”, towards a more “organic society” in which the “creative, integral personality can flourish”.¹⁰

Mounier's Catholic background and his calls for a liberal and politically engaged Catholicism in France still remains an integral component of *Esprit*. In

⁸ Principal sources for this summary are *Esprit's* detailed self-account, ‘*Esprit*: Une revue dans l'histoire 1932-2002’ <<http://www.Esprit.presse.fr/help/history/historique.pdf>> [accessed 7 August 2008]. It is co-authored by its current editor-in-chief, Marc Olivier Padis, his predecessor Olivier Mongin and by Daniel Lindenberg, a contributor and member of the editorial board. The self-presentation includes an extensive bibliography for further reading on Emmanuel Mounier and on postwar French intellectual history. Other sources include Michael Winock's extensive study on *Esprit's* early years, *Histoire politique de la revue “Esprit” 1930-1950* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975), and Jaye Miller, ‘Anarchism and French Catholicism in *Esprit*’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 37 (1) (1976), 163-174.

⁹ See Emmanuel Mounier's own account in *Communisme, anarchie et personnalisme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966).

¹⁰ Noël O'Sullivan, ‘From Revolutionary Idealism to Political Moderation: The French Search for an Accommodation with Liberal Democracy since 1945’, in *European Political Thought since 1945* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 63-94 (p. 70).

contrast to the other journals surveyed here, it engages in theological debates and questions of religion on a regular basis. Mounier's successors and a large part of the editorial board are practising Catholics and the journal points out in its self-description that it considers questions of religion as relevant as other social and political concerns and a valid theme for intellectual enquiry. However, *Esprit* refuses the label of "la revue chrétienne *Esprit*" ('*Esprit*: Une revue', p. 55), preferring to stress that it adheres in spirit to a specific French secularism: "partageant et soutenant des idéaux de la tradition laïque telle qu'elle s'est constituée à partir de la Révolution française et sous la IIIe République en France" (p. 54).

Esprit is well known for intervening and participating in many philosophical debates and has published and discussed the works of famous theorists and philosophers, such as Lévi Strauss, Ricoeur, Foucault, Althusser and Merleau-Ponty. Its influence on contemporary intellectual thought is for example manifest in a recent edited collection of essays, entitled *New French Thought: Political Philosophy*.¹¹ Of the eighteen essays in the volume, which were selected as being representative of current French thought, five contributions alone are translated and reprinted *Esprit* articles. The journal today takes its place among other well-established French journals such as *Revue des Deux Mondes*, *Les Temps modernes*, founded in 1945 by Jean-Paul Sartre (and since 1985 published by Claude Lanzmann), or the more recent journals, *le débat*, initiated in 1980 by Pierre Nora, and *Multitudes*, published since 2000. With them, *Esprit* shares what Michael Winock has identified as stylistic "inclinations typiquement françaises", including a high level of abstraction and complexity, a propensity towards a moralising tone, a self-image of French intellectuals as "la conscience de la société française", and a certain absolutism, or "tout ou rien" mentality in their judgements (*Histoire politique*, pp. 374-375).

Esprit published throughout the 1930s, but was shut down in 1941 on the orders of the Vichy regime. However, in the early days of Vichy France, *Esprit* was initially allowed to continue publishing and Mounier taught for a brief

¹¹ *New French Thought: Political Philosophy*, ed. by Mark Lilla (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

period of time at Vichy's cadre school at Uriage. The question of Mounier's possible collaboration or at least accommodation with the Vichy regime in the initial phases of the occupation remains a central point of contention in studies of the journal.¹²

Publication resumed in 1944 and *Esprit's* outlook in the immediate aftermath of the war veered sharply towards the Left. *Esprit's* vocal support of communism and its pro-Stalinist leanings as well as its fiercely anti-American tone at the time provide the basis for a further point of criticism levelled against the journal today,¹³ relating to the previously mentioned failure of the Western European Left to recognize and speak out against the crimes committed in the name of communism. Michael Winock mentions "la timidité d'*Esprit* devant le stalinisme saute aux yeux" and criticizes its failure to encourage "une gauche non communiste" (*Histoire politique*, p. 367). In the wake of the Budapest Uprising in 1956, *Esprit* readjusted its position somewhat and exchanged its rhetoric of revolution and utopias for a more pragmatic tone engaging with attainable social goals. Moreover, *Esprit's* anti-Americanism waned slightly under the editorship of Jean Marie Domenach who aimed at a more nuanced engagement with the United States.

During the 1950s, *Esprit* also developed a sustained critique of European colonialism and voiced its support for Algerian independence from France during the French-Algerian war.¹⁴ With regard to domestic and European concerns, *Esprit's* focus lay on formulating a critique of Western

¹² For critical assessments of Mounier's wartime record see Seth Armus, 'The Eternal Enemy: Emmanuel Mounier's *Esprit* and French Anti-Americanism', *French Historical Studies*, 24 (2) (2001), 271-304, and more extensively in Zeev Sternhell, *Ni droite, ni gauche* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1983), pp. 300-310. Michael Winock, however, defends Mounier against Sternhell's attacks in 'French-Style Fascism, or Fascism Nowhere to be Found?', in *Nationalism, Anti-Semitism and Fascism in France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 195-205. A detailed history of French literary journals during Vichy France can be found in a study by Olivier Cariguel: *Panorama des revues littéraires sous l'occupation: juillet 1940-août 1944* (Paris: Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine, 2007). The history of *Esprit* is however not included here, since the study is exclusively concerned with literary, rather than more broadly defined cultural journals.

¹³ For further reading on *Esprit's* anti-Americanism see Jean-Philippe Mathy, 'Culture in Soda Cans: The Cold War of the French Intellectuals', in *Extrême-Occident: French Intellectuals and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 137-162, and Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French: the Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

¹⁴ For an analysis of *Esprit's* critique of European colonialism see Michael Kelly, 'Emmanuel Mounier and the Awakening of Black Africa', *French Cultural Studies*, (17) 2 (2006), 207-222.

consumerist societies during the 1960s and 70s, which lacked the requisite spiritual dimension as they were led by technocratic governments.

In the 1980s, the journal became increasingly interested in the civil society movements and engaged to an extent with dissidents from Eastern Europe. Since 1989, the journal's main analytical framework has been to rethink conditions of democracy in Europe, to provide a framework of critique for globalisation processes, and to address questions of social inequality in Europe by establishing "un nouveau type de solidarité d'État providence" (*Esprit*: Une revue', p. 65). *Esprit* sees its role in exploring the diverse religious, philosophical and intellectual strands of Europe, and in engaging with the ongoing political integration of the European Union.

Of the three journals surveyed here, *New Left Review* (hereafter *NLR*) is the youngest and the one most closely aligned with a clear political ideology.¹⁵ The journal is the result of a merger of two journals, *Universities and Left Review*, and *The New Reasoner*, which developed around the "New Left", a political group which comprised disaffected Labour Party members and Communists critical of Stalinist orthodoxies. Both journals began publication in 1956, a year which provoked a series of crises for Communists in Western Europe (see *Esprit*) with the political repercussions of the failed uprising in Budapest and the publication of the secret Khrushchev speech. *Universities and Left Review* was committed to a broadly based socialism but was composed by intellectuals and writers from a cosmopolitan and avant-garde milieu based in Oxford and London, most notably Stuart Hall. *The New Reasoner*, by contrast, engaged in a serious reassessment of British communism and a critique of Stalinism; its well-known figures include John Saville and Edward Palmer Thompson, who

¹⁵ Principal sources used for this overview are Michael Kenny, *The First New Left: British Intellectuals after Stalin* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995), and the edited volume, *Out of Apathy: Voices of the New Left Thirty Years On: Papers based on the Conference Organized by the Oxford University Socialist Discussion Group*, ed. by Robin Archer, et al (London: Verso, 1989), which includes accounts of the founding years written by the original members of the New Left group. In addition, *NLR*'s self-presentation provides a useful historical overview: Robin Blackburn, 'A Brief History of *New Left Review*' <<http://www.newleftreview.org/?page=history>> [accessed 9 May 2006]. On *NLR*'s more recent developments see also Perry Anderson's extensive essay 'Renewals' <<http://www.newleftreview.org/A2092>> [accessed 9 May 2006].

were also involved in the initial phases of *NLR*. This journal was based in Yorkshire and had its ties in a much more provincial, working class culture than its counterpart. The two journals merged in 1960 to form one organ for the New Left movement, but internal splits and recriminations led to its eventual demise in 1962. However, the journal remained in publication under the leadership of Perry Anderson, who became its editor in 1962 and who remained in the post until 1982. He then returned as editor from 2000-2003, and still retains a seat on the journal's editorial board. Brother of the equally well-known Benedict Anderson, he has a prolific publication record of his own, and holds a position at UCLA University as professor of history. Today, *NLR* is published on a bi-monthly basis by the left-wing academic publishing house Verso and publishes a translated version in Turkish, as well as in Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese.¹⁶

In its initial stages, *NLR* positioned itself as a critical voice against the British Labour party,¹⁷ and aimed to provide a theoretical underpinning for an assessment and, after 1989, re-assessment of "international socialism". Anderson quickly established the journal as a cosmopolitan, "international" publication, rather than one tied to its British roots. This continues today as the journal rarely features articles devoted to purely British concerns. Rather, in the view of Geoffrey Wheatcroft, *NLR*'s "happiest legacy is its cosmopolitanism, helping to make the names of Adorno, Lefebvre and Della Volpe familiar here."¹⁸ *NLR*, more than most British journals from the time, introduced in its pages Western European or "Continental" thinkers and philosophers to British readers. It displayed a keen interest in Western European Marxists such as Gramsci and Lukács, as well as the French-dominated schools of thought of existentialism and psychoanalysis. Moreover, because cultural criticism was seen as an "intrinsic part of an extended political process of defining values

¹⁶ *NLR* is one of a few cultural journals which publishes translated versions of its issues. The political monthly *Le monde diplomatique* is probably the most successful of such ventures, with 25 editions in other languages. Another example is the literary/cultural journal *lettre internationale*, which has independent editorial staff for each language edition. The editions share the same title, but do not cooperate on a systematic or institutionalized basis.

¹⁷ See in Donald Sassoon, 'The Revival of Ideology and the Student Contestation', in *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (New York: The New Press, 1996), pp. 383-407 (p. 404).

¹⁸ Geoffrey Wheatcroft, 'Left within the Pages', *Times Literary Supplement*, 28 July 2006, 6-9.

and shaping society” (*Out of Apathy*, p. 6), the journal’s coverage included theoretically informed criticism of arts and culture.

In *NLR*’s self-styled cosmopolitanism, with its heavy emphasis on theory and its engagement with ‘Continental’ thinkers, the journal certainly went against the grain of most comparable British cultural publications. Where French intellectual discourse veers towards high-minded abstraction, British intellectual discourse is typically characterized as more pragmatic and more interested in “analyzing, classifying and defining”,¹⁹ rather than transforming a given status quo.

A cursory sketch of *NLR*’s main concerns throughout the decades must include its fierce anti-colonialism and its focus on “Third World” issues during the sixties and seventies. *NLR* was characterized by a principled rejection of European colonialism, imperialism and more generally a Western or Eurocentric world view. This critique of Eurocentrism explains why *NLR* from the 1960s onwards has been “far more interested in revolutionaries in the developing world than dissidents in Eastern Europe” (Kenny, *The First New Left*, p. 79). As Tony Judt critically remarked, the reasons had do with “the new taste for the exotic” amongst the young intellectual Left: after the unfruitful attempts of Eastern European intellectuals, most notably the failed Budapest uprising in 1956, the “revolutions in Cuba and China especially were invested with all the qualities and achievements so disappointingly lacking in Europe” (*Postwar*, p. 406). However, while issues closer to home were low on *NLR*’s agenda, the journal intervened in the debate surrounding Britain’s entry into the European Union in 1973, and, contrary to the mainstream of the British Left, led the cause for membership.²⁰

During the 80s, *NLR* became increasingly involved in issues of the peace movement and the nuclear disarmament movement through its links with the CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), which gave way in the early 90s to a concern with a “reassessment” of the state of international socialism in

¹⁹ Noël O’Sullivan, ‘British Political Thought since 1945: The Limitations of Pragmatism’, in *European Political Thought* (see O’Sullivan, above), pp. 20-62 (p. 24).

²⁰ See here the extensive essay by Tom Nairn, ‘The Left against Europe?’, *NLR*, 75 (1972), 4-72.

the wake of its collapse. While *NLR* witnessed the demise, rather than flourishing of its political aims of establishing a “socialist humanism”, it has, throughout the 1990s and 2000s, forcefully argued against humanitarian interventions (for example in the Balkans), thrown its weight behind anti-globalisation movements such as ATTAC, and vociferously opposed the first and second US invasion into Iraq.

As with *Esprit* and *NLR*, the founding year of the journal *Merkur* provides a clue about the political *Zeitgeist* in which it was conceived, in this case the year 1947, close to Germany’s political new beginning, or “Year Zero”.²¹ Judging by the choice of the journal title, however, its founders Hans Paeschke and Joachim Moras did not deem Germany’s cultural and intellectual legacy in need of such a new beginning, since *Merkur* is also the name of two earlier German cultural journals, the *Teutscher Merkur* and the *Neue Merkur*. Founded in 1773 by the German man of letters Christoph Martin Wieland, the *Teutscher Merkur* is generally considered as the original German cultural journal, with the goal of establishing a European rather than exclusively German journal to instruct and enlighten readers in the spirit of the eighteenth century Enlightenment ideal.²² The *Neue Merkur* was a relatively short-lived, but well-received publication that appeared from 1914 until 1925 (publication was interrupted for two years during the First World War).²³ Its editor, Efraim Frisch, originally from Austria but working in Munich, was a member of the assimilated bourgeois German Jewry. His journal showcased literary, artistic and intellectual figures from a

²¹ Sources used in this summary include: *Die Botschaft des Merkur: eine Anthologie aus fünfzig Jahren der Zeitschrift*, ed. by Karl Heinz Bohrer and Kurt Scheel (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 1997); Jan-Werner Müller, *Another Country: German Intellectuals, Unification and National Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Henry Lowood, ‘Karl Heinz Bohrer’, *Stanford Presidential Lectures in the Humanities and Art* <<http://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/bohrer/>> [accessed 17 February 2008], as well as the brief self-description of *Merkur*, ‘Selbstdarstellung’ and ‘About us’ (in English and German) <<http://www.online-Merkur.de/>> [accessed 11 September 2008].

²² See: *Der ‘Teutsche Merkur’- die erste deutsche Kulturzeitschrift?*, ed. by Andrea Heinz (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2003); Karin Stoll, *Christoph Martin Wieland. Journalistik und Kritik: Bedingungen und Maßstab politischen und ästhetischen Rasonnements im ‘Teutschen Merkur’ vor der Französischen Revolution* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1978).

²³ The history of the *Neue Merkur* is chronicled in Guy Stern, *War, Weimar and Literature: The Story of the Neue Merkur 1914-1925* (London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971).

varied, cosmopolitan milieu and his circle of correspondence included Robert Musil, Franz Kafka, Christian Morgenstern, Lou Andreas Salomé and Thomas Mann.²⁴

The legacy of these journals forms the basis of what *Merkur* aimed to continue and uphold. For one thing, its subtitle “Deutsche Zeitschrift für Europäisches Denken” or “German Journal for European thought” indicates that *Merkur* aspires to be unconstrained by national boundaries in its intellectual pursuits, much like Wieland’s original *Teutscher Merkur*. Moreover, the legacy of the writers and intellectuals assembled in the German interwar period represents the German cultural and literary tradition that Paeschke and Moras seemingly wished to continue.

Moras, who died in 1961, was in fact involved as one of the editors of a previous German cultural journal called *Europäische Revue*, which was extremely well-connected to influential Austrian/ German circles of aristocrats, financiers and bankers, as well as high-ranking army figures and diplomats. Troublesome is the fact that the *Europäische Revue* published without interruption from 1925 onwards until 1944: not only did it appear with the tacit support of Goebbel’s propaganda ministry but was also employed by it as propaganda tool, all the while maintaining its elitist appeal and façade of high-brow cultural content. However, the journal did in some instances also publish critical voices of the German ‘inner emigration’.²⁵

While the current *Merkur* is in no way implicated with the ideology of its predecessor magazine, it maintains an unapologetically elitist view of culture and literature and is specific about the role that art and literature should play in modern societies. Far from *NLR*’s conviction that art is always inherently political, *Merkur* maintains that art should be judged by aesthetic criteria alone. Its current editor since 1984, Karl Heinz Bohrer, has especially promulgated the need for applying a theory of aesthetics to literature and the arts and has

²⁴ Source: Leo Baeck Institute: Catalogue of the Archival Collections, ed. by Fred Grubel (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1990), p. 71.

²⁵ The history of the *Europäische Revue* is summarised by Ina Ulrike Paul, ‘Konservative Milieus und die *Europäische Revue* (1925-1944)’, in *Le Milieu Intellectuel Conservateur en Allemagne, sa Presse et ses Réseaux (1890-1960)*; *Das Konservative Intellektuellenmilieu in Deutschland, seine Presse und seine Netzwerke (1890-1960)*, ed. by Michel Grunewald and Uwe Puschner (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003), pp. 509-557.

voiced his suspicion of any form of “littérature engagée”.²⁶ Bohrer is probably best known for his writing on aesthetic theory, which he also pursued in his academic position as a professor for German literary history at the University of Bielefeld until his retirement in 1997. Prior to his editorship of the *Merkur*, he established a name for himself as the responsible editor until 1974 of the feuilleton pages of the German conservative daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Bohrer has co-edited the journal with the philologist and political scientist Kurt Scheel since 1991.²⁷ The journal is published monthly (one bi-monthly issue in autumn), and is financially backed by the Ernst H. Klett foundation of the German publishing house Klett-Cotta, but enjoys editorial independence.

Politically, the journal has firm conservative credentials, aligned most closely with the Christian Democratic Union, the CDU party. During the 50s, the journal supported Adenauer’s “Westeinbindung” of Germany into transatlantic political structures and, Jan Müller notes, underwrote Adenauer’s concept of Europe as a Christian Catholic, “Abendland”, “as the rallying point against the Communist threat from the East” (*Another Country*, p. 21). *Merkur* has a long history of support for the American political and economic model and has argued for close transatlantic cooperation between Europe and the United States.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, *Merkur* continued to intervene in West-German historical and intellectual debates, often fiercely attacking the views of the German Left. Despite being a journal for “European thought”, *Merkur* criticized progressive European integration. More specifically, it argued against what it saw as a German leftwing consensus that the country’s catastrophic past could only be overcome by embedding Germany firmly into the European Community. *Merkur* has consistently opposed European political integration on the grounds that it encroaches on national sovereignty.

²⁶ See in Jan-Werner Müller, ‘Karl Heinz Bohrer: Recovering Romanticism and Aestheticizing the State’, in *Another Country* (see Müller, above), pp. 177-199.

²⁷ From a portrait on Karl Heinz Bohrer by Ijoma Mangold, ‘Der anarchische Aristokrat’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 13 March 2006, p. 36.

Merkur strongly supported German reunification, against the opinions of several influential intellectuals on the German Left such as Grass or Habermas²⁸ who expressed misgivings about the possibility of a strong, reunited Germany. For Bohrer, reunification presented an opportunity to recover Germany's cultural, spiritual and intellectual legacy, which had been suspended and partly erased during the years of its division. In the early nineties, *Merkur* espoused the views of the so named "German New Right",²⁹ which argued for a more assertive role of German national interests on the European and world stage. In 1998, as an acknowledgment of the symbolic relevance of the re-established capital of the "new" German republic, the journal moved its editorial offices from its long-term home in Munich to Berlin.

2. Project and Outline of Thesis

The contribution that this thesis seeks to make is to study these three European journals within a framework which has not yet been applied.³⁰ The theoretical departure point of this thesis is the model of the European public sphere, which has become a much-used framework especially in the social sciences. Similarly, the concept of 'European identity' has been much theorized and discussed, but, as the public sphere theorists Risse and van de Steeg point out, "very few attempts have been made to study identity in relation to the question of an emerging EU public sphere".³¹ Rather, most studies link the

²⁸ See Siobhan Kattago, 'Unified Germany's Double Past', in *Ambiguous Memory: The Nazi Past and German National Identity* (Westport: Praeger, 2001), pp. 117-169 (pp. 120-121).

²⁹ Jan Werner Müller, 'From National Identity to National Interest: The Rise (and Fall) of Germany's New Right', in *German Ideologies since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic*, ed. by Jan Werner Müller (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 185-206.

³⁰ Some comparative studies of European journals exist in the form of PhD theses, but in relation to a different timeframe and thematic focus. See Dolores Anne Signori, 'Nationalism and Internationalism: Criteria of Literary Taste in three European Journals, 1815-1830' (unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Toronto, 1976); Salah Dean Assaf Hassan, 'Between Issues: The Politics of Cultural Journals in the Postwar Era, 1944-1962' (unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1997). A recent study refers to discussions of European identity in one French journal, but is confined to the interwar period: Étienne Deschamps, 'L'Européen (1929-1940): a Cultural Review at the Heart of the Debate on European Identity', in *European Review of History*, 9 (1) (2002), 85-95.

³¹ Marianne van de Steeg and Thomas Risse, 'The Emergence of a European Community of Communication: Insights from Empirical Research on the Europeanization of Public Spheres'

public sphere to questions of the political legitimacy of the EU and take for granted, but do not question further, the relationship between the public sphere and European identity formation. Moreover, most empirical research on the public sphere is based on an analysis of daily newspapers or television news, which are considered the principal opinion-makers within the public sphere, rather than on cultural journals. In short, this thesis aims to study cultural journals within a set of questions which have thus far not been linked.

I would contend that journals offer a concrete and systematic access point to study questions of European identity because they feature reflexive essays and articles on a broad range of cultural, literary, political or philosophical themes, and because they adopt a more long-term perspective on the questions raised. This makes them well-suited to study the discursive construction of European identity which in itself will not be revealed in one single instance, but might be observed over a longer period of time.

Furthermore, the very fact that journals are situated in a specific national and historical context while at the same time aspiring in theory at least to a cosmopolitan, international or European agenda provides for an interesting source of tension in relation to the way in which these journals express notions of European identity.

This thesis pursues an interdisciplinary approach and draws on literature from the social and political sciences and to a lesser extent on cultural studies and intellectual history. Primarily, the aim is to contribute to the ongoing debates about the European public sphere and the possible emergence of a discursively driven formation of a European identity. It seeks to answer to what extent a European public sphere is relevant for the question of identity in these journals. However, the empirical part of this thesis might prove to be of more general interest to those concerned with the ongoing political and historical debates of post-1989 Europe.

<http://www.atasp.de/downloads/eps_vandesteeg_risse_070513.pdf>
[accessed 28 September 2007].

The timeframe analysed in this thesis spans the years 1989-1992 and 2003-2006. These dates were chosen because they coincide with key dates in Europe in regard to external political events (the 1989 revolutions and the 2003 American-led Iraq invasion), as well as internal ones (the Maastricht treaty in 1992, the debates about a European constitution in 2003, as well as the question of Turkey's possible accession to the EU). The aim in focussing on certain themes lies in revealing patterns of identity formation *as they are expressed through the discussion of these issues*. The justification for this approach has been highlighted by Cathleen Kantner, who writes: “[m]ethodologically, it seems to be worthwhile to analyse the processes of political identity formation systematically, policy issue by policy issue, instead of speaking in an undifferentiated and general manner of ‘the collective identity’.”³²

The length of the timeframe was chosen in order to do justice to the diachronic changes and developments in European identity, rather than analysing only the discourse in relation to one issue at one particular moment in time. This will provide more reliable insights into recurring or changing patterns of European identity formation. The need for more long-term studies on this topic has also been highlighted in a recently published study on the Europeanization of public discourse, in which the authors argue that, thus far, the long-term development and gradual processes of a possible European identity formation remain under-researched;³³ this thesis aims to contribute to filling this gap.

Any study concerned with Europe or the European Union faces the challenge of selecting which countries should form the basis of the study, since a study of all European countries is far beyond the scope of this thesis and indeed of most research projects. While it is true that the countries here present the perspective of Western Europe, it might be pointed out that, thematically, the

³² Cathleen Kantner, ‘Collective Identity as Shared Self-Understanding: The Case of the Emerging European Identity’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 9 (2006), 501-523 (p. 516).

³³ Stefanie Siffert, et al, ‘Segmented Europeanization: Exploring the Legitimacy of the European Union from a Public Discourse Perspective’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 45 (1) (2007), 127-155.

concern is with how these countries attempted to adapt to the changing dimensions of Europe to include those of Eastern Europe in the wake of 1989.³⁴ The inclusion of more than one journal from each country in order to attain a broader and more representative sample was discounted because a relatively detailed and in-depth analysis of each journal was called for in order to present a nuanced view of the often complex positions presented there. In addition, the aim was to encourage a transnational, rather than an intra-country comparison.

Since the three journals chosen here are all very distinct publications in their own right, and because they write for such specific audiences, it is not my aim to claim that these publications are representative of the French, British or German discourse. Rather, the primary concern was to choose journals which enjoy a certain level of recognition in their countries as a forum for intellectual discussion. Three factors were relevant in the choice of the journals. First, the selected journals have been in publication for a comparatively long period of time over which they have built up a reputation as well established and respected journals, even if their political opinions and judgements have proven controversial or less than prescient at times.

Second, a certain level of engagement with European issues - whether for or against - needed to be observable in the journals. In the British case, this narrowed down the options considerably because the often-mentioned neglect of European issues in the British media also holds true for cultural journals. A more recent publication, *Prospect*, which has a relatively strong interest in European issues, only began publication in 1997 - too recent for this thesis. Other influential periodicals were not chosen due to their stronger emphasis on reviews and literary criticism. *NLR* is one of the few British publications evincing a modicum of engagement in European issues, and this has offset

³⁴ The term "Eastern Europe" is used throughout this thesis to refer to those countries of the former Eastern Bloc which joined the European Union in 2004, as this is the term predominantly used by the journals. Of course, in recent years other terms have been proposed by these countries themselves to refer to the region such as "Central Eastern Europe" or "Central Europe", in order to transcend the division into "Eastern" and "Western" Europe which is considered as a remnant of a Cold War mentality. It is not the aim here to reify the East-West divide, but to adequately capture the journals' use of the term.

some of the drawbacks involved in choosing a journal with such a highly ideological treatment of the themes.

Finally, the political stance of the journals was considered. While it is difficult to attain parity in a study of three journals, the choice of *Merkur* reflects the aim to include a counter-viewpoint to publications such as *NLR* and the more moderately left-wing *Esprit*. It might be added that the choice of two left and one right-wing journal reflects the fact that the large majority of European cultural journals are indeed left-wing publications.

The first chapter of this thesis aims to connect cultural journals to a methodological working framework. To this purpose, it provides an account and overview of the original concept of the public sphere as developed by Habermas and explains the relevance of his theory for the discussion of cultural journals. Following that, the chapter provides an overview of the academic debate on the European public sphere and a working definition for the purpose of this analysis. Chapter Two explores the premises on which identity formation has been linked to the model of the European public sphere. Moreover, it will outline some of the historical sources and influences which are relevant to current debates on European identity, and point to some of the current European identity models, which will also feature in the discussion of the journals.

Although the main thrust of the analysis is provided by a qualitative discussion, Chapter Three provides some quantitative data on the overall composition of the journals. This includes some information about the number of articles in relation to Europe and the background of the authors and contributors. The aim is to assess whether the number of articles has increased quantitatively over the periods of study, and whether there are indications that the journals have become more interconnected.

The subsequent two chapters provide the analysis of the discussions in the journals. Chapter Four is concerned with how the question of European identity is phrased in the wake of the revolutions in Eastern Europe and considers to a lesser degree the effects of the Maastricht Treaty. Chapter Five

looks at the debates around the proposed European Constitution, or rather the effects of the No-Vote against it in 2005. To a lesser degree, the question of Turkey's membership into the European Union will be addressed, yet the main focus of this chapter lies in tracing the discussion about Europe's identity in the aftermath of the American-led Iraq invasion. Finally, the conclusion will reconnect the findings of the chapters to the research questions and discuss their implications for our understanding of a European identity formation as related to the public sphere.

Chapter 1

The Public Sphere: Developing Habermas's Original Model Towards a European Research Agenda

1.1 The Ideal Type: Jürgen Habermas's Model of the Public Sphere

A poll conducted by the British magazine *Prospect* on “The World's Top 100 Public Intellectuals” placed the German social philosopher Jürgen Habermas in seventh place.¹ Although the merits of such a poll are of course debatable, they nonetheless attest to the enduring international interest in his work which encompasses a broad range of theoretical concerns such as historical materialism, universal pragmatism, critiques of modernity and epistemology.² Habermas also established his name as a public intellectual, initially within the context of German debates, but increasingly also on questions of European and international concern. Most recently, he commented on the global financial crisis that unfolded in the autumn of 2008 which he interpreted as the unravelling of the neoliberal ascendancy in the Western world.³

Within Germany, he made his mark in national debates from the 1960s onwards. For example, he initially supported the German student protests in 1968, but later distanced himself and criticized their radicalism. In the 1980s he took a position in the German *Historikerstreit* against the conservative revisionism of right-wing historians, and in 1990 voiced his reservations about the political handling of German Reunification.⁴ Habermas has also pursued a long-standing intellectual engagement with the role of the European Union and

¹ David Herman, 'Global Intellectual Poll Results', *Prospect*, November 2005 <<http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/pdfarticle.php?id=7078>> [accessed 12 December 2005].

² Habermas's output includes more than twenty books, well over 100 essay publications and his work has been translated into more than 30 languages. See: 'Jürgen Habermas: Interpretation', in *Demokratie Theorien: Von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Peter Massing, Gotthard Breit (Bonn: Schriftenreihe Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2003), pp. 253-261 (p. 256). On the breadth of Habermas's theoretical concerns see also: Robert Holub, *Jürgen Habermas. Critic in the Public Sphere* (London: Routledge, 1991), and Erik Oddvar Eriksen, Jarle Weigard, *Understanding Habermas: Communicative Action and Deliberative Democracy* (London: Continuum, 2004).

³ Jürgen Habermas, 'Nach dem Bankrott', *Die Zeit*, 6 November 2008, pp. 53-54.

⁴ See: 'The Normative Deficits of Unification', in *The Past as Future: Jürgen Habermas Interviewed by Michael Haller*, ed. by Max Pensky (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), pp. 33-54.

European integration. In his work, he has reflected upon the possibility of the democratic legitimation of the European Union and the challenges imposed upon the EU in the age of “postnational constellations”, marked by processes of globalisation and diminished nation state power.⁵ One of Habermas’s most noteworthy forays into European debates took place in the form of the simultaneous publication of six articles on 31 May 2003 in different European newspapers by mainly European intellectuals (the late philosopher Richard Rorty was the one American in this group), which he initiated.⁶ The articles considered the possibility of Europe’s “renewal” in the wake of the American-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Habermas’s article, co-written with Jacques Derrida and published in German and French in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and in *Libération* alleged that the European-wide protests against the Iraq war would go down in history as a sign of the “birth of a European public sphere”.⁷

The discussion over the state of the European public sphere will be the subject of the second part of this chapter. To begin with, the original concept of the public sphere as formulated by Habermas in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* will be outlined.⁸ Following this, the role and relevance of the cultural journals in such a public sphere will be illustrated. Thereafter, I will sketch how the model of the public sphere has been reconceptualized in the contemporary context and address the role and relevance which the journals play today. The latter part of this chapter will then discuss the conceptual

⁵ See his articles: ‘Citizenship and National Identity: Some Reflections on the Future of Europe’, *Praxis International*, 12 (1) (1992), 1-20; ‘The European Nation-State and the Pressures of Globalization’, *NLR*, 35 (1999), 45-60; ‘Beyond the Nation-State? On Some Consequences of Economic Globalization’, in *Democracy in the EU. Integration through Deliberation?*, ed. by Erik Oddvar Eriksen and John Erik Fossum (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 29-42; ‘The Postnational Constellation and the Future of Democracy’, in *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, ed. by May Pensky (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 58-113.

⁶ For English translations of all the original articles of this initiative, see *Old Europe New Europe Core Europe: Transatlantic Relations After the Iraq War*, ed. by Daniel Levy, Max Pensky and John Torpey (London: Verso, 2005).

⁷ Jacques Derrida, Jürgen Habermas, ‘Unsere Erneuerung. Nach dem Krieg: Die Wiedergeburt Europas’, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 31 May 2003, p. 33, quoted here from the English translation ‘February 15, or, What Binds Europeans Together: Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in Core Europe’, in *Old Europe New Europe Core Europe* (see Levy, above), pp. 3-14 (p. 9).

⁸ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, transl. by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1989).

framework of the European public sphere and adumbrate relevant points of enquiry and discussion in the academic debate. The aim is to connect the cultural journals to a methodological working framework and to set this enquiry in its most fruitful perspective of approach.

1.1.1 The Rise of a Public Sphere

The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (hereafter abbreviated as *STPS*) provided a socio-historical approach to the concept of the public sphere; it was considered groundbreaking at the time of its publication in 1962 and established Habermas's reputation in the German academic scene.⁹ His work was not translated into English until 1989, but when it was, it opened up a whole new line of scholarly inquiry in political and social sciences. *STPS* proceeds roughly chronologically and describes the rise of a public sphere in the eighteenth century and its disintegration and eventual demise throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Habermas first charts the social and material conditions for the genesis of this public sphere and provides case studies of three European countries: Great Britain, Germany, and France.¹⁰ In the second part, he exposes some of the inherent contradictions, ambivalences and limitations of the public sphere that led to its demise, before discussing the social and political conditions under which the public sphere eventually faltered in the twentieth century.

The public sphere can be understood as a notional space between the state and its citizens. It entails the complex interplays and dynamics that take place between state and citizens in a public arena through practices of the articulation, deliberation and exchange of ideas. Habermas's public sphere can cover everything from "the domestic realm to the literary marketplaces, modes

⁹ It was originally written as Habermas's "Habilitationsschrift" and published under the German title *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1962; repr. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M., 1990).

¹⁰ Habermas points out that each of these countries underwent different degrees of social and political transformation. In his account, Great Britain is to be seen as the "model case" where an independent *political* public sphere was most developed, whereas in Germany, political critique developed to a lesser degree. In France, the Revolution of 1789, which Habermas discusses extensively, marked the beginning of the public sphere's demise, as the flourishing publishing scene and its lively exchanges which had existed prior to the Revolution fell victim to the increasing radicalization of political culture. See the chapters in *STPS*, 'The Model Case of British Development' (pp. 57-67), and 'The Continental Variants' (pp. 67-73).

and institutions of sociability, and arenas of political debate.”¹¹ It is not confined to a space or aspect of public life, but can cover many meeting places where private individuals come together to discuss matters of public concern – be that “virtually”, through the medium of newspapers and journals, or in “real” meeting places such as coffee houses, debating societies, clubs and salons.

Yet Habermas does not merely describe or “locate” these meeting places but goes on to develop an understanding of the processes which the public sphere generates. He explores how “public opinion can be formed through unrestricted discussion of matters of general interest” and how it is “assigned a critical and controlling function”¹² in relation to the state: he traces not only the social and historical processes under which the development of public opinion became possible, but how this public opinion for the first time became recognized as a political entity; “sovereign” in its own right and capable of rendering states accountable to their citizens. For example, he draws attention to the fact that the very term “public” was not officially recognized in Great Britain until 1792, when it was first officially recorded and attributed to a British member of parliament in reference to “public opinion”. Prior to that, he explains, the word was only unofficially acknowledged, if at all, as “the sense of the people”, “vulgar opinion” or “common opinion” (*STPS*, p. 66). Similarly in France, historian Roger Chartier notes the first edition of the legendary *Encyclopédie* did “not acknowledge the notion of ‘public opinion’”, since this notion “did not yet exist in this philosophic *summa* of the eighteenth century”.¹³ What, then, were the necessary processes and shifts which had to take place from the initial development and self-realization of the public as an independent entity, towards an official acknowledgement and recognition of a concept of the “public”?

In Habermas’s account, the rise of the public sphere is closely connected with Enlightenment ideas concerning the use of reason through the

¹¹ James van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), p. 10.

¹² Thomas McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1978), p. 15.

¹³ Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution* (Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 29.

advancement of science and the circulation of knowledge. Yet, as Geoff Eley remarks, Habermas develops the concept of the public sphere not only in relation to the intellectual and philosophical *Zeitgeist* of the Enlightenment, but also sees it as

the complex effect of a socioeconomic developmental process (the transition from feudalism to capitalism, the rise of capitalism, commercialization, the birth of a consumer society) mediated via the novel institutional structures of the public sphere.¹⁴

Relevant to this process are three long-term developments adumbrated by historian James van Horn Melton. He identifies the rise of the modern nation state and the consolidation of power in absolutist regimes through which society emerged as a distinct realm from the state. This is crucial, because only the understanding of “state” and “society” as two separate entities enables us to think of them as realms with potentially divergent interests. Secondly, the rise of capitalism contributes to a more autonomous and self-aware society by fostering a sense of self-interest among citizens, in which the capitalist marketplace, rather than the operations of the state become the central concern for its citizens. Of particular relevance here is the third development, which relates to the general increase of printed material in the form of novels, newspapers and periodic journals. For this flourishing print culture of the eighteenth century brings about, in Habermas’s account, the “new domain of a public sphere whose decisive mark was the published word” (*STPS*, p. 16).

Through the discussions and writings in the journals, a space for different and conflicting opinions arises, which contributes to the emergence first of a literary public sphere, and, later on, a political sphere. The precursor *literary* public sphere comes into being via the novel and book reviews in journals and newspapers which are then discussed in the reading circles, coffee-houses and book-clubs in which the educated bourgeoisie meets and initially engages in debates about cultural matters. This reading and debating culture serves as a springboard for the more developed *political* public sphere, in which the publication of debates and arguments about matters of common interest is

¹⁴ Geoff Eley, ‘Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures’, in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 289-340 (p. 303).

instrumental to the systematic and sustained articulation of opinions, which in turn leads to the self-awareness of a public sphere as an independent entity. As the sense of critical judgement is furthered, the application of reason turns towards a critical enquiry of political and religious issues, which in turn leads to a politicization of the public. Roger Chartier defines this politicization process as the “application, beyond a literary domain alone, of a critical judgement unconstrained by limits on its empire or by obligatory subjection to instituted authority” (*Cultural Origins*, p. 162).

In this guise, the public sphere has then realized its full potential as participants develop demands for general and abstract laws, based on deliberation and reason in opposition to notions of unrestrained sovereignty. Herein perhaps lies the fundamental contribution of the public sphere to our modern understanding of sovereignty, which is based principally on the use of reason and common deliberation rather than a simple assertion of power through the use of will. Dena Goodman has pointed out that Habermas “finds in the bourgeois public sphere, its critical and open discourse, and the public opinion that represents it, the best hope for a modern democratic political structure”.¹⁵ Thus, she points out, for Habermas, the sphere of public opinion represents “the great historical development of the modern world” (p. 5).

1.1.2 The Role of Cultural Journals in the Original Public Sphere

In the following, I would like to exemplify some of these developments by discussing the role of cultural journals as one of the formative agents of the original public sphere. The aim here is to illustrate some of the developments sketched out above and to highlight more clearly how the model of the public sphere can “confer causal power”¹⁶ on developments such as reading and writing practices which evolved in the journals at this time. Two relevant aspects will be mentioned: firstly the development of argumentative reason and the practice of written exchanges between a journal and its readers, and secondly

¹⁵ Dena Goodman, ‘Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime’, *History and Theory*, 31 (1992), 1-20 (p. 5).

¹⁶ John Brooke, ‘Reason and Passion in the Public Sphere: Habermas and Cultural Historians’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 24 (1) (1998), 43-67 (p. 48).

the development of intellectual sociability, which was vital to build and foster intellectual networks in which the journals could take root and extend their reach.¹⁷

To begin with, one brief note on the use of the word “journal” in the eighteenth century. While the term “journal” or “periodical” initially referred to *either* a newspaper or a periodical, it increasingly came to denote a daily publication. Anthony Smith points out that:

[i]n the mid eighteenth century a *journal* was defined by Diderot as a ‘periodical work which contains extracts from a newly published book, together with details of recent discoveries in the arts and sciences’. [...] Yet by the end of the eighteenth century the meaning had shifted considerably, and in 1777 the first enduring daily paper in French, containing political as well as cultural information, called itself a *journal*.¹⁸

However, contemporary literature almost exclusively employs the term *journal* in order to denote the emerging periodical press: in rare instances, the term “literary periodical”, “learned periodical” or “printed periodical” is used, but in line with most secondary literature, I will use the term journal in reference to the periodical press.

Even though most journals were mainly directed at the enlightened intelligentsia, such as the French *philosophes*, the German *Gebildeten*, or the English *men of letters*, many journals existed also in order to “instruct the ‘common man’”.¹⁹ Initially, they developed an “ethos of servicing others” by “announcing discoveries and publishing requests for data, announcing and reviewing new publications”.²⁰ On a basic level journals were responding to a

¹⁷ These developments have been researched by social or cultural historians who have mapped for example the spread of Enlightenment ideals by considering the increase in book-trade and the rise of the printing press. See: Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie 1775-1800* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979) and *Revolution in Print: The Press in France 1775-1800*, ed. by Robert Darnton, Daniel Roche (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). Others, such as Roger Chartier, have referred to transformations in reading practices from a reverential to a more critical style of reading or concentrate on the new social structures which emerged from literary societies, reading and book clubs, and the coffeehouses..

¹⁸ Anthony Smith, *The Newspaper: An International History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), p. 9.

¹⁹ Eckhart Hellmuth, Wolfgang Piereth, ‘Germany 1760-1815’, in *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760-1820*, ed. by Hannah Barker, Simon Burrows (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), pp. 69-113 (p. 73).

²⁰ Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 29.

demand for information and news, but they additionally fostered a new sense of critical reflection.²¹

Alongside new approaches to ordering and presenting knowledge, the journals are said to have been crucial in developing a style of argumentative criticism and reasoning which, the historian Reinhart Koselleck has sketched out, grew in the eighteenth century out of a consideration and examination of Christian morals and eventually developed into the application of critical, independent thought.²² In the first instance, Koselleck outlines, writers turned their attention to antique texts, literature, works of art, and later towards a more articulated and sustained critique of the church and the state. Eventually, the use of critical reason was applied to all other scientific enquiries (*Kritik und Krise*, pp. 86-105) as expressed as early as 1700 by the French philosopher and man of letters, Pierre Bayle: “on s’est tourné vers la justesse du raisonnement (...), on devient sensible au sens et à la raison plus qu’à tout le reste.”²³ John Gray also points to the shift of “the traditional morality of the past founded on revelation and the authority of the church”, towards “a new morality, grounded in reason”,²⁴ as one of the defining developments of the Enlightenment.

Another development relates to the flourishing practice of letters to the editors. Although epistolary exchanges between men of letters had long been part of the self-cultivation and self-presentation between individuals within a private sphere, they provided here the basis for a more institutionalized and formalised form of exchange between journals and its readers. This, in turn, had ramifications for the development of journals as “nerve centres”²⁵ for the

²¹ For a detailed case study about the development of style and content of one exemplary eighteenth-century journal see: Harcourt Brown, ‘History and the Learned Journal’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 33 (3) (1972), 365-378.

²² Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise: Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1973).

²³ Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Rotterdam: Livineius, 1720) quoted here in Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise: Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1973), p. 289.

²⁴ John Gray: ‘Enlightenment Humanism as a Relic of Christian Monotheism’, in *2000 Years and Beyond: Faith, Identity and the ‘Common Era’*, ed. by Paul Gifford, et al (London: Routledge, 2003) pp. 35-50 (p. 36).

²⁵ Robert Darnton, *George Washington’s False Teeth: An Unconventional Guide to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Norton & Company, 2003), p. 33.

transmission and spread of debate and new intellectual trends, since the printing of letters provided the readers with a forum where they could express and exchange their own opinions and respond to those of others.²⁶ For this alleged principled openness and “disinterested” pursuit in presenting all sides of an argument, the historians Bödeker and Hellmuth even state that the “journal is considered, with good reason, as the medium of the Enlightenment *par excellence*”.²⁷

Finally, the interactions of intellectual sociability that were cultivated in the journals served to build incipient intellectual networks. Historical research has shown how the imaginary framework of the Republic of Letters propagated an ideal of scholarly pursuits that in turn informed the social interactions of its members. For example the German novelist and man of letters Christoph Martin Wieland (and editor of the original *Merkur* journal, the *Teutscher Merkur*) propagated the idea that the programme of the Enlightenment was founded “außer auf unbehindertes öffentliches Raisonement noch [...] auf gemeinsinnige [...] Aktivitäten der aufgeklärten Individuen”.²⁸ These social or communal interactions, Goldgar writes, took place in the form of “reading and discussing journals, visiting academies, libraries, bookshops, universities, cabinets of curiosities” (*Impolite Learning*, p. 2) where the stress was placed not solely on scholarly pursuits, but on aspects of social exchange and sociability. In a historical perspective, these networks are said to have strengthened the sense of self-awareness and self-recognition of the journal and its readers as an independently-minded entity, and thus a vital stepping stone for the development of a public sphere.

The point here was to illustrate the way in which journals have been portrayed as a contributing factor in the development of the public sphere conceived by Habermas, and to outline the relevant mechanisms which are at

²⁶ An argument made by Ann Goldgar in *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters 1680-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

²⁷ Hans Erich Bödeker, ‘Journals and Public Opinion: The Politicization of the German Enlightenment in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century’, in *The Transformation of Political Culture. England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Eckhart Hellmuth (Oxford: OUP, 1990), pp. 423-447 (p. 435).

²⁸ Wolfgang Albrecht, ‘Wielands Vorstellungen von Aufklärung und seine Beiträge zur Aufklärungsdebatte am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts’, *Impulse*, 11 (1988), 25-60 (p. 41), quoted here from Klaus Schaefer, *Christoph Martin Wieland* (Stuttgart: Verlag J.B Metzler, 1996), p. 30.

the basis of this newly emerging print culture. Evidently, the developments sketched here present an idealized version and arguably overstate the contribution and impact of the journals to a public sphere at the time. However, it is not the purpose to claim that the public sphere really existed in the form presented above, as a “Paradise Lost”, which the contemporary cultural journals ought to aim to retrieve. Nor is the concern of this thesis to “test” the extent to which contemporary cultural journals constitute or possibly recreate an ideal public sphere in the Habermasian sense. Indeed, numerous historians have objected that Habermas retrospectively applied and romanticized his model of a public sphere of the eighteenth century.²⁹ However, it is important to note in this context that the public sphere should not be understood as a factual historical account. Rather, it serves as a model, an “ideal type” in the sociological meaning of the term, which is, as the next section will demonstrate, precarious and transient, continuously caught between external constraints and internal contradictions, between aspiration and reality.

1.1.3 The Public Sphere’s Decline

A significant proportion of *STPS* is dedicated to outlining the public sphere’s transformation, or indeed decline, by analysing the internal contradictions and external factors which intrude upon it. Habermas points out how the public sphere, allegedly only interested in the pursuit of the truth and reason, nevertheless operates in a society which has private interests and agendas to defend. These initially private and subsequently organized political or corporate interests enter the public sphere and contribute to its demise. For the public sphere simply cannot function as a sanctified space where private, power, and property interests are set aside.

Moreover, the “inclusionary” principle of the public sphere, its being principally open and accessible to every citizen, actually hastens its demise. With increasing levels of democratisation throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a more diverse and broadly educated public gains access to the public sphere. However, this does not lead to a democratic rejuvenation

²⁹ As suggested by A.E.B Coldiron in ‘Public Sphere/Contact Zone’, *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts*, 46 (2) (2004), pp. 207-218.

of the public sphere, but rather to its depoliticization. To the extent that political participation widens, the “exclusivity” of the public sphere dwindles, and with it the standards of educated, rational debate and self-reflection (See *STPS*, p. 132). Herein lies the paradox, that the public sphere - by following through the message of democratization and openness which it purports to deliver - brings about its own demise.

In the final part, Habermas relied on critical tools designed by the Frankfurt School to analyse the external factors of the demise of the public sphere in the twentieth century.³⁰ With the further rise of liberalism and the increasing dominance of capitalism, he argued, the reasoning public sphere is eventually replaced in the twentieth century by a consumerist public sphere, which is part of a depoliticized cycle of production and consumption. The press, the public sphere’s most “pre-eminent institution” (*STPS*, p. 181), is at the heart of this shift, as it becomes increasingly commercialized. Consequently, news and politics are sold for profit as “entertainment”, rather than to initiate debate within a reasoning public. In this account of “late capitalist mass culture”, the citizen is reduced to a passive consumer who in van Horn Melton’s terms conforms and assents (*The Rise of the Public*, p. 4), rather than participates in the public sphere. The book ends on this profoundly pessimistic note, arguing that the conditions for a critical, reasoning public have essentially ceased to exist.

Habermas eventually modified his original findings in later publications. In a speech delivered at a symposium entitled ‘Further Reflections on the Public Sphere’, he conceded that his original account of the degradation of the “culture-debating to a culture-consuming public” in *STPS* was “too simplistic and pessimistic”.³¹ The reasons for this, he explained, lay in an excessive reliance on Adorno’s sombre assessment of modern mass culture and in the absence of more sophisticated sociological research on modern state-society relationships,

³⁰ See Martin Jay, ‘Aesthetic Theory and the Critique of Mass Culture’, in *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923-1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), pp. 173-219.

³¹ Jürgen Habermas, ‘Further Reflections on the Public Sphere’, in *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (see Calhoun, above), pp. 421-462.

opinion formation, and media analysis and research, which could have refined his somewhat simplistic assessment of the twentieth century.³²

He also subsequently rephrased the continued relevance for a public sphere in what is widely regarded as Habermas's major work, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, published in 1984.³³ Here, he restated the case for a public sphere by pointing out that democratic governments today rely on legitimacy, that is, their policies and laws have to be *perceived* by the citizens as legitimate and fair. The process by which legitimacy is created can only take place in a public sphere, rather than through "force or strategic manipulation".³⁴ Put simply, only a society which exchanges, discourses and opines in a public sphere will produce a functioning and resilient democracy. It is for these reasons that critical theorists such as Nancy Fraser acknowledge that "something like Habermas's idea of the public sphere is indispensable to critical social theory and democratic political practice",³⁵ and why Craig Calhoun maintains that the model of the public sphere offers "the richest, best developed conceptualization available of the social nature and foundations of public life", which will continue to work "as an immensely fruitful generator of new research, analysis and theory" (*Habermas and the Public Sphere*, p. 41).

1.1.4 The Public Sphere Model Updated

Indeed, the model of the public sphere has become a much-applied and debated model, and the numerous critical responses to Habermas's work have sought to redefine the public sphere in a contemporary context in the light also of the criticism that his work has elicited.

³² Craig Calhoun tellingly formulates one weakness of Habermas's analysis as follows. "Habermas tends to judge the eighteenth century by Locke and Kant, the nineteenth century by Marx and Mill, and the twentieth century by the typical suburban television viewer. Thus Habermas's account of the twentieth century does not include the intellectual history, the attempt to take leading thinkers seriously and recover the truth from their writings." In: 'Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere' (see Calhoun, above), pp. 1-35 (p. 33).

³³ Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, Volume 1, trans. by Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

³⁴ Simone Chambers, 'Discourse and Democratic Practices', in *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*, ed. by Stephen White (Cambridge: CUP, 1995), pp. 233-259 (p. 242).

³⁵ Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere', in *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (see Calhoun, above), pp. 109-143 (p. 111).

One line of criticism relates to Habermas's over-emphasis on rational discourse as the only permissible means of debate in a public sphere. Craig Calhoun has argued that the focus on rationalist discourses entails a disregard for other discourses such as the non-rationalistic and popular entertainment discourses (*Habermas and the Public Sphere*, p. 38). He maintains that Habermas's preference for rational discourse points to an unwillingness to rescue anything meaningful or valid from public sphere discourses, which operate on a purely emotional, speculative or imaginative level. The critic Meili Steele takes this argument further.³⁶ According to Steele, Habermas's focus on a rational-critical discourse overlooks what he calls the "social imaginary" of cultures. Steele points out that Habermas renders irrelevant the "images, plots, symbols, and background practices through which citizens imagine their lives" (p. 410). He claims that the emphasis on rational discourse leaves no room for expressing and discussing non-rational factors by which people gain an understanding of their social, political, and cultural environment.

Here I disagree with Steele that the use of reason impairs the ability to express the "social imaginary" of a culture. While Habermas is certainly wary about types of discourses which he considers too populist or emotive, he does not dismiss their principal validity and importance. Crucially, the rational aspect is considered to be the ideal *standard* for a debate, but it does not mean that, within it, arguments and discussions about the "images, symbols and background practices" are banned as insignificant from the debate – quite the contrary. Especially with a view to the ensuing discussion of our cultural journals, we will find that their debates about European issues invoke a large number of references to shared (and imagined) historical and cultural phenomena and appeal to a social imaginary, rather than to a rational case for or against Europe.

Moreover, one should acknowledge that Habermas does not try to advocate a thoroughly rationalized world that denies the relevance of the social imaginary and cultural bonds. Nicholas Garnham observes: "Its rationalist and universalist vision must [...] be distinguished from that other strand in the

³⁶ Meili Steele, 'Hiding from History: Habermas's Elision of Public Imagination', *Constellations*, 12 (3) (2005), 409-439.

dialectic of the Enlightenment, that of scientific rationality and the hubris of human power that accompanied it”.³⁷ Habermas’s “rationalism” does not overlap with a purely instrumental or strategic use of reason, but rather is “tied to subject-subject relations between communicating and interacting individuals” (Eriksen and Weigard, *Understanding Habermas*, p. 4). The use of reason is best suited for discussions and deliberations, since they guarantee the optimal prerequisite for a meaningful and resilient public debate; however, Habermas does not preclude the “social imaginary” from the public sphere.

Numerous responses to Habermas have further criticized the allegedly “universal” character of the public sphere, which Marxist and feminist critics have exposed as being made up in fact of a male bourgeois audience.³⁸ Geoff Eley argues that Habermas has neglected “the existence of *competing* publics” (‘Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures’, p. 306), by which he means the existence of a public potentially opposed to the goals and aims characteristic of the bourgeois sphere. He alleges that Habermas “ignores alternative sources of an emancipatory impulse in popular radical traditions” and effectively subsumes all positive impulses “into his ‘liberal model’ of the bourgeois public sphere” (p. 306). Feminist critiques have stressed how the allegedly universal public sphere was essentially gendered and male-dominated. In the view of Joan Landes, the public sphere is “essentially, not just contingently, masculinist.”³⁹

In short, these lines of criticism undermine the claim that a public sphere will automatically work towards the common good of the entire society and that the concerns of various citizens can be adequately addressed within one inherently consensual public sphere. In the wake of this postmodern critique, the implicit claim of the public sphere, which revolves around universal understanding and communication, does not hold anymore “due to the death of

³⁷ Nicholas Garnham, ‘The Media and the Public Sphere’, in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, (see Calhoun, above), pp. 359-377 (p. 374).

³⁸ For a comprehensive overview of criticism see: *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, ed. by Nick Crossley, John Michael Roberts (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

³⁹ Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 7.

legitimizing metanarratives and the corresponding fragmentation of the discursive realm”.⁴⁰

In the light of these qualifications, the critical theorist Nancy Fraser has incorporated the existence of potentially competing publics into a model, outlined in her article ‘Rethinking the Public Sphere’, which recognizes *multiple* public spheres rather than privileging one public sphere as an ultimate model. In modern democratic societies, she argues, it is indispensable to recognize these multiple, conflictual public spheres and “counterpublics” as a framework in which issues of social - and gender exclusion can be addressed. She writes: “I contend that in stratified societies, arrangements that accommodate contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory parity than does a single, comprehensive, overarching public” (p. 122).

The contested and diverse nature of the public sphere has also been stressed by the sociologist Somers, who has defined it as a “contested participatory site in which actors with overlapping identities as legal subjects, citizens, economic actors, and family and community members (i.e. civil societies) form a public body and engage in negotiations and contestations over political and social life.”⁴¹

Habermas has since responded to these lines of criticism and has conceded that his original model formulated “ideals of bourgeois humanism” (‘Further Reflections’, p. 430). He also admitted the “patriarchal character of the public sphere”, and points out that not only women, but also other groups such as “workers and peasants”, “were denied equal active participation in the formation of political opinion and will” (pp. 427-428). In fact, he greatly extended and expanded his original definition of a public sphere in his later works, among them in *Between Facts and Norms* (1996), where he revisited the political function of the public sphere in contemporary societies and sought to provide a

⁴⁰ Dana Villa, ‘Postmodernism and the Public Sphere’, *American Political Science Review*, 86 (3) (1992), 712-722 (p. 712).

⁴¹ Margaret R. Somers, ‘Citizenship and the Place of the Public Sphere: Law, Community, and Political Culture in the Transition to Democracy’, *American Sociological Review*, 58 (5) (1993), 587-620 (p. 589).

more theoretical rather than historical account of the public sphere.⁴² His definition in *Between Facts and Norms* seemingly covers the entire “realm of public debate and social communication and interaction”,⁴³ which he differentiates as follows.

[The public sphere] represents a highly complex network that branches out into a multitude of overlapping international, national, regional, local and subcultural arenas. Functional specifications, thematic foci, policy fields, and so forth, provide the points of reference for a substantive differentiation of public spheres that are, however, still accessible to laypersons (for example, popular science and literary publics, religious and artistic publics, feminist and ‘alternative’ publics, publics concerned with health-care issues, social welfare, or environmental policy) (pp. 373-374).

Habermas further distinguishes between levels of institutionalization and density of communication: from informal encounters to abstract levels of the public sphere in the form of “isolated readers, listeners, and viewers scattered across large geographic areas, or even around the globe and brought together only through the mass media” (p. 374).

These reformulations, I would maintain, aim to redefine the public sphere as a diverse and plural place which encompasses the different discourses and variegated media outlets of modern societies. They have removed some of the essentialist claims involved in the idea that one overarching public sphere can address the concerns of the entire society, while staying true to the original procedural principles of the public sphere of reasoned criticism and argumentative exchange.

Today, cultural journals form a small segment of the public sphere which is characterized by a multiplicity and divergence of tone, and style. It is not my intention to claim here that they are representative of the public discourse in France, Britain and Germany. Rather, the journals present the deliberations of a certain set of writers, editors, journalists or “public intellectuals”. And whilst the

⁴² Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, transl. by William Rehg (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996).

⁴³ Chris Rumford, ‘European Civil Society or Transnational Social Space: Conceptions of Society in Discourses of EU Citizenship, Governance and the Democratic Deficit: An Emerging Agenda’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 6 (1) (2002), 25-43 (p. 28).

journals can be presented - as above - as the “exemplary” medium of the original public sphere (whose editors and readers incidentally conformed to the bourgeois, educated, liberal audience of Habermas’s original model), I do not contend that these journals occupy a special or privileged role in the contemporary public sphere. Indeed, their influence would be described as marginal by many, given their low print-run that cannot compete with mass circulation newspapers.

Even so, the late Bernhard Peters has suggested their influence is noticeable in other, less direct ways.⁴⁴ In his view, cultural journals “come in [sic] with very small readerships, a questionable influence on everyday opinion, as it were, on the current public agenda, but with high respect among the educated classes and possibly a long-term influence on wider cultural developments that is very hard to assess empirically” (p. 2). In spite of the empirical difficulties, however, Peters proposed the “hypothesis of a cultural and intellectual trickle-down effect” (p. 6), in which these journals play a part. It is true, he wrote, that in the short run “small and dedicated groups of cultural or intellectual aficionados do not have much immediate political or cultural impact on the broader social, cultural and political scene” (p. 6). However, he writes that “if we take a longer perspective” and consider “deeper cultural changes and innovations and the development of influential public ideas” (p. 6), cultural journals can play a role for the testing and probing of new ideas and arguments, first within an - admittedly - elite readership, which eventually influence and determine the debates once they percolate into the political and societal mainstream. This is, I would suggest, how one might most adequately characterise the role of cultural journals, which neither exaggerates their reach and influence, nor unduly underplays their part in a public sphere.

Thus far, I have aimed to outline the notion of the public sphere and to introduce its origins in a historical perspective, as well as to demonstrate how

⁴⁴ Bernhard Peters, ‘Ach Europa: Questions about a European Public Space and Ambiguities of the European Project’, Speech held at the 17th Meeting of Cultural Journals, ‘The Republic of Letters? Cultural Journals in a European Public Space’ (Tallinn, 14-17 May 2005) <<http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-06-21-peters-en.html>> [accessed 3 December 2005] pp. 1-8 (p. 2).

this model has been rethought and adapted in a contemporary perspective. Crucially, we saw that the model of the public sphere as an ideal type remains a valid tool to conceptualize the relevance of debate, exchange, and contestation in media discourses.

1.2 The European Public Sphere

1.2.1 A Remedy for the Legitimacy and Identity Deficit?

The concept of the public sphere has been applied to many countries far and beyond its original European context in order to account for ongoing political developments and changes in the media landscape.⁴⁵ However, within Europe this model has evolved into a research agenda of its own that has become part of the larger European Studies area.⁴⁶ In the following, I will retrace how the perceived “need” for a European public sphere (hereafter abbreviated as EPS) has been put forward and summarize recent theoretical and empirical findings of this research.

The systematic focus on an EPS emerged in the early 1990s when scholars turned towards Habermas’s public sphere model in order to glean some ideas about its potential to lend more legitimacy to the EU. At the time, the EU was undergoing one of its recurring periods of malaise marked by voter indifference and apathy in the aftermath of the Maastricht treaty in 1992. The

⁴⁵ As the following articles attest: Mark Lynch, ‘Beyond the Arab Street: Iraq and the Arab Public Sphere’, *Politics & Society*, 31 (2003), 55-91; *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, ed. by Dale Eickelman, Jon Anderson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999); Michael Hanchard, ‘Black Cinderella? Race and the Public Sphere in Brazil’, *Public Culture*, 7 (1) (1995), 165-185; Guobin Yang, ‘The Internet and the Rise of a Transnational Chinese Cultural Sphere’, *Media Culture Society*, 25 (2003), 469-490.

⁴⁶ Current academic research groups include for example the ‘Public Sphere Research Group’ at the Jacobs University, Bremen <<http://www.jacobsuniversity.de/schools/shss/research/sfb/project/>> [accessed 8 December 08], the group ‘EMEDIATE: Media and Ethics of the European Public Sphere’, at the University of Lancaster <<http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/activities/289/>> [accessed 8 December 08], or the research centre ‘ARENA: Centre for European Studies’ in Oslo <<http://www.arena.uio.no/>> [accessed 8 December 08].

For a general discussion of the academic turn towards the model of the EPS, see: Hans Kleinsteuber, ‘Strukturwandel der europäischen Öffentlichkeit? Der Öffentlichkeitsbegriff von Jürgen Habermas und die European Public Sphere’, in *Europäische Union und Mediale Öffentlichkeit: Theoretische Perspektiven und empirische Befunde zur Rolle der Medien im europäischen Einigungsprozess*, ed. by Lutz Hagen (Cologne: Herbert von Halem, 2004), pp. 29-47.

negative perception of the EU by its citizens was explained in part by the negligent treatment that the EU received in media coverage. More precisely, the absence of a balanced and informed debate, coupled with the lack of adequate provision of information about the decision-making processes in the EU, was identified as one of the root causes of this shortfall of interest. European citizens, it was said, had no outlet to form a common public opinion because only national, rather than European public spheres existed. At a time when political decision-making structures had become increasingly transnational, so the argument went, the media had remained attached to national perspectives and frames of reference.⁴⁷ It was suggested that a Europe-wide public sphere initiated by the media would firstly produce the necessary conditions to provide legitimacy to the European integration project and secondly give a more unified voice to the weak and underdeveloped sense of European identity.

Concerning the first point, the absence of a European media sphere was seen as troubling because, Michael Greven has pointed out, the European Union comprised a system of governance with its own actors, rules, and competencies that amounted to an autonomous political system to which European citizens required corresponding possibilities for democratic participation.⁴⁸ The challenge was now to reconceptualize ideas of democratic participation and debate from a national to a European level, in order to open up new avenues for channelling legitimacy. Habermas described the problem in the 2001 *NLR* article 'Why Europe Needs a Constitution' as follows.

Legitimacy flows more or less through the channels of democratic institutions and procedures within each nation-state. This level falls short of what is needed for the kind of supranational and transnational decision-making that has long since developed within the institutional framework of the Union [...].⁴⁹

⁴⁷ This argument is made by Jürgen Gerhards, 'Missing a European Public Sphere', in *Will Europe Work? Integration, Employment and the Social Order*, ed. by Martin Kohli and Mojca Novak (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 145-159.

⁴⁸ Michael Greven, 'Mitgliedschaft, Grenzen und politischer Raum: Problemdimensionen der Demokratisierung der Europäischen Union', in *Regieren in entgrenzten Räumen*, ed. by Beate Kohler-Koch (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1998), pp. 249-270.

⁴⁹ Jürgen Habermas, 'Why Europe Needs a Constitution', *NLR*, 11 (2001), 5-26 (p. 14).

He concluded that there would be “no remedy for the legitimation deficit, however, without a European-wide public sphere - a network that gives citizens of all member states an equal opportunity to take part in an encompassing process of focused political communication” (p. 17). If these processes did not take place and if the European Union was seen to be conducting politics solely on the basis of a top-down approach of governance, backed only by a “permissive consensus” from EU citizens, then its legitimacy would be inevitably compromised, since the expectations towards democratic legitimacy were at such a level that a permissive consensus would neither be a satisfactory nor tolerable state of affairs. Therefore, the theorists Eriksen and Fossum pointed out, only a functioning public sphere could “legitimate the political union and [...] reconstruct democracy as governance based upon the public use of reason” (‘Post-National Integration’, p. 2). In this chain of argumentation, the EPS would provide the vital source of legitimacy for the European Union.

Whilst the political legitimacy argument remains a relevant point of concern for political scientists, it is not the main focus of this thesis. Rather, this research will be concerned with examining the second premise, namely that an EPS will bring about a more defined sense of European identity. This point presupposes that the European Union, in addition to its legitimacy deficit, suffers from a lack of identity and sense of belonging. Communal affinities, so it was argued, are overwhelmingly directed at the clearly delineated nation state, rather than a supra-national structure like the European Union. According to the well-known arguments put forward by Anthony Smith, Europe would not be able to compete against the “thick” and affective sense of identity that is invested in the nation-state with its origins, traditions and foundations. Europe would prove too fragmented in its cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic landscapes to instil a sense of belonging.⁵⁰

Yet despite this pessimistic assessment about the emergence of a European sense of identity, it was argued by many that the substrate for a stable and enduring political entity is essentially a communal bond that ties the

⁵⁰ Anthony Smith, ‘Supra- or Super-Nationalism?’, in *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 116-147.

citizens together and guarantees a degree of solidarity between them. “Communicative processes” were seen as central and formative to generate this sense of common belonging. Cathleen Kantner has emphasized the need to develop a sense of identity based on such communication processes that can touch upon a shared sense of memory and history.⁵¹ Hans Jörg Trenz has also stressed the need for a “transnational communication space”, not only to create legitimacy, but to enable processes of identity formation:

Für die Ausbildung der Legitimität der neuen Ordnung bedarf es der Ausbildung eines transnationalen Handlungs- und Kommunikationsraumes, der von aktiven Bürgern gefüllt wird, die sich in kollektive Identitätsbildungsprozesse einbeziehen.⁵²

Ideally, the EPS is to provide the forum where citizens can discuss and argue about commonalities and differences amongst European nations and cultures which will then lead to processes of identity formation, or in the words of Eriksen and Fossum, “the binding force of words in communicative practices” will be able to take hold (‘Post-National Integration’, p. 2).

These two points provide the premise on which the alleged need for an EPS was formulated and I will retrace and examine in more detail the link between the EPS and concepts of European identity formation in the following chapter. We might note at this point that the research agenda concerning the EPS carried at its core a strong pro-integrationist stance, which assumes that a stronger, more developed sense of identity will lead to a stated outcome, namely enhancing political legitimacy. That said, subsequent research on the EPS soon found the gap between these aspirations and reality to be disappointingly wide.

⁵¹ See: Cathleen Kantner, *Kein modernes Babel. Kommunikative Voraussetzungen europäischer Öffentlichkeit* (Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2004), p. 181.

⁵² Hans Jörg Trenz, ‘Soziologische Perspektiven: Auf der Suche nach der europäischen Zivilgesellschaft’, in *Theorien der europäischen Integration*, ed. by Hans-Jürgen Bieling, Monika Lerch (Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2005), pp. 373-398 (p. 377). An increase in communication and debate as a means to strengthen a sense of European identity is also put forward in Heiko Walkenhorst, *Europäischer Integrationsprozess und europäische Identität. Zur politikwissenschaftlichen Bedeutung eines sozialpsychologischen Konzeptes* (Baden Baden: Nomos Universitätsschriften Politik, 1999).

1.2.2 Evolving Concepts of the European Public Sphere

The discussion about the EPS has spanned many different approaches in the course of which numerous models have been proposed and repudiated. As a general trend, one can state in summary that over the years an increased emphasis on empirical research has taken place from normative models of one homogenous EPS to more pragmatic assessments and analysis of the existing media discourses.⁵³ In the following, I would like to provide an outline of the current state of research in order to establish the points of departure for the analysis presented in this thesis.

Initially, the notion of an EPS centred on the creation of a new European media system, which, it was envisaged, would provide an integrated and unified European information stream and set the agenda for public debates and discussions. This model has been termed a “cross-national European public sphere”, also called the “vertical perspective”,⁵⁴ whereby a new pan-European media outlet, in the form of television, radio, or print media would provide a multilingual rendition of European news and thereby instigate debates. Such transnational media outlets exist; however, none of them has captured a mass audience but caters instead to arguably specialized tastes and interests. In the cultural sector, one can point to the most prominent televisual example of *Arte*, the bilingual publicly funded French-German arts channel. Although often praised for its high-quality output, its viewing figures are relatively low and it

⁵³ Relevant theoretical discussions and interventions have been made amongst others by Hans Jörg Trenz, ‘In Search of the European Public Sphere: Between Normative Overstretch and Empirical Disenchantment’, *Recon Online Working Paper*, 2008/07

<http://www.reconproject.eu/main.php/RECON_wp_0807.pdf?fileitem=16662548> [accessed 8 May 08]; Hans Jörg Trenz, Klaus Eder, ‘The Democratizing Dynamics of a European Public Sphere: Towards a Theory of Democratic Functionalism’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 7 (1) (2004), 5-25; Jessica Erbe, Ruud Koopmans, ‘Towards a European Public Sphere?’, *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 17 (2) (2004), 97-118; Jürgen Gerhards, ‘Missing a European Public Sphere’, in *Will Europe Work?*, (see Kohli, Novak, above), (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 145-159.

⁵⁴ For a more detailed explanation about “horizontal” and “vertical” perspectives, see: ‘Introduction: Topic of the Conference: The European Public Sphere’, Europäische Akademie (Berlin, 28-30 November 2003) <<http://www.stoyke.com/eupub/index.php?id=home>> [accessed 13 October 2005].

certainly could not be described as a media provider that initiates European debates.⁵⁵

Within their niche, cultural journals have made attempts to overcome the constraints of the national frameworks long before the self-conscious, formalized framework of the EPS came into being. For example, the short-lived *Revue Internationale*, founded in 1962, was an attempt by German, French and Italian writers and intellectuals to create a collaborative journal with a truly international perspective. Even though the editorial committee boasted prestigious literary names, publication eventually faltered due in large part to internal infighting and radically different ideas about how such an international perspective would be put in practice.⁵⁶ In fact, the account of the *Revue Internationale*'s ambitious goals and its eventual demise reads like a case study of the difficulties involved in creating a journal which traverses national writing styles and overcomes the cultural references, markers, and modes of expression different to each language and culture and which, as the ensuing discussion of the selected journals will show, are particular and relevant to the profile of the publication.

The attempt to create transnational media spaces for cultural journals has been partly successful on the Internet. The internet journal *Eurozine*, based in Vienna and funded in part through the Culture Programme of the European Union, is one such example. *Eurozine* is both a journal in its own right, and a platform for European cultural journals. Its aim is to facilitate textual exchange and the translation of articles - in effect to establish the groundwork for an incipient EPS.⁵⁷ A similar project is *Eurotopics*, initiated in December 2005 and

⁵⁵ See: Barbara Thomas, 'Public Service Broadcasting als Faktor einer europäischen Öffentlichkeit', in *Europäische Union und Mediale Öffentlichkeit* (see Hagen, above), pp. 47-63. For more about the role of television for an EPS see Fritz Groothues, 'Television News and the European Public Sphere: A Preliminary Investigation', *European Political Communication Working Paper Series*, 6 (2004).

⁵⁶ Participants in the editorial committee included for example Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Ingeborg Bachmann, Martin Walser, Maurice Blanchot, Robert Antelme, Marguerite Duras, Roland Barthes, Pier-Paolo Pasolini and Italo Calvino. For a summary of the history of this journal see: Henning Marmulla, 'Internationalisierung der Intellektuellen? Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer "communauté internationale" nach dem Algerienkrieg', in *Zwischen den Fronten: Positionskämpfe europäischer Intellektueller im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006), pp. 179-200.

⁵⁷ *Eurozine* <http://www.eurozine.com/about_Eurozine.html> [accessed 5 January 2006].

funded by the German Agency for Civic Education. This project encompasses a weekly online magazine and a daily newsletter on European debates which is available in French, English and German. Editors and correspondents from 28 European countries (the EU member states and Switzerland) select material from national newspapers which are summarized in the newsletter and presented with a short introductory overview and links to the original articles. *Eurotopics'* self-stated objective is to promote "transeuropean discussions and the development of new networks for media, cultural and political exchanges."⁵⁸

Other examples of a segmented Europeanization are the more established publications chiefly interested in the European economic and financial agenda such as the *Financial Times* or the *Economist*. However, these examples given above are all seen as instances of a mere "elite" Europeanization which has not yet reached into the mainstream. Thus, researchers such as Philip Schlesinger and Kevin Deirdre have argued that overall initiatives to shape a new "European information area have been fragmented and did not bear fruit",⁵⁹ since the mass national media remain overwhelmingly organized along the lines of national news.

Various reasons for this perceived failure have been presented: firstly, the language diversity within Europe is seen as a severe and insoluble impediment to the creation of an integrated EPS. Secondly, the European Union itself was blamed, for presenting matters of European concern as purely technocratic exercises in order to minimise potential dangers of open discussion and the airing of possibly dissenting voices. Hence, the European Union had failed to nurture a culture of controversy and debate from the outset. Thirdly, the cultural, social and political differences within Europe were seen as simply too great and significant for the creation of such a public sphere. National culture and the national public spheres were considered too potent and crucially

⁵⁸ *Eurotopics* <http://www.eurotopics.net/en/magazin/magazin_aktuell/> [accessed 6 December 2005]. The *Eurotopics* newsletter is produced by *n-Ost*: Network for Reporting on Eastern Europe.

⁵⁹ Philip Schlesinger, Deirdre Kevin, 'Can the EU Become a Sphere of Publics?', in *Democracy in the EU. Integration through Deliberation?* (see Eriksen and Fossum, above), pp. 206-230 (p. 211).

significant to compete against a relatively thin and undefined European culture.⁶⁰

In 2002, Marianne van de Steeg's article 'Rethinking the Conditions for a Public Sphere in the European Union',⁶¹ raised the question, however, as to whether the fault lay not with the European media as such, but rather with the expectations of how such an integrated media system might work. Models for an EPS, she pointed out, worked from the simplistic assumption that each national public sphere presented something like a perfect model of a self-sufficient, homogeneous sphere that corresponded to one integrated media system, established democratic institutions and one dominant language, which was now supposed to be emulated on a European level in the guise of one integrated EPS. "The idea is that the public sphere is delimited by the state's borders, thus creating a space in which everything – the citizenry, language, the media, the national collective identity, the national interests, etc. – coincides" (p. 502).

However, she pointed out that this approach ignored the fact that national spheres too were marked by differentiation and heterogeneity, and - as established in the previous section - refer to complex and stratified networks, rather than a unitary, integrated discourse. Especially with regard to the cultural journals, for example, one can safely say that the various media outlets "address a certain readership, not the national public".⁶² Thus, she noted, in the case of the EPS, one should be prepared to accept a similar level of contrasting discourses, heterogeneity and contestation, rather than expect the creation of a unified European media system. For one thing, there are the obvious practical

⁶⁰ In this paragraph I am summarizing the arguments and findings from Philip Schlesinger's and Kevin Deirdre's abovementioned article, as well as those of Craig Calhoun, 'The Virtues of Inconsistency: Identity and Plurality in the Conceptualization of Europe', in *Constructing Europe's Identity: The External Dimension*, ed. by Lars-Erik Cederman (Boulder, Colorado: L. Rienner, 2001), pp. 36-57; Jürgen Gerhards, 'Missing a European Public Sphere' (see Gerhards, above), Ruud Koopmans, Friedhelm Neidhardt and Barbara Pfetsch, 'Conditions for the Constitution of a European Public Sphere', Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB), Paper presented at the Conference 'Democracy beyond the Nation-State' (Athens, 5-7 October 2000).

⁶¹ Marianne van de Steeg, 'Rethinking the Conditions for a Public Sphere in the European Union', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5 (4) (2002), 499-519.

⁶² Hans Jörg Trenz, 'Media Coverage on European Governance: Exploring the European Public Sphere in National Quality Newspapers', *European Journal of Communication*, 19 (3) (2004), 291-319 (p. 312).

difficulties involved in simply creating new media as an “add-on” to the traditional ones and to expect these to attain a large readership and influence on public opinion. Further, according to political scientist Thomas Risse, this view about how such a system would operate also wrongly implies

that we must somehow transcend our national public spheres and that a ‘European public sphere’ is somehow located above and beyond the various national media and publics. In concrete terms, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Le Monde* could never be part of the same public sphere by definition.⁶³

Yet he contends that exactly these same newspapers should in fact be the bearers of an emerging EPS. Risse suggests analysing the emergence of a possible “Europeanization” of the media by observing the social and discursive practices in the *existing*, rather than *potential*, future media discourses, as they might lead to a more viable “Europeanization of national public spheres”. Whereas the first model saw national media as the “stumbling stone” and obstacle that needed to be overcome to create an EPS, they now emerged as its “building blocks”,⁶⁴ and hence the departure point for investigating and researching communication processes which traverse national boundaries.

In recent years, therefore, research has increasingly focused on comparisons between national media to ascertain to what extent these debates are integrated and interconnected and whether common European perspectives, reference points and analysis are apparent. This approach has had the advantage of considering the EPS not as something that “exists” at any particular time, but rather as a potential process in the making. Risse outlines this point as follows.

Public spheres are not a given, are not out there waiting to be discovered by some analysts. Rather, they are constructions in the true sense of the word. Public spheres emerge in the process in which people debate controversial issues in public. [...] Public spheres and communities of communication emerge through social and discursive practices, in the

⁶³ Thomas Risse, ‘An Emerging European Public Sphere? Theoretical Implications and Empirical Indicators’, Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the European Studies Association (Nashville, TN., 27-30 March 2003) <http://aei.pitt.edu/6556/01/001315_1.PDF> [accessed 5 January 2009] pp. 1-11 (p. 4).

⁶⁴ Sebastian Kurpas, ‘When the European Constitution went National: A Plea for a European Public Sphere’, Centre for European Policy Studies <http://www.ceps.be/Article.php?article_id=421&> [accessed 3 December 2005].

process of arguing about controversial questions. Europe is no exception (p. 5).

Quantitative research has attempted to account for these processes and developments through computerized coding of datasets, such as articles from European newspapers. Analysis has been deduced from the frequency of certain keywords such as “EU” and “EU governance” over a given timeframe.⁶⁵ In addition, Risse has proposed to measure the extent of “similar levels of attention” (‘An Emerging European Public Sphere?’, p. 5) in the media discourse to European topics as a basic relevant parameter, because, as he notes, topics have to be discussed simultaneously in different countries in order for there to be a meaningful debate about them in the first place. Moreover, van de Steeg has suggested tracing the level of “discursive interaction” (‘Rethinking the Conditions’, p. 512) between different publications by establishing how much space in articles is devoted to recapitulating and furthering arguments from other countries, or by including texts from foreign authors which would lead to a “transplantation” of opinions. These parameters will also be used in the initial quantitative discussion of the journals in Chapter Three.

Risse’s crucial, and in my view defining, indicator for an EPS in a qualitative analysis is as follows: he maintains that it is not necessary to always agree and reach the same conclusion on a given topic, but rather to agree on the “frame of reference” within which a given topic is discussed. He exemplified this point with reference to the debate about the American-led Iraq invasion.

We can disagree on whether the attack on Iraq is consistent with international law or not. But ‘same criteria of reference’ requires that we do agree that compliance with international law is significant in debating questions of war and peace. If we do not agree about international war as a frame of reference to discuss the war against Iraq, we cannot meaningfully communicate about this issue (p. 5).

This criterion, I would contend, does justice to the traits of heterogeneity, plurality, and contestation which define a public sphere, while at the same time implying that the EPS is not simply a cacophony of competing voices or a forum

⁶⁵ For a detailed quantitative analysis see Stefanie Sifft, et al, ‘Segmented Europeanization: Exploring the Legitimacy of the European Union from a Public Discourse Perspective’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 45 (1) (2007), 127-155.

of opinion where anything goes. Rather, it is a space where participants can express differences of opinion and diverging viewpoints, but still find themselves in discursive contact with each other because they share a common understanding of what criteria are relevant in discussing a topic.⁶⁶ This question of whether or not “same criteria of reference” are apparent in the debates of the cultural journals provides the underlying question in the subsequent qualitative discussion of the journals in Chapter Four.

Despite extensive studies, researchers continue to disagree on whether national media are in fact becoming increasingly Europeanized in line with political and economical integration. Some recent studies have suggested that a tentative EPS is slowly emerging in some segments of the European media.⁶⁷ Yet others maintain that the results are either inconclusive or that no increasing Europeanization is taking place.⁶⁸ This suggests that the answer to the bluntly put question “does a European Public Sphere exist?”, inevitably has to be: it depends on a number of variables, such as the benchmarks for what constitutes an EPS, the methods of analysis, the type of media analysed, and, of course, on the countries involved in such a case study.⁶⁹ All these factors account for

⁶⁶ Bernhard Peters has used different terms to denote similar indicators to Risse's. He established “simultaneity of issues and agendas” across the media as a first indicator for an EPS, and furthermore proposes to establish whether these topics are discussed according to the same “patterns of interpretation”, as sign of a “common understanding” amongst the participants of an EPS. See: ‘Ach Europa’, (see Peters, above), pp. 2-3.

⁶⁷ As suggested by Thomas Risse, Marianne van de Steeg, ‘The Emergence of a European Community of Communication: Insights from Empirical Research on the Europeanization of Public Spheres’, Centre for Transnational Relations, Foreign and Security Policy, Freie Universität Berlin <http://www.atasp.de/downloads/eps_vandesteeg_risse_070513.pdf> [accessed 22 October 2007].

⁶⁸ As suggested by Hans-Jörg Trenz, ‘In Search of the European Public Sphere’ (see Trenz, above).

⁶⁹ Since the field of EPS research has been largely dominated by German researchers, many empirical media studies usually include Germany and one or two other countries. The following, by no means exhaustive, selection of books and journal articles indicates some of the themes and countries of comparison. Roberta Carnevale, Stefan Ihrig and Christian Weiss, *Europa am Bosphorus (er-)finden: Die Diskussion um den Beitritt der Türkei zur Europäischen Union in den britischen, deutschen, französischen und italienischen Zeitungen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 2005); Helmut Scherer, Simone Vesper, ‘Was schreiben die anderen – Ausländische Pressestimmen als Vorform paneuropäischer Öffentlichkeit: Eine Inhaltsanalyse deutscher Qualitätszeitungen’, in *Europäische Union und Mediale Öffentlichkeit* (see Hagen, above), pp. 195-211; Christiane Eilders, Friedhelm Neidhardt and Barbara Pfetsch, ‘Die Stimme der Medien im politischen Prozeß: Themen und Meinungen in Pressekommentaren’, Discussion Paper FS

the wide discrepancy in conclusions that have been reached about the state of the EPS.

It is, however, not the main aim of this thesis to simply pose the question of whether an EPS “exists” in these cultural journals. Rather, the particular interest of this research lies in the possibilities and limits of debate within a public sphere in relation to questions of European identity. It seeks to establish to what extent this model of the public sphere with its emphasis on debate and exchange of arguments can in fact contribute to the development of a more defined and integrated sense of European identity, as suggested by social theorists.

In this section, I have endeavoured to give a summary of the existing debates and research on the EPS and to provide a useful working definition for the context of this thesis. Specifically, I referred to using national media as an organising point for the discussion and to conceptualize the EPS as a “social construction” (Risse’s term) and a process in the making. Importantly, this EPS was characterized as consisting of a variety of views that are connected by common underlying criteria of relevance. The next chapter will probe more deeply into the ideological underpinnings of the EPS model in relation to identity formation and provide an overview of recurrent motifs of European identity.

III98-106 Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin <<http://bibliothek.wzb.eu/pdf/1998/iii98-106.pdf>> [accessed 17 December 2008].

Recent English language examples include Paul Statham, Emily Gray, ‘The Public Sphere and Debates about Europe in Britain: Internalized and Conflict Driven’, *Innovation*, 18 (1) (2005), 61-81; Swantje Renfordt, ‘Do Europeans Speak with One Another in Time of War?’

Recon Online Working Paper, 2007/17

<http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/workingpapers2007/papers/wp07_17.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2007].

Chapter 2

Locating European Identity

2.1 European Identity: Its Conceptual and Terminological Emergence in Postwar Europe

This chapter begins by retracing the emergence of European identity as a concept in postwar Europe and then outlines current approaches to identity studies, which emphasise the role of textual discourse, especially the public sphere as a relevant locus for identity formation. The second part will point to some historical narratives which are relevant in contemporary declarations about European identity, and will sketch out some current identity models. The majority of these, I will argue, can be understood as projections of political aspirations and philosophical ideals.

The concern with the “idea” of Europe, as suggested in the introduction, has been variously put by writers, philosophers, historians, and intellectuals as much as by politicians and geographers throughout the centuries as a question of Europe’s, “essence”, “soul”, or its “spirit”, “mystique”¹ or “consciousness”.² The use of the term “identity” is, however, of very recent origin and according to Luisa Passerini originated in the United States in the 1960s with the emergence of “new social, cultural, ethnic and regional movements”.³ Since then, the term has diffused “across disciplinary and national boundaries, establishing itself in the journalistic as well as the academic lexicon and permeating the language of social and political practices as well as social and political analysis”.⁴ In Europe, Bo Stråth points out, the term “identity” slowly replaced the buzzword of

¹ Hugh Seton-Watson, ‘What is Europe, Where is Europe? From Mystique to Politique’, *Encounter*, 64-65 (1985), 9-17 (p. 13).

² Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilizations*, trans. by Richard Mayne (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 423.

³ Luisa Passerini, ‘From the Ironies of Identity to the Identities of Irony’, in *The Idea of Europe. From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. by Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and CUP, 2002), pp. 191-208.

⁴ Rogers Brubaker, Frederick Cooper, ‘Beyond “Identity”’, *Theory and Society*, 29 (2004), 1-47 (p. 3).

European “integration”, which had dominated the 50s and 60s; by the early 1970s the term “European identity” appeared for the first time in an official communiqué of the European Community at the 1973 EEC Copenhagen Summit.⁵

In Stråth’s view, the use of the term at the Copenhagen summit signified the political appropriation of identity for a political programme. For the talk about a European identity, however undefined, was in his view an attempt to deal with the sense of economic malaise which gripped Europe in the early 1970s, specifically “in the wake of the collapse of the dollar and the subsequent oil-price shock, at a time of general crisis for national economic governance”.⁶ Numerous political scientists and sociologists have offered the explanation that the increasing popularity of European identity has coincided with the gradual weakening of the nation state model. This argument contends that the nation state had been in a period of decline and lost its capacity to manage the economic and political challenges thrust upon it.⁷ Meanwhile, the increasing European political cooperation and economic steering mechanisms weakened the “ideological and symbolic centrality of the nation-state [and] its position as the charismatic locus [...] of collective identity”.⁸ Increasingly, the nation state provided just one of many possible sources of identification, and national identity was eroded from below in the form of local allegiances – to a region, city, or community – and diluted from above in the form of transnational or supranational structures, one of them being the then EEC, now EU.

Thus the absence of an automatic congruence between national borders and corresponding identities weakened the nation’s exclusive grip on the concept of identity in the collective imagination. It is suggested that while national identity today still provides an undeniable appeal and strong

⁵ Bo Stråth, ‘Introduction: Europe as a Discourse’, in *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*, ed. by Bo Stråth (Peter Lang: Brussels, 2004), pp. 13-54 (p. 14).

⁶ Bo Stråth, ‘Introduction’, in *The Meaning of Europe: Variety and Contention Within and Among Nations*, ed. by Mikael af Malmberg, Bo Stråth (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p. 11. The oil-price shock is also seen as a caesura by the French social theorist Edgar Morin, who considers the event as his personal European awakening. He writes that in the wake of the oil-price shock: “(j)e suis devenu un néo-Européen parce que j’ai vu l’Europe malade et la répétition générale de son agonie.” Edgar Morin, *Penser l’Europe* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1987), p. 23.

⁷ One of the central theses in Ulrich Beck, Edgar Grande, *Das kosmopolitische Europa: Gesellschaft und Politik in der Zweiten Moderne* (Suhrkamp: Frankfurt a. M., 2004).

⁸ Shmuel Eisenstadt, ‘Multiple Modernities’, *Daedalus*, 1 (2000), 1-29 (p. 16).

resonance, “the older territorial and national boundaries of the world become increasingly uncertain”, which would explain why “the quest for national and transnational identity has intensified”.⁹ Arguably, a European identity is emerging as a possible alternative or complementary source of identification for Europeans. However, the as yet unanswered question is how these new forms of transnational governance and free trade would translate into an identity which belongs to “something larger than [...] the nation, yet smaller and more culturally specific than “humanity”.¹⁰

The ongoing political integration and economic deregulation throughout the 1980s gave sustained impetus to the concern, or in Stråth’s words “obsession”, with European identity during this decade (*Europe as Discourse*, p. 14). The publication of Milan Kundera’s 1984 essay, ‘The Tragedy of Central Europe’ published in the *New York Review of Books*,¹¹ is frequently mentioned as a defining moment for a reassessment of European identity, which, as Kundera pointed out, had, in the wake of the Cold War, largely become a matter of *Western* European identity and had ignored the plight of the countries behind the Iron Curtain.¹² While the essay certainly made an impact in intellectual circles, the question of Europe’s division into an “Eastern” and a “Western” part did not arise on a larger scale until 1989, when Europe was confronted with the challenge of asserting its position - and defining its identity - in a changed world order. In this sense, 1989 triggered a qualitative reassessment of European identity, because discussions about it could no longer be neatly confined to the “Western” European Community countries. It is for these reasons, the

⁹ Anthony Pagden, ‘Introduction’, in *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. by Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and CUP, 2002), pp. 1-32 (p. 1)

¹⁰ Anthony Pagden, ‘Europe: Conceptualizing a Continent’, in *The Idea of Europe* (see Pagden, above), pp. 33-55 (p. 53).

¹¹ Milan Kundera, ‘The Tragedy of Central Europe’, *New York Review of Books*, 26 April 1984, pp. 33-37. For a critical review of Kundera’s article see Tony Judt, ‘The Dilemmas of Dissidence: The Politics of Opposition in East-Central Europe’, *Eastern European Politics and Societies*, 2 (2) (1988), 185-241 (p. 224).

¹² See Kevin Wilson, Jan van der Dussen, ‘Europe since 1945: Crisis to Renewal’, in *The History of the Idea of Europe*, ed. by Kevin Wilson, Jan van der Dussen (Milton Keynes: Routledge, 1998), pp. 151-205.

introduction has already intimated, that I take this historical caesura as the starting point for discussion.¹³

2.2 The Constructivist Premises of Identity Formation

It is a commonplace to point out that “identity” today is a capacious term which can stand in for all sorts of analytical concepts, to the extent that it has lost much of its signifying value. It is not my aim to give a comprehensive overview of the sprawling debate on the use and different understandings of identity by the numerous academic disciplines which utilize it. Rather, I would like to point to some relevant definitions proposed by different theorists which will help to locate the term in the context relevant to this enquiry.

Firstly, Paul Ricoeur provides a useful entry point into how one might understand a communal identity. Identity, he writes, is made up “to a large extent” of “identifications with values, norms, ideals, models, and heroes, *in* which the person or the community recognizes itself.”¹⁴ For, as he points out: “[r]ecognizing oneself *in* contributes to recognizing oneself *by*” (p. 121). Thus, any given community, in this case the European one, recognizes itself as such a community by identifying with values, norms, and ideals that they make out as distinctively their own.

Secondly, these self-ascribed values and norms are based in large part on historical narratives which serve as a guide to express ambitions and projections for the future. Identity can be therefore understood in what Paul Gifford has formulated, in allusion to Ricoeur’s theory of “narrative identity”, as the “articulation of *project* and *memory*.”¹⁵ He notes: “‘I’ am, ‘we’ are”, is created, “at the point where a projected future is articulated in terms of a

¹³ It is important to clarify that while my concern is ultimately with the question of a European, not EU identity, discussions about European identity are initiated by the political developments of the European Union. In other words, it is by and large the political developments of the EU which set the agenda for discussions about European identity today. Thus, without intending to conflate the obvious distinction between the two terms, they are often used in close correlation with each other.

¹⁴ Paul Ricoeur, ‘Personal Identity and Narrative Identity’, in *Oneself as Another* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 113-140 (p. 121).

¹⁵ Paul Gifford, ‘Conclusion: Dialogue on the “Common Era”’, in *2000 Years and Beyond: Faith, Identity and the ‘Common Era’*, ed. by Paul Gifford, et al (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 147-191 (p. 147).

narrativized past” (p. 147). Thus the expression of an identity occurs when such a narrativized past is tied to the present and used to project a common future. The intellectual discourses especially, which are of concern here, rely on creating such a connection between the “narrativized” past, the present, and a “projected” future in order to establish a sense of a continuous European identity.

Thirdly, identity relies on creating a sense of “sameness” and common belonging which a group establishes mostly by designating an “Other”. Creating inner cohesion by demarcating and separating “us” from “them” is of course one of the recurrent elements involved in identity formation and is achieved, according to Robert Frank, in the following way.

L'identité d'un groupe est faite des traits communs qui font que les membres de ce groupe se sentent 'mêmes'. Bien que distincts, ils se sentent semblables, dans la mesure où ils s'opposent aux 'autres'. L'identité européenne est donc une conscience d'être Européen, par opposition à ceux qui ne le sont pas, une conscience de similitude, un sentiment d'appartenance.¹⁶

The fourth point, which follows from the previous ones, is that European identity is something to be actively and self-consciously designed and created. In Robert Frank's view it is not enough to simply be European, one must be aware that Europe needs to be made: “La conscience européenne [...] est conscience de la nécessité *de faire* l'Europe” (p. 134). René Girault identifies the individual components involved in the process of “making Europe”: “Il faudrait valoriser les convergences entre les cultures européennes, entre les histoires nationales, souligner les solidarités économiques et sociales qui existent entre des peuples européens.”¹⁷ Thus the available traits of group identification to which intellectuals have recourse, such as an imagined past, must be harnessed, convergences need to be emphasised and values need to be defined and valorised in order to mobilize a European identity. Klaus Eder has therefore pointed out somewhat cynically that not history in itself, but to

¹⁶ Robert Frank, ‘Présentation’, in *Identité et Conscience Européennes au XXe Siècle*, ed. by René Girault (Paris: Hachette Livre, 1994), pp. 133-135 (pp. 133-134).

¹⁷ René Girault, ‘Les trois sources de l'identité et de la conscience Européennes au XXe siècle’, in *Identité et Conscience* (see Girault, above), pp. 193-205 (p. 199).

“falsely invent history as a construction by intellectuals is the basis of a shared collective identity.”¹⁸

This awareness over the “invented nature” of European history separates it, according to Hans Jörg Trenz, from “traditional identity discourses” such as national identities “which have to repress the contingency of its underlying concepts”.¹⁹ In the case of European identity, attempt is no longer made to hide the “invented nature of tradition”, which Eric Hobsbawm’s and Benedict Anderson’s works have identified as the crucial mechanism of shaping national identities since the nineteenth century.²⁰ As Hobsbawm has emphasized: “the ‘nation’ was not a spontaneous growth but an artefact [...]. It had actually to be constructed” (p. 117). He describes the immense efforts that went into fashioning and disseminating national myths and national histories through state-educated schooling, reliance on new forms of mass communication, as well as literature, designed to unify and mould a sense of national consciousness in the citizens. This construction also took place through “the emergence of more or less large groups of cadres dedicated to the ‘national idea’, publishing national journals and other literature, organising national societies, attempting to establish educational and cultural institutions” (p. 115). Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* specifically stresses the importance of the invention of modern printing presses and distribution networks for newspapers, journals, books and pamphlets which allowed for the dissemination of print material and allowed the subsequent enculturation of citizens into an “imagined community” of the nation to become so successful.

According to the influential sociologist Anthony Giddens, the rise of the print culture and the increasing reliance on “mediated experience”²¹ is also partly responsible for the state of “self-reflexive modernity”, which marks

¹⁸ Klaus Eder, ‘Integration through Culture: The Paradox of the Search for a European Identity’, in *European Citizenship between National Legacies and Postnational Projects*, ed. by Klaus Eder and Bernhard Giesen (Oxford: OUP, 2001), pp. 222-269 (p. 226).

¹⁹ Hans Jörg Trenz, “Quo vadis Europe?” Quality newspapers struggling for European unity’, Paper presented at the Workshop ‘One EU- Many Publics?’ (Stirling, 5-6 February 2004), pp. 1-22.

²⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital 1848-1875* (London: Abacus, 1975, repr. 1999); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. and Extended edn. (London: Verso, 1991).

²¹ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p. 4.

modern societies today. The idea that self-reflexivity is a distinctly modern phenomenon has been questioned by sociologists such as Richard Jenkins and Kath Woodward, who have remarked that Giddens's claim "may tell us more about contemporary self-indulgence and introspection, than about historical detail".²² After all, Jenkins remarks, throughout history we can find a "venerable philosophical discourse about identity", as well as "variety of religious and legal traditions which are recognisably reflexive about identity".²³ That said, Giddens's claims remain an influential and often used axiom for the process of identity formation. He writes:

[i]n the post-traditional order of modernity, and against the backdrop of new forms of mediated experience, self-identity becomes a reflexively organised behaviour. The reflexive project of the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choice as filtered through abstract systems. (p. 5)

Thus understood, European identity has no recourse to a single "unreflected" narrative, an uncontested tradition or a self-evident founding myth, which was so relevant to the national identity formation. The very proposition that values, cultural traditions or characteristics are a seemingly natural and pre-ordained part of communal identity are in Eder's view an "atavistic" notion ('Integration through Culture', p. 230). European identity can unfold only on the premise that it is a continuous exercise in invention and self-reflection. Hence, identity studies in the European context, as I have indicated above, stress the notion that identities are nothing but a representational construct, dependent on theoretical modelling and discursive manipulation while being less concerned with exploring the possible, "objective" commonalities on which these representations are based. The historian J.G.A Pocock has summed up this

²² Kath Woodward, *Understanding Identity* (London: Arnold, 2002), p. 2.

²³ Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity* (Routledge: London, 1996), p. 9. For a detailed exploration of philosophical and religious approaches to the notion of identity see the book by Charles Taylor *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (CUP: Cambridge, 1989), which explores the "making" of identity through a historical-philosophical lens.

observation in the rather tart remark that “there is a habit at present of putting the words ‘the invention of’ before the name of anything we want to discuss.”²⁴

With reference to European identity studies this means that the concern is not so much to explore whether European identity is “invented”, but to ask *why* and *for what purposes* we choose to “invent” a particular sense of identity, and to analyse the intermediary processes of language and discourse by which - to use the term favoured by social and political scientists today - such an identity is “constructed”. It has been formulated by the theorists Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener as follows: “[i]f the study of identity formation is accepted as a crucial component of constructivist research, the role of language and of discourse becomes crucial”.²⁵ Discourse is crucial because it is herein that identities are seen to be expressed and developed in a cohesive and systematic manner. Habermas, too, stressed this point in a 1974 speech, tellingly entitled ‘Can Complex Societies Form a Rational Identity?’, in which he noted that identity can only take shape in the form of a “discursive and experimental” process and that “[c]ollective identity can only be grounded in [...] communication processes by which identity formation becomes a continuous learning process.”²⁶

Identity is therefore conceived not as passive identification with values, norms and ideals but as something actively determined through “categories of ascription and identification”²⁷ by the actors themselves. Michael Billig suggests

²⁴ J.G.A Pocock, ‘Some Europes in Their History’, in *The Idea of Europe* (see Pagden, above), pp. 55-71 (p. 55).

²⁵ Thomas Christiansen, Knud Erik Jorgensen and Antje Wiener, ‘The Social Construction of Europe’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6 (4) (1999), 528-544 (p. 541). The initial theoretical link between communication processes and identity formation has been systematically established as early as 1953 in Karl Deutsch’s study *Nationalism and Social Communication*. Deutsch sought to establish through a quantitative study that the level of communication processes that take place in the media of a national community bears a direct correlation to the sense of social cohesion, understanding and trust amongst the members of such a community. Although Deutsch’s work was in the first instance a study of nationalism and does not yet operate with the term “identities”, his study has become a seminal and influential work in the field. See Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality* (Cambridge, MA.: M.I.T Press, 1953, repr. 1978).

²⁶ Jürgen Habermas, ‘Can Complex Societies Form a Rational Identity?’, *Telos*, 19 (1974), 91-103 (p. 99).

²⁷ Fredrik Barth, ‘Introduction’, in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: the Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little Brown, 1969), pp. 9-38, quoted here from Siân Jones, ‘Discourses of Identity in the Interpretation of the Past’, in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology*:

that in order to study identity “investigators should examine how people make claims about themselves – the groups to which they claim to belong and those to which they claim not to belong.”²⁸

Identity is not understood as a latent psychological state but rather is revealed in the manner in which people speak or write about themselves: the groups to “which they claim to belong to”, as mentioned above, the values they identify with, the ideals that they aim to project, their perceptions of the past and the aspirations of the future. It is perceived as something to be expressed, formed and staged, not pre-given and ordained. Identity is understood as being contingent and preliminary, not fixed and solid; the outcome of communication processes and discursive practices, not a wordless common understanding. In short, it is something that is not measurable through one particular instantiation, but can be understood as “anonymous, unnoticed permeation of our ways of thinking and talking and making sense of the social world” (Brubaker and Cooper, ‘Beyond “Identity”’, p. 16).

2.2.1 European Identity in the Public Sphere

Having established these premises, I will relate the question of European identity back to the public sphere to see why, as the previous chapter has suggested, the latter is considered such a relevant locus for a process of European identity formation. Two points are noteworthy here. Firstly, and crucially, the procedural aspects of debate, discussion and self-critique relate closely to the ways in which European identity is seen to develop: not on the basis of spontaneous, natural emotions, but as the result of deliberative processes which could “provide the basis for European identity as a reflexive project.”²⁹ The model of the EPS with all the inbuilt “safety-measures” relating to the construction and expression of European identity in the form of rational

The Construction of European Communities, ed. by Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 62-81.

²⁸ Michael Billig, ‘From Code to Utterances: Cultural Studies, Discourse and Psychology’, in *Cultural Studies in Question*, ed. by Marjorie Ferguson, Peter Golding (London: Sage Publications, 1997), pp. 205-227 (p. 208).

²⁹ Risto Heiskala, ‘Our Time: Europe in the Age of Global Networks and Flowing Identities’, in *Will Europe Work? Integration, Employment and the Social Order* (see Kohli, Novak, above), pp. 111-127 (p. 124).

deliberation and the potential for self-reflection, rather than potentially unchecked allegiances, therefore recommends it as a desirable locus for a self-reflexive, mutually agreed “constructed” European identity.

This understanding is implicit in Furio Cerutti’s definition of identity, which, he points out, is

not something that can be established from outside the group, [...] it must be felt as such in a more or less clear manner by the group’s members, who engage in private exchange and public debate about how to determine those values and to modify them when circumstances have changed and require a change of consciousness.³⁰

Along these same lines Calhoun and Fraser have restated the belief in the centrality of the public sphere for identity formation, since “[i]t is crucial to create public space within which people may engage each other in discourse – not just to make decisions, but to [...] make and remake their own identities.”³¹ And Fraser notes that in her view “public discursive arenas are among the most important and underrecognized sites in which social identities are constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed.”³²

An even more outspoken champion of the centrality of the public sphere is Klaus Eder, who alleges that communication within the public sphere has replaced the role of the state or religion in generating cultural meaning and, indeed, a sense of one’s own identity. In his view, intercultural communication within Europe provides the defining platform from which a shared understanding can emerge and a (contingent) self-reflexive identity can be staged and communicated (‘Integration through Culture’, pp. 231-234).

A second reason for the popularity of the European public sphere model for European identity formation lies in its theoretical ability to contain and integrate a diversity of voices, rather than to give preference to one dominant model. This point is especially pertinent in the context of Europe’s diverse cultural

³⁰ Furio Cerutti, ‘Towards the Political Identity of the Europeans: An Introduction’, in *A Soul for Europe*, ed. by Furio Cerutti, Enno Rudolph (Leuven, Stirling: Peeters, 2001), pp. 1-31 (p. 4).

³¹ Craig Calhoun, ‘Nationalism, Political Community and the Representation of Society: Or, Why Feeling at Home is not a Substitute Public Space’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2 (2) (1999), 217-231 (p. 228).

³² Nancy Fraser, ‘Rethinking the Public Sphere’, in *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (see Calhoun, above), pp. 109-143 (p. 140, Footnote 24).

background which supports the idea that no single European identity exists, merely the sum of multiple, partly overlapping and sometimes conflicting identity models. As the following section will demonstrate, this is not only current academic orthodoxy, but also “a recurrent theme of European religious, philosophical and political thought”.³³ What is more, it is the officially sanctioned policy of the European Union, whose cultural policy bears the slogan “Unity in Diversity”.³⁴ Craig Calhoun argues convincingly that a public sphere on the European level allows for these diverse voices to find expression.

Public discourse depends on articulating differences - crucially differences of opinion; potentially but not necessarily also differences of group identity. [...] What we know as ‘public’ discourse is that in which ideas, opinions and identities are made clear and subjected to more or less open discussion – ideally, perhaps, to rational-critical discussion.³⁵

In other words, the debate taking place in the public sphere arises on the basis of heterogeneous but equally valid opinions between participants, rather than assuming an uncritical commonality between them. Thus, the virtual space of the public sphere allows for the fruitful expression of matters as complex, multiple and potentially conflictual as European identity, since it is a space that does not presume sameness but allows for, and welcomes differences. The idea that diverse discourses are engaged in a debate with each other as equals, I would argue, corresponds to the European aspiration not to privilege one dominant culture, but to create a space in which the European cultures can practice their creed of “Unity in Diversity”.

Whether this understanding of identity formation in a public sphere as outlined above does in fact adequately capture the processes evident in the journals, is the focus of this study.

³³ Hans Jörg Trezz, “Quo vadis Europe?” Quality newspapers struggling for European unity’, Paper presented at the Workshop ‘One EU- Many Publics?’ (Stirling, 5-6 February 2004), pp. 1-22 (p.17).

³⁴ See Melissa Pantel, ‘Unity-in-Diversity. Cultural Policy and EU Legitimacy’, in *Legitimacy and the EU: The Contested Polity*, ed. by Thomas Banchoff, Mitchell P. Smith (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 46-66.

³⁵ Craig Calhoun, ‘Nationalism, Political Community and the Representation of Society: Or, Why Feeling at Home is not a Substitute Public Space’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2 (2) (1999), 217-231 (p. 222)

2.3 European Identity as Political Ideology and Philosophical Ideal

2.3.1 Europe's Contested Historical Sources

The second part of this chapter indicates some of the historical sources of European identity in order to contextualize the references and starting points of discussion as they occur in the journals. Moreover, it will begin to shed some light on the question as to “why” and for “what purposes” certain models of identities are being requisitioned in these discourses.

There have been many attempts to define the historical origins and values in which Europeans “recognize themselves”, which involve competing claims about what kind of historical narrative should be told and highlighted. Numerous interpretations are offered, for example, about the mechanisms by which a convergence or ‘Europeanization’ of the continent is said to have come about. Historians point with different emphasis to the development of trade and commercial networks,³⁶ intellectual and artistic exchanges,³⁷ as well as to the history of conquests and wars as catalysts for convergence.

Take the account by Anthony Pagden, who points to humanistic principles, civilisational progress, and the non-coercive forces of trade and the arts as having shaped the Europe of today. He mentions the great commercial trade routes of Europe which led to the establishment of political unions and resulted in a shared political culture. Moreover, he writes, Europe has been since the eighteenth century increasingly committed to a life of civility and the liberal arts. The Enlightenment brought about guarantees of individual autonomy, individual property rights and secularization. Pagden concludes that today Europe stands as a guarantor for peace and human rights in the international community. While he concedes that “Europeans have a shared history of antagonisms to overcome” (‘Introduction’, p. 20) and have been “one of the most belligerent groups of people” (p. 14), he identifies the “perennial

³⁶ The emphasis on trading routes and centres of commerce as places of European exchange and understanding is explored in Ferdinand Seibt, *Die Begründung Europas: Ein Zwischenbericht über die letzten tausend Jahre* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer Verlag, 2005).

³⁷ For an account of how European art forms have cross-fertilized each other and spread over the continent see Fernand Braudel, ‘Unity in Europe’, in *A History of Civilizations*, pp. 399-427.

quest for peace” (p. 14) as the victorious and ultimately redeeming aspect of European identity.

A different perspective is offered by philosopher Peter Sloterdijk who asserts that the catalyst for all the cultural and political processes that led to the “Europeanization” of the continent were the conquests of changing European empires with their drive to claim, colonise, influence and transform their conquests.³⁸ In his view the Roman Empire proved to be the leading model for all subsequent empires of imposing power and thus unifying what is Europe today. These conquests included acts of “transference” (p. 34), as the imposition of unified political and administrative structures on hitherto disparate regions led to a convergence of experiences. In other words, Europe was not unified through acts of intellectual exchange or ideas but through the driving forces of coercion and conquest.

Yet, as Yasemin Soysal points out in her study of the depiction of European history in contemporary school textbooks, even acts of conquests and wars can be construed as occasions for dialogue, conflict resolution and intercultural understanding rather than as sheer displays of power. She notes that “the Crusades are taught not simply as holy wars and conquests but as occasions for cultural exchange and learning between Europeans and other civilizations”.³⁹

These competing views and interpretations are not always mutually exclusive, but since these narratives also offer a window onto the current self-perception of Europe, accusations of conducting a “politics of history” are inevitable when the positive and heroic European civilisational ideals of enlightened humanism and intercultural exchange are highlighted. Historian Mark Mazower points out that the divisions, cleavages and ruptures, as well as Europe’s history of wars and other “darker” aspects including colonialism, imperialism, and racism belong to this history just as much, but are too often

³⁸ Peter Sloterdijk, *Falls Europa erwacht* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1994), pp. 32-35.

³⁹ Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, ‘Locating Europe’, in *European Societies*, 4 (3) (2002), 265-284 (p. 275). For a further discussion on current teaching of European history especially in schools, see Ulrich Beck, Edgar Grande, *Das kosmopolitische Europa*, (see Beck, Grande, above), pp. 164-168.

neglected or conveniently omitted. Both factors have to be given their due merit, he notes, especially when considering the more recent European history.

The intellectual tradition which identifies Europe with the cause of liberty and freedom goes back many centuries. But [...] it is hard to deny that what has shaped Europe in this century is not a gradual convergence of thought and feeling, but on the contrary a series of violent clashes between antagonistic New Orders.⁴⁰

Any attempt to tell a narrative of European history as the basis of its identity today is therefore invariably fraught and contested. Some of the historical narratives, which as the following chapters will show feature in *Esprit* and *Merkur* and to a lesser degree in *NLR*, can be adumbrated as follows.⁴¹

Rome, Athens, and Jerusalem are the place names that Paul Valéry evoked in his essay 'La crise de l'Esprit'⁴² to denote the cultural, political and civilisational influences that have shaped Europe. He cites Roman influence as providing a model for our understanding of law and an organised state; Greek influence as responsible for the virtues of intelligence, clarity, intellectual rigour and discipline, as well as the creation of science, and, finally, the spread of Christianity as providing a sense of morality. The blending of the Graeco-Roman civilization is thus responsible for a Europe based on a common system of law which is then moulded by a common religion into the European "civilisation".⁴³ This "three sources" doctrine was hugely influential amongst intellectuals and advocates for a united Europe during the First World War; the perhaps most politically engaged figure being the Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, who also actively lobbied for a "United Europe".⁴⁴ It remains a relevant

⁴⁰ Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 403.

⁴¹ For a comprehensive historical overview of intellectual constructs of Europe see Norman Davies, 'Introduction', in *Europe: A History* (London: Pimlico, 1997). For a schematic overview on contemporary European identity concepts, see Theodora Kostakopoulou, *Citizenship, Identity and Immigration in the European Union. Between Past and Future* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

⁴² Paul Valéry, 'La crise de l'Esprit', *Variété I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1924), pp. 9-33.

⁴³ See Gérard-Francois Dumont, Anselm Zurfluh, *Die Identität Europas: Werte für eine gemeinsame Zukunft* (Schaffhausen: Novalis, 2001), p. 16.

⁴⁴ Coudenhove-Kalergi was also the driving force behind a monthly cultural journal *Panuropa*, in which the idea of a "United Europe" was promulgated. See Daniel C. Villanueva, 'Richard von

entry point from which to explore European history, and to understand the legacies which have shaped it until today.

For example, Anthony Pagden has pointed to Christianity as providing the dominant mark on the development of Europe that outlasted “the collapse of the political structures of the Graeco-Roman world”.⁴⁵ Similarly, the late Hugh Seton-Watson has pointed out that Christendom is inseparably intertwined with the notion of Europe, since “the main strands in European culture have come through Christendom, from Hellas, Rome, Persia and the Germanic north as well as from Christianity itself” (‘What is Europe, Where is Europe?’, p. 16). Importantly, these three sources have also provided the justification for the numerous instances of “othering” on grounds of religion throughout the centuries. At various, repeated points in time, regions such as the Balkans, Russia and Turkey, found themselves designated as the non-European “barbarians” or “infidels” (p. 10).

While Christianity provided one of the unifying ideals, it was also responsible for major sources of tension and splits within Europe, between Roman Catholicism and the Greek Orthodox Church, as well the separation of areas under Ottoman Muslim rule, and a split into a predominantly Protestant Northern Europe and a Catholic-dominated Southern Europe. Norman Davies notes that the term “Europe” derived, in fact, from the concept of ‘Christendom’. In the wake of the wars of religion, and crucially in the early phase of the Enlightenment, Davies observes “it became an embarrassment for the divided community of nations to be reminded of their common Christian identity” (*Europe*, p. 7). The concept ‘Europe’ at this point fulfilled the need for a more secular, more neutral designation and “gradually supplanted Christendom as the cultural frame of reference”.⁴⁶

Even the Enlightenment period, during which Europe was transformed from a predominantly, religious order into a largely secular one, can be understood, John Gray argues, as an offprint off the very Christian culture it

Coudenhove-Kalergi's "Pan-Europa" as the Elusive "Object of Longing", *Rocky Mountain Review of Languages and Literature*, 59 (2) (2005), pp. 67-80.

⁴⁵ Anthony Pagden, ‘Conceptualizing a Continent’, in *The Idea of Europe* (see Pagden, above), pp. 33-55 (p. 35).

⁴⁶ Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: Macmillan, 1995), p. 30.

aimed to outgrow. In the Enlightenment's emphatic emphasis on the capacity of knowledge, reason and the appliance of science to emancipate humanity, Gray sees "a promise of salvation that is a secular version of Christianity's".⁴⁷ Consequently, the "self-image of Enlightenment as a universal movement" could in fact be more adequately described "as a secular version of a Western religion" (p. 50). Yet it is the Enlightenment's purported *universal* validity claim which provides much of its contested legacy today. In these interpretations the Enlightenment is credited with positive developments, social progress, political liberalism, the notion of power based on reason rather than will (which informs of course also Habermas's account of the public sphere); and the cherished ideals enshrined by the French Revolution of equality, liberty and fraternity. All these are seen to owe their intellectual debt to the Enlightenment and are qualified as universal, rather than distinctly "European" values.

However, this one-sided view of the Enlightenment has of course been dented and subverted by those experiences of the twentieth century symbolized in the names of "Verdun and Auschwitz", which put to an end the era of progress and hope for the "moral betterment of humanity".⁴⁸ In the wake of Adorno's and Horkheimer's seminal work *Dialectic of Enlightenment*,⁴⁹ the Enlightenment was credited not only with progress and emancipation, but also responsible for developments of nationalism, imperialism and totalitarianism. Simply put, processes of terror and emancipation were seen as two sides of the same coin.

Thus whilst the Enlightenment remains a relevant point of reference, one can discern amongst intellectuals informed by the "descent into barbarism" a cautious and mindful attitude towards invoking Enlightenment ideals for the purpose of formulating a progressive European identity. For example, historian Konrad Jarausch points out, that a European framework should be construed as a "Spannungsfeld zwischen befreienden, zivilisatorischen Aspirationen und

⁴⁷ John Gray, 'Enlightenment Humanism as a Relic of Christian Monotheism', in *2000 Years and Beyond* (see Gifford, above), pp. 35-50 (p. 37).

⁴⁸ Jürgen Moltmann, 'Progress and Abyss: Remembering the Future of the Modern World', in *2000 Years and Beyond* (see Gifford, above), pp. 16-34 (p. 22).

⁴⁹ Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, transl. by John Cumming, 2nd edn. (London: Verso, 1986).

schrecklichen Verbrechen”.⁵⁰ Habermas, too, points out that any successful European identity must be based on the “Fähigkeit zur selbstkritischen Auseinandersetzung mit ‘bellizistischer Vergangenheit’”.⁵¹ In the same vein, the Swiss intellectual Adolf Muschg, rather than invoking the values of the Enlightenment unconditionally or triumphantly, appeals to reason and self-critique as the only available *defence* against the seeds of self-destruction that these values potentially entail. He points out warily that a productive self-doubt and continuous critique have been and must remain part of the guiding principles of European dialogue and identity formation.⁵² Note also how this hesitation and ambivalence about European identity formation continues until this day. In an editorial published in 2006 in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, the Swedish journalists Rolf Gustavsson and Richard Schwartz urge caution towards any idea of an integrated European identity which in their view is a dangerous idea

weil die Vorstellung eines einigen Europa –eine Art Vereinigten Staaten von Europa – auf der Idee einer zu vollendenden Utopie beruht und jede Utopie zum Totalitarismus neigt. Europa hat noch einige Hypotheken abzutragen, die es sich durch seine Versuche erworben hat, Utopien zu verwirklichen, auch wenn die Versuche längst kompromittiert sind; es ist nicht allzu lange her, dass Hitler und Stalin ein einiges Europa schaffen wollten.⁵³

2.3.2 Current European Identity Models

The experience of totalitarianism and the Holocaust have not only shaped the attitudes towards the ideal of moral progress, but are beginning to emerge - seemingly paradoxically - as the basis of a common European framework of remembrance. Ariane Chebel d’Appollonia observes that “wars themselves were a dividing factor; the interpretation of the wars by the Europeanists,

⁵⁰ Konrad Jarausch, ‘Zeitgeschichte zwischen Nation und Europa. Eine transnationale Herausforderung’, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 39 (2004), 3-10 (p. 10).

⁵¹ As noted by Jens Hacke, ‘Wir-Gefühle: Repräsentationsformen kollektiver Identität bei Jürgen Habermas’, *Mittelweg* 36, 16 (2008-2009), 12-32 (p. 26).

⁵² See Adolf Muschg, *Was ist europäisch? Reden für einen gastlichen Erdteil* (Munich: Beck, 2005).

⁵³ Rolf Gustavsson, Richard Schwartz, ‘Die Unvollendete: Geduld mit Europa!’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 January 2006, p. 11.

however, has become a supremely unifying factor”.⁵⁴ Consider on this point this carefully-worded question: “les guerres de notre siècle n’ont elles pas contribué aussi, du fait des expériences similaires vécues pendant ces instants tragiques, à l’émergence d’une conscience voire d’une identité des Européens?”.⁵⁵

The extent to which one can – or indeed should – shape a common identity out of these experiences, especially the Second World War, is of course contested since it opens up many grey zones over the extent of resistance and collaboration in the European countries during that time. Tony Judt has argued that, immediately after the war, European countries created their own myths, in which they presented themselves without fail as “victims” of German aggression and deliberately suppressed the extent of collaboration and collusion that had taken place.⁵⁶ A resistance myth emerged that was built on the desire not only to move forward but to conform to the pressure from the Allies, in which the need to maintain the myth of an “ethically respectable past” (p. 314) was imperative. Judt maintains that this “Vichy Syndrome” can be applied by and large to most European countries – Great Britain excluded. With the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, however, old certainties have given way to new, more complex interpretations that undermine these impeccable myths of resistance and victimhood.

Of course, national collective memories remain strong, but the Second World War and especially the Holocaust are arguably emerging as defining reference points of the European twentieth century experience. Ulrich Beck, for example, argues that it is imperative to work through the experiences of dictatorship, of concentration camps and gulags into a “European common framework of remembrance” (*Das kosmopolitische Europa*, p. 203). Others go so far as to suggest that the “Europeanization” of the memory of the twentieth

⁵⁴ Ariane Chebel d’Appollonia, ‘European Nationalism and European Union’, in *The Idea of Europe* (see Pagden, above), pp. 171-190 (p. 179).

⁵⁵ Robert Frank, Antoine Fleury, ‘Le rôle des guerres dans la mémoire des Européens: Leur effet sur leur conscience d’être Européen’, in *Identité et Conscience Européennes* (see Girault, above), pp. 149-155 (p. 149).

⁵⁶ Tony Judt, ‘The Past is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe’, in *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and its Aftermath*, ed. by István Deák, Jan T. Gross and Tony Judt (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 293-325. On the ambivalent role of the Holocaust in modern European memory see also ‘The House of the Dead: An Essay on Modern European Memory’, in *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London: William Heinemann, 2005), pp. 803-831.

century is a development with “enormous potential” that could serve to “de-essentialise the concept of national identity”.⁵⁷

Others contend that such a historically based identity presents a potentially divisive, rather than a cohesive force, and advocate that a modern European identity should be based instead on ‘civic’ principles. Habermas is the most prominent of the numerous political and social scientists who advocate a European civic identity based on “constitutional patriotism”,⁵⁸ which entails an allegiance to a common European political culture based on an international rule of law, respect for human rights and commitment to democratic practices. Such a civic understanding of Europe, Habermas maintains, is already partly in existence and could thus become the basis for a new sense of European identity which could be further underpinned by the introduction of a European citizenship⁵⁹ in order to render such an identity more tangible and less abstract.

Sceptics point out that these civic principles are built purely on “postnational and liberal values”,⁶⁰ which need not necessarily correspond to the views of the large majority of Europeans. Equally, one must wonder whether these values – democracy, human rights, and the rule of law – are not in fact coterminous with more generally “Western” values. Yet this model is an attempt to capture and identify civic values as the basis for a European identity, which would conveniently strengthen support for a political agenda of establishing a postnational form of governance that has, in the view of its proponents, left behind the potentially divisive cultural and historical baggage of the nation states.

⁵⁷ Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore, ‘Apologias for the Nation-State in Western Europe since 1800’ in *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800*, ed. by Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 3-15 (p. 13).

⁵⁸ See Jürgen Habermas, ‘Why Europe Needs a Constitution’, *NLR*, 11 (2001), 5-26.

⁵⁹ For a discussion on European citizenship see: Gerard Delanty, ‘Conclusion: Towards Post-National Citizenship’, in *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (see Delanty, above), pp. 156-163.

⁶⁰ Thomas Risse, ‘European Institutions and Identity Change: What Have we Learned’, in *Transnational Identities. Becoming European in the EU*, ed. by Richard K. Herrmann, Thomas Risse and Marilyn B. Brewer (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefields, 2004), pp. 249-271 (p. 257).

Yet another model is based on the theme of social solidarity as the central plank of a European identity which would foster a shared feeling of *Gemeinschaft*, of collectivity amongst Europeans. As René Girault notes “se sentir Européen, c’est se sentir solidaire des autres Européens” (*Identité et Conscience*, p. 204). This model, advocated primarily by some thinkers of the political Left in Europe, proposes social solidarity as a means to overcome economic inequalities. Since the currently dominant free-market and deregulationist economic policies have led to increasing income gaps and levels of social protection within Europe, Europe-wide rather than nation-wide redistribution policies and welfare mechanisms are required, in order to provide the basis of a shared sense of community based on collective responsibilities and duties of social justice, rather than merely on a shared sense of consumerism.⁶¹ As the abovementioned Girault notes: “[I]a société de consommation européenne ne suscite pas encore une conscience européenne” (‘Les trois sources de l’identité’, p. 205). Thus, a European identity would be based upon fostering a Europe-wide social solidarity, as this is more likely to command emotional legitimacy and to instil an enduring commitment than the vapid promises of a common market.

The notion of solidarity is also crucial to a model of European identity formulated primarily as an acknowledgement and recognition of the “Other”. Since 1989 especially the encounter with the “Other” has proved a renewed challenge to Europe’s self-image. Europe’s initial reluctance or inability to incorporate Eastern European experiences into a common European identity was, according to Delanty, the first in a line of heavy-handed encounters with the “Other” (*Inventing Europe*, pp. 130-156). In recent years, this has been

⁶¹ Habermas has written extensively on the topic of social solidarity and the need for redistributive policies on a European scale amongst others in ‘The European Nation-State and the Pressures of Globalization’, *NLR*, 35 (1999), 45-60; ‘Der europäische Nationalstaat – Zu Vergangenheit und Zukunft von Souveränität und Staatsbürgerschaft’, in *Die Einbeziehung des Anderen: Studien zur politischen Theorie* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1996), pp. 128-154. See also Ulrich Beck, Edgar Grande, ‘Ungleichheit und Anerkennung: Gesamteuropäische Konflikte und ihre politische Dynamik’, in *Das kosmopolitische Europa* (see Beck, Grande, above), pp. 258-298, and in Étienne Balibar, ‘Europe: Vanishing Mediator’, in *We, the People of Europe: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*, trans. by James Swenson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 203-237.

supplanted by the concern of how to react to the presence of around fifteen million Muslims living in the European Union.⁶² Their religious and cultural otherness is perceived as a test of a purportedly secular, progressive, liberal mainstream European identity. “For over a thousand years”, Delanty writes, “Europe was shaped by Christianity, now the question is whether it will be able to absorb an Islamic identity“ (*Inventing Europe*, p. 140).

Since an overarching synthesis of European identity is lacking, the recognition and acknowledgement of *different* cultural identities is put forward as the binding common denominator. After all, it is proposed, European identity does not inevitably “entail an ideological crusade against the other” (Cerutti, ‘Towards the Political Identity of the Europeans, p. 6). Rather, “[t]he acknowledgment of differences, the reciprocal acknowledgement of the Other in her otherness – can also become a feature of a common identity”, suggest Habermas and Derrida.⁶³ This cosmopolitan ideal of recognising and respecting the “Other” has been developed amongst others by Étienne Balibar and Jacques Derrida. The latter insists that it is in fact Europe’s duty to welcome foreigners “in order not only to integrate them but to recognize and accept their alterity”.⁶⁴ The acceptance of difference is phrased by Derrida as a moral *duty*, which could provide a common moral purpose for Europeans and define their identity. The intellectual/philosophical discourse that develops a vision of a cosmopolitan solidarity maintains that the acknowledgement of the Other is the only viable way of affirming a sense of cultural identity that is “not based on exclusion or on a contrast with others” (Passerini, ‘From the Ironies of Identity’, p. 208). Rather, the acknowledgement of difference is perceived as an essential requirement for a shared sense of mutual recognition and cohesion. If Europeans can reach a consensus on the recognition of the Other, this premise can become the basis of a European identity that values multiplicity and accommodates the particularities of different cultures over the superiority of one

⁶² This is the number given by Tony Judt in *Postwar*, p. 741.

⁶³ Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Derrida, ‘February 15, or, What Binds Europeans Together Plea for a Common Foreign Policy, Beginning in Core Europe’, in *Old Europe New Europe Core Europe* (see Levy, above), pp. 3-14 (p. 9).

⁶⁴ See Étienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe*, and Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on today’s Europe*, trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael B. Naas (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

dominant culture. Such an understanding depends of course on a high degree of ethical abstraction; hence it is questionable to what extent it would provide a viable, broadly accepted base for European identity.

2.3.3 “Intractable Disunity”?

While historical events and their interpretations continue to shape and inform discussions of European identity, and while numerous models of how to formulate such an identity today have been put forward, in the final analysis, no dominant, commanding ideal or framework is seen to exist. Edgar Morin contends that it would be preferable to abandon “toute idée d’une essence ou substance européenne première, chasser l’idée d’une réalité européenne qui précède la division et l’antagonisme. Il faut au contraire l’y inscrire” (*Penser l’Europe*, p. 27).

Thus, European history and ideals are caught up in conflicting pathways that emerge from the discrepancies between historical realities and intellectual ideals; from the dynamics of conquest and empires against the dynamics of exchange and interaction; from the advances of science, progress and Enlightenment to a state of all-out war; and from cosmopolitan visions of inclusion to fearful and regressive encounters with the Other. Arguably, these conflicting currents and countercurrents and the constant destruction and remaking of European values persist to this day, to the point that Delanty has suggested that it “may quite well transpire that intractable disunity is the condition for a European identity” (*Inventing Europe*, p. vii).

Davies also concludes that “Europe has had no unifying ideal; historians cannot pretend otherwise” (*Europe*, p. 35). Hence, the existing models of European identity outlined above should not be understood as descriptive models, but as encompassing templates for political blueprints (social solidarity) relevant to our age, philosophical ideals (the cosmopolitan recognition of Otherness), or utopian visions of a Golden Age of Europe defined by Greek and Roman cultural legacy. In different times and throughout history, Europe has

served other concepts or purposes.⁶⁵ Davies succinctly points out that the term “Europe” has been

the product of complex exercises in ideology, of countless identity trips, of sophisticated essays in cultural propaganda. It can be defined by its advocates in almost any way that they think fit. Its elastic geography has been inspired by the distribution of religions, by the demands of liberalism and of imperialism, by the unequal progress of modernization, by the divisive effects of world wars and of the Russian Revolution, and by the self-centred visions of French *philosophes*, of Prussian historians, and of British and American statesmen and educators [...]. On the brink of the twenty-first century, one is entitled to ask in whose interests it may be used in the future (*Europe*, p. 25).

This statement serves as a useful outlook to the discussion of the journals in the following chapters: namely, that in all the debates about European identity we must query *which* ideals or visions are being propagated, but also remain mindful *to what* purpose and in “whose interest” they are being promulgated.

In this chapter, my aim was to outline current definitions of European identity, and to outline the procedural aspects of deliberation and exchange that take place in the public sphere as central to the articulation of European identity. Subsequently, I provided some historical reference points relevant to European identity models, which are nevertheless partial and based on selective, invariably contested European values. Therefore, models of European identity should best be understood as projections or as expressing ulterior political and philosophical aspirations. Thus I have laid out the methodological framework of the public sphere and clarified the conceptual and terminological emergence of European identity in postwar Europe, together with the relevant theoretical

⁶⁵ Jörg Requate has for example coined the term of Europe as an “appellative Instanz” – an imaginary authority, to which intellectuals or persecuted religious or political refugees appealed to in order to raise support for their political causes. He convincingly argues that throughout history, regional or separatist movements called upon Europe as a mediator for struggles between local and national interests or to attach more credence and importance to a regional struggle. See *Europäische Öffentlichkeit. Transnationale Kommunikation seit dem 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Jörg Requate, Martin Schulze Wessel (Frankfurt: Campus, 2002), and in Ludger Klein, Christian Lahusen, ‘Identitäts und Gemeinschaftsbezüge als Herausforderung europäischer Integration’, in *Bürgerschaft, Öffentlichkeit und Demokratie in Europa*, ed. by A. Klein, et al (Opladen: Leske and Budrich, 2003), pp. 251-257.

approaches, and some historical sources and intellectual currents which the term encapsulates.

Chapter 3

Indicators of “Europeanization”? The Journals in Overview

3.1 Thematic Composition of the Journals

This chapter will provide some quantitative data on *Esprit*, *NLR* and *Merkur* during the periods of 1989-92 and a decade later 2003-06. The aim is to gain a systematic overview of the journals and to identify trends about European-related articles. Specifically, the chapter seeks to assess to what extent the journals use republished or commissioned articles from other European countries in order to gauge whether the publications put the idea of a “textual exchange” - requisite to a public sphere - into recognisable practice. Finally, this chapter introduces some of the recurrent themes and main concerns of each journal which will be analysed in more detail in relation to the question of European identity in the subsequent textual analysis.

A bird’s-eye view of the thematic composition of each journal provides an initial measure of the relative prominence of European-related articles. To this purpose, each article between 1989-1992 and 2003-2006 was counted (see Table 1.1 and Table 1.2 below for the number of articles per journal) and categorized according to one of the following thematic headings.

- European Politics
- International Politics
- Domestic Politics
- Culture
- Literature
- Theory
- History
- Science
- Economics

- Religion / Theology
- Media

Table 1.1 Articles per Year and per Journal

1989-92

Year	<i>Esprit</i>	<i>NLR</i>	<i>Merkur</i>
1989	133	43	127
1990	126	47	143
1991	121	48	143
1992	108	53	132
Total	488	191	545

2003-06

Year	<i>Esprit</i>	<i>NLR</i>	<i>Merkur</i>
2003	146	57	156
2004	137	54	153
2005	159	52	152
2006	146	55	149
Total	588	218	610

Table 1.2 Mean Numbers of Articles per Issue

1989-92

Year	<i>Esprit</i>	<i>NLR</i>	<i>Merkur</i>
1989	13.1	7.1	11.7
1990	13.8	7.8	13.0
1991	12.1	8.0	13.0
1992	10.3	8.8	12.0
Total	12.3	7.9	12.4

2003-06

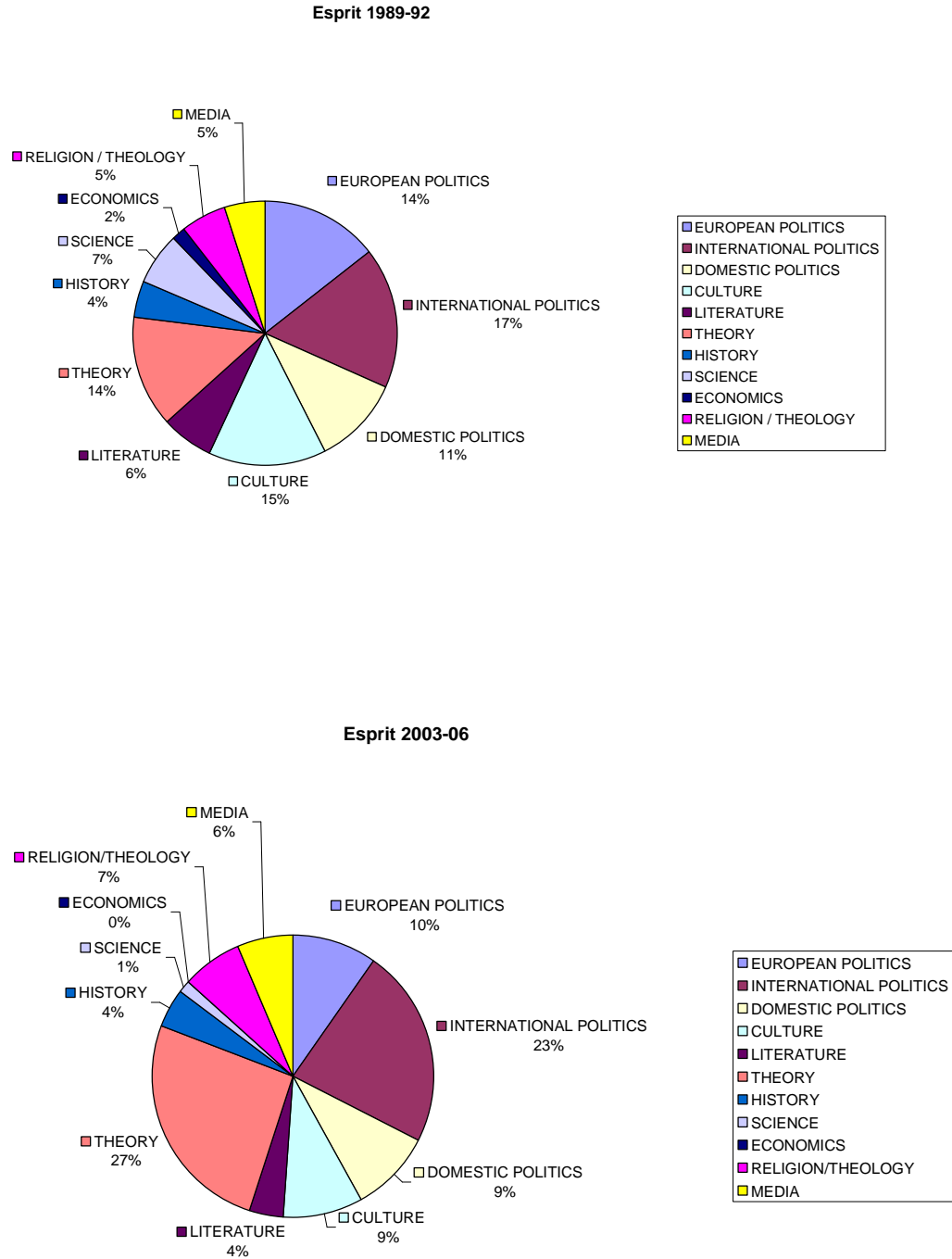
Year	<i>Esprit</i>	<i>NLR</i>	<i>Merkur</i>
2003	12.1	9.5	13.0
2004	11.1	9.0	13.9
2005	13.2	8.6	13.8
2006	12.1	9.1	13.5
Total	12.1	9	13.5

The length of the articles varies considerably in all of the journals, from six pages up to 20-30 pages. Not included in this count are editorials and shorter commentary pieces from *Esprit's* "Journal" section. *NLR's* significantly lower article count is due to the journal's bimonthly publication, whereas both *Esprit* and *Merkur* publish eleven issues annually (*Esprit* publishes one double-issue in the July-August months, and *Merkur* over the September-October period). In

addition, *NLR* also publishes fewer articles in each issue (between 7.9 to 9 articles), compared to *Esprit* and *Merkur* (12.3 to 13.5 articles per issue). The thematic distribution of the journals is presented in the figures below.

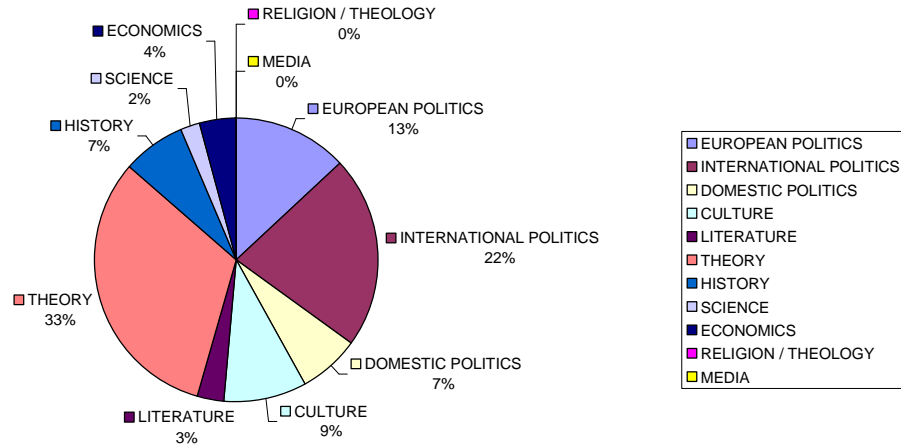
Figure 1. Composition of themes in the journals: 1989-92 and 2003-06

1.1 ESPRIT

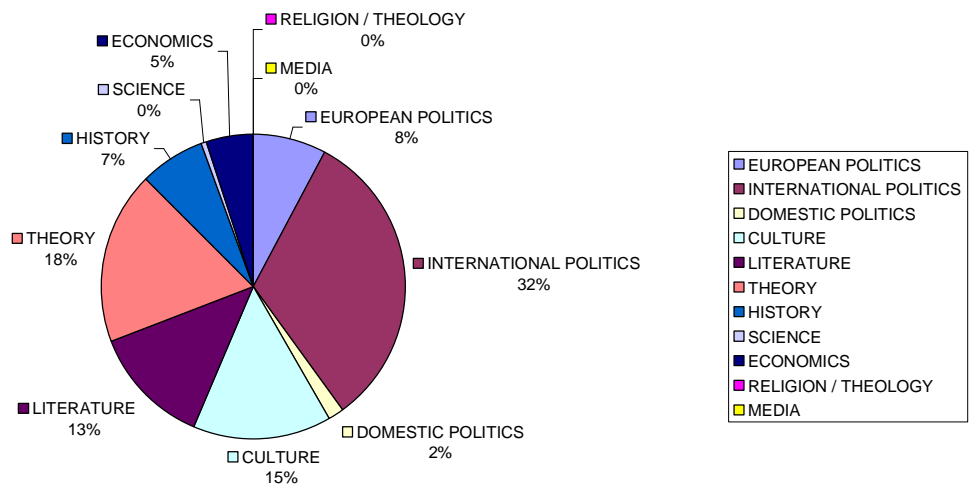


1.2 NLR

NLR 1989-92



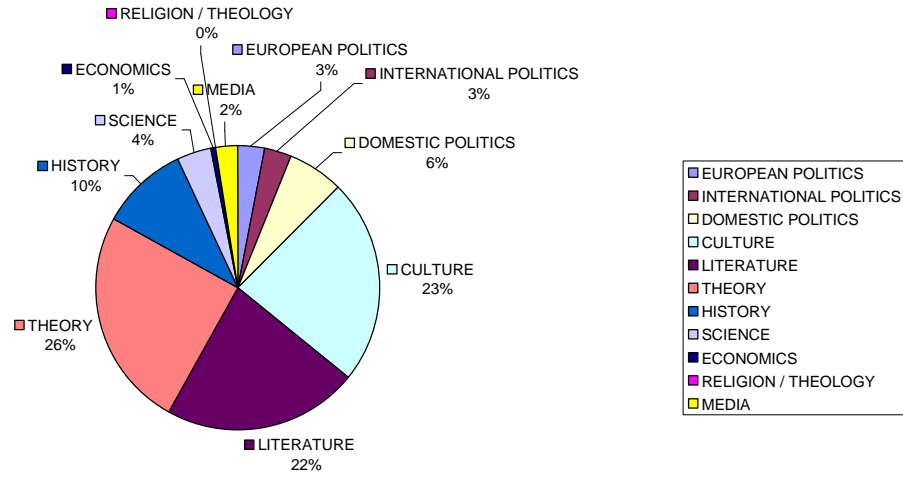
NLR 2003-06



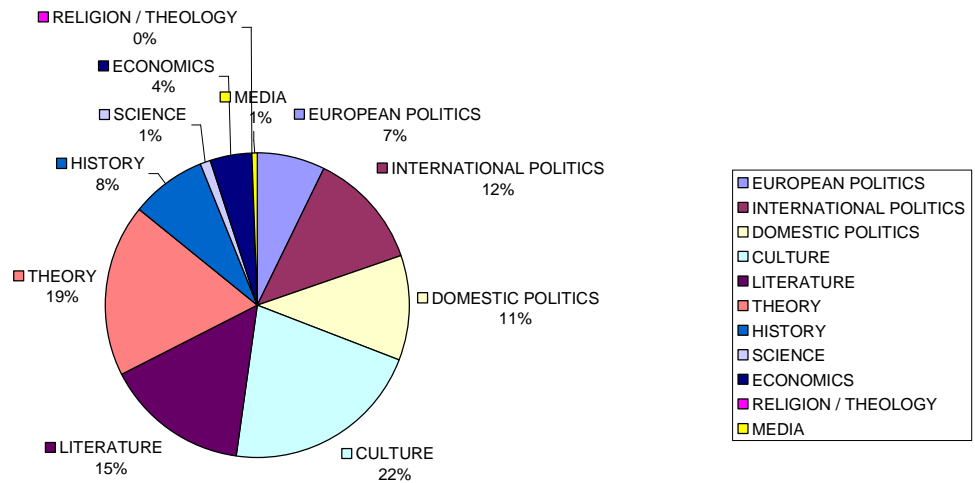
1.3

MERKUR

Merkur 1989-92



Merkur 2003-06



These figures confirm to a degree points already made in the introduction about the profile of the journals. *Merkur*, for example, is to a much larger extent concerned with literature, culture and history than its French and British counterparts, while *NLR* and *Merkur* have a greater interest in theoretical questions than *Esprit*. Unsurprisingly, given its ideological slant, *NLR* features more articles on economic themes than the other journals. Although economic discussions can also be found in the pages of *Esprit*, these discussions are usually embedded in political texts and do not merit a category of their own. By the same token, articles on the theme of religion and theology are prominent in *Esprit* (six percent), but non-existent in either *Merkur* or *NLR*.

During 2003-06, *Esprit* publishes far fewer articles on culture and literature than it did in 1989-92 in favour of more theoretical, often philosophically-oriented articles; and there is a slight increase (two percent) in articles dealing with religious or theological themes. *Merkur's* theoretical and literary concerns give way somewhat to many more political articles, of which I will say more below. The biggest change in the overall composition of the journal *NLR* is evident in relation to texts concerned with literature and culture (an increase of ten and six percent respectively). This partly reflects a change in editor from Robin Blackburn in 1992 to Susan Watkins in 2003-04, but also a conscious decision towards a renewed focus on literary and cultural criticism, which Perry Anderson spelled out as one of the new intellectual preoccupations of the journal in a mission statement for the journal's relaunch in 2000.¹

Esprit runs the most European articles during 1989-92 with 14 percent of its articles on the topic. These are similar to *NLR's* share of 13 percent, while *Merkur* publishes by far the fewest articles about Europe. By comparison, domestic politics account for six percent of the articles in *Merkur* and *NLR*, and for 10 percent in *Esprit*. International coverage is strongest in *NLR* (22 percent), followed by *Esprit* with 17 percent and only three percent in *Merkur*. Simply put, *Esprit* emerges as the most Europe-orientated publication of the three journals; *NLR* is in the first place dedicated to international coverage and

¹ Perry Anderson, 'Renewals', *NLR*, 1 (2000), 5-24.

ranks domestic concerns much lower, while *Merkur* is more engaged with domestic politics than with either Europe or the world at large during this period.

In 2003-06, *Merkur* increases its share of political articles by a large amount, and European articles rise from three to seven percent, while its international coverage rises from three to twelve percent. One of the main factors behind this increase is, as we will see later on, the intense focus on the US-led Iraq invasion in 2003. Thus, while the figures suggest that an increasing focus on Europe takes place in *Merkur* – as Chapter Five will also highlight – this rise takes place in line with an overall increase in political and international articles.

At the same time, *NLR*'s interest in Europe and in domestic politics diminishes (from 13 to eight percent and from seven to two percent), while its already weighty international politics section increases from 22 to 32 percent. This is consistent with *NLR*'s profile as an ever more international, rather than primarily British publication.

Domestic politics remain important to *Esprit* during 2003-06 (nine percent), and are now roughly on par with *Merkur* on domestic politics (eleven percent). There is a drop in the amount of European Politics articles from 14 to ten percent, but one must point out that *Esprit* publishes more theoretical and philosophical discussions about Europe at this time which is not immediately reflected in these numbers. As will become apparent in Chapter Five, *Esprit*'s engagement with questions of European values and ethics increase in relevance alongside politically informed discussions. Thus, although the political articles related to Europe decrease during this time, the engagement with Europe remains strong in more philosophically accented discussions.

3.2 Sample Articles

In total, 94 articles from the years 1989-92 and 117 articles from 2003-06 were selected as the basis for the qualitative analysis in the following chapters.² The

² This includes some editorial articles from *NLR* and *Esprit*, as well as some shorter *Esprit* articles from the journal's 'Journal' section. See the chronological list of primary sources in the bibliography for the complete list of articles.

sample articles were chosen on the grounds that they must contain some form of *evaluative* or *argumentative* treatment of Europe or the EU; in other words, some framing of Europe in either a geopolitical, political, historical or identitarian context. The sample includes not only articles that deal with Europe directly, since this would result in a very limited account of the discussion, but also included, with the intent to attain a more rounded picture, articles with an initially different frame of reference: for example, a discussion of domestic politics that leads onto a discussion of these concerns in a European context. In order to show, from which initial frame of reference “Europe” was discussed, the articles were categorized according to one of the following three rubrics:

- a) Articles with an outright “European” theme;
- b) Articles discussing primarily national issues but with reference to the European framework;
- c) Articles which discuss issues from a mostly theoretical or international perspective that also make reference to European issues.

The first group includes articles such as ‘Inquiétudes pour l’Europe des Douze’, ‘Überlegungen zur Europäischen Friedensordnung’, or ‘What’s Wrong with Europe?’.³ The second rubric includes articles such as ‘The Ruins of Westminster’ which discusses the crisis of British political life but includes copious references to Britain’s future in the European Union; *Merkur’s* article from 1990, ‘Zwei Staaten oder Einheit? Der dritte Weg als Fortsetzung des deutschen Sonderweges’, which discusses the merits and risks of German reunification, but also sketches out Germany’s future in Europe; and *Esprit’s* article, ‘Sur les craintes françaises d’une Europe espace’, which engages with primarily French attitudes and worries about European enlargement after the 2004 accession.⁴ The third rubric is represented by those articles which approach a discussion about Europe from an initially theoretical perspective – such as ‘Qu’est-ce qu’une identité postnationale?’ – or discuss it from an

³ Élie Cohen, ‘Inquiétudes pour l’Europe des Douze’, *Esprit*, 160 (1990), 57-75; Ernst-Otto Czempiel, ‘Überlegungen zur Europäischen Friedensordnung’, *Merkur*, 505 (1991), 305-318; Andrea Boltho, ‘What’s Wrong with Europe?’, *NLR*, 19 (2003), 5-27.

⁴ Robin Blackburn, ‘The Ruins of Westminster’, *NLR*, 191 (1992), 5-35; Ulrich Oevermann, ‘Zwei Staaten oder Einheit? Der dritte Weg als Fortsetzung des deutschen Sonderweges’, *Merkur*, 492 (1990), 91-107; Christian Lequesne, ‘Sur les craintes françaises d’une Europe espace’, *Esprit*, 322 (2005), 28-35.

international framework, for example ‘Europa gegen Amerika. Entsteht die neue Supermacht in der Alten Welt?’.⁵ The following tables provide a breakdown of the sample articles according to these three rubrics and will establish which ‘entry point’ into Europe is most prevalent.

Table 2. Sample Articles According to Framework

3.1 ESPRIT 1989-92

<i>Esprit</i>	Number of Articles	European Framework	National Framework	International Framework	Journal	Editorial
1989	8	5	1	2	4	2
1990	14	3	6	5	4	2
1991	10	8	1	1	0	0
1992	9	5	2	2	4	0
Total	41	21	10	10	12	4

ESPRIT 2003-06

<i>Esprit</i>	Number of Articles	European Framework	National Framework	International Framework	Journal	Editorial
2003	19	14	0	5	3	3
2004	17	13	1	3	2	1
2005	5	2	2	1	5	3
2006	13	8	3	2	1	2
Total	54	37	6	11	11	9

⁵ Jean Marc Ferry, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’une identité postnationale?’, *Esprit*, 164 (1990), 80-91; Tony Judt, ‘Europa gegen Amerika. Entsteht die neue Supermacht in der Alten Welt?’, *Merkur*, 673 (2005), 375-387.

3.2 NLR 1989-92

<i>NLR</i>	Number of Articles	European Framework	National Framework	International Framework	Editorial
1989	6	2	0	4	4
1990	7	2	0	5	3
1991	5	3	0	2	1
1992	6	2	1	3	1
Total	24	9	1	14	9

NLR 2003-06

<i>NLR</i>	Number of Articles	European Framework	National Framework	International Framework	Editorial
2003	5	2	0	3	0
2004	4	2	0	2	0
2005	7	5	0	2	0
2006	4	3	0	1	0
Total	20	12	0	8	0

3.3 MERKUR 1989-92

<i>Merkur</i>	Number of Articles	European Framework	National Framework	International Framework
1989	3	2	1	0
1990	11	2	6	3
1991	6	5	1	0
1992	9	7	1	1
Total	29	16	9	4

MERKUR 2003-06

<i>Merkur</i>	Number of Articles	European Framework	National Framework	International Framework
2003	11	7	0	4
2004	9	5	0	4
2005	12	8	1	3
2006	11	10	1	0
Total	43	30	2	11

During 1989-92, slightly more than half of the sampled articles in each journal operate within a European framework. However, the number of the articles varies from year to year and does not follow a recognisable upward or downward trend. In *Esprit*, the number of these articles remains relatively constant over the years while *NLR*'s coverage of Europe peaks in 1990, only to decline again in 1991. Only *Merkur* shows a quantitative increase which could be cautiously interpreted as a shift from an indirect towards a more direct engagement with European topics in the journal, yet "national issues" remain a relevant entry point for a discussion of European issues. The reason, one can surmise, is the imminent German reunification, a topic which accounts for numerous articles and explains the predictably more inward-looking perspective than in other journals during 1989-92.⁶ *NLR*, on the other hand, shows only a marginal interest in discussions of Britain and Europe, compared to the much more salient international framework. *Esprit*'s concern with Europe is more even-handed and apparent in all three rubrics, suggesting that the issue is pertinent throughout the period in question.

Significantly, all journals in the period increase their share of articles with a European framework during 2003-06. Most striking is *Merkur*'s dramatic decrease of articles with a national framework in favour of a much more international outlook. In fact, the number rises to roughly 70 percent in *Merkur*

⁶ Discussed in articles such as: Ulrich Oevermann, 'Zwei Staaten oder Einheit? Der dritte Weg als Fortsetzung des deutschen Sonderweges', *Merkur*, 492 (1990), 91-107; Karl Heinz Bohrer, 'Und die Erinnerung der beiden Halbnationen', *Merkur*, 493 (1990), 183-189.

and *Esprit* (68 percent for *Esprit*, 69 percent for *Merkur*) and to almost 60 percent in *NLR*. In contrast, none of the sampled articles from *NLR* during 2003-06 discuss Europe within a national perspective. However, the national prism remains strong in *Esprit* due in parts to heightened introspection after the French No-Vote to the Constitutional Treaty, which account for numerous articles on France's role in the EU.⁷

If Europe is becoming increasingly the primary focus of the articles, one might cautiously suggest that Europe has become more of a discernible and relevant entity in its own right and less dependent on an initially national prism. However, while a European framework is increasingly the primary point of reference, one must also note that the number of relevant sample articles in *NLR* actually decreases from 11.5 percent in 1989-92 to only 6.8 percent in 2003-06. Hence, while one can observe an increase in coverage on European themes in the French and German publications, *NLR*'s overall number of articles on Europe actually declines.

3.3 Authorship

The specific role of the journals in creating a transnational public space through the introduction of foreign texts and authors is directly addressed by the journals to a limited degree, if discussed at all. To *NLR*, the theme is of no relevance and does not feature in any of its articles. For *Merkur*, the notion that textual and intellectual exchange leaves much to be desired is "problematized" just once, in an article from 1991 by *Merkur*'s editor Karl Heinz Bohrer. His piece, aptly entitled "Europrovinzialismus",⁸ explores the lack of exchange, particularly in relation to French-German and German-British intellectual relations, and concludes that a mentality of intellectual provincialism prevails within Europe, which stifles intellectual openness and curiosity. Bohrer notes that the term non-existent -"nichtexistierend" (p. 1046) - would probably correctly describe the

⁷ See the following articles by Marc Olivier Padis: 'Une France sans vision de l'Europe?', *Esprit*, 314 (2005), 6-13; 'La France insulaire', *Esprit*, 316 (2005), 47-53; 'Le traité constitutionnel passe, les questions restent', *Esprit*, 326 (2006), 100-105.

⁸ Karl-Heinz Bohrer, 'Provinzialismus (VI) Europrovinzialismus', *Merkur*, 512 (1991), 1059-1068.

state of German-French relations. These insights notwithstanding, *Merkur* seems hardly compelled to pursue an intensification of intellectual exchange within its own pages, as we will see below.

Esprit, though, does address the issue more forthrightly and pursues a more proactive engagement than the other journals. For example, one of *Esprit's* “dossiers” from the December 1989 issue is the result of a collaboration between *Esprit* and the bimonthly Italian cultural journal *MicroMega*, in which contributors of this journal had produced a dossier about Italy, written by Italians and subsequently translated into French, while *Esprit's* authors had produced a dossier about France that formed part of a *MicroMega* issue.⁹ In *Esprit's* foreword to the dossier, the *European*, rather than the bilateral dimension of this exchange is explicitly foregrounded.

L'Europe culturelle consiste trop souvent à organiser des rencontres et des colloques où l'on parle avec plus ou moins de bonheur de l'Europe culturelle à venir. Conscients du poids de nos habitudes et des traditions nationales, soucieux de ne pas nous précipiter, il est apparu opportun de prendre le temps d'une meilleure connaissance réciproque [...].¹⁰

Clearly, for *Esprit* the collaboration with other journals through texts and translations is one way of giving shape to the desired “meilleure connaissance réciproque”. Yet such a highly planned and organized form of textual exchange in the form of an entire dossier between journals remains the exception; usually, it is limited to individual articles.

As an indication of the level of textual exchange in the journals, the tables below show how many articles are written by foreign authors from other publications. However, one proviso must be made here, since the task of determining who is “foreign” involves assigning a nationality to the authors in these journals, who largely derive from a country's intelligentsia, its literary circles, or academia, and who, in several instances, have cosmopolitan pedigrees and therefore publish, write or teach in more than one language. The example of one regular *Merkur* contributor, Lord Ralph Dahrendorf, serves as an illustration of this point. A German-born and German-educated sociologist

⁹ Dossier, ‘L'Italie derrière ses mythes’, *Esprit*, 157 (1989), 5-63.

¹⁰ ‘Sommaire’, *Esprit*, 157 (1989), 1-4 (p. 1).

and philosopher, once a member of the German parliament and Commissioner in the European Commission in Brussels, he adopted British citizenship, currently sits in the House of Lords and is affiliated with St Antony's College, Oxford, and the LSE. In his function as regular contributor to *Merkur*, he is a frequent commentator on German politics and European issues. This begs the question whether he is actually British, as his adopted citizenship would tell us, or German, since he was born and raised there and maintains ties to *Merkur*. In this context, the authors were categorized according to the cultural and linguistic environment in which they now predominantly write, rather than solely on the basis of their country of origin; however, the distinctions between "national" and "non-national" authors are arguably more complex and subjective than these numbers suggest. With this qualification in mind, some general trends and observations about the journal's exposure to foreign viewpoints might still be discerned.

Table 3. Percentage of Articles by Foreign Authors

4.1 ESPRIT 1989-92

2003-06

<i>Esprit</i>	Total Number of Articles	Articles Written by Foreign Authors	Percentage	<i>Esprit</i>	Total Number of Articles	Articles Written by Foreign Authors	Percentage
1989	133	23	17.2	2003	146	25	17.1
1990	126	16	12.6	2004	137	17	12.4
1991	121	22	18.1	2005	159	16	10.4
1992	108	21	19.4	2006	146	11	7.5
			16.8 Mean				11.8 Mean

4.2 NLR 1989-92

2003-06

<i>NLR</i>	Total Number of Articles	Articles Written by Foreign Authors	Percentage	<i>NLR</i>	Total Number of Articles	Articles Written by Foreign Authors	Percentage
1989	43	14	32.5	2003	57	34	59.6
1990	47	19	40.4	2004	54	35	64.8
1991	48	24	50	2005	52	32	61.3
1992	53	23	43.3	2006	55	26	47.2
			41.5 Mean				58.2 Mean

4.3 MERKUR 1989-92

2003-06

<i>Merkur</i>	Total Number of Articles	Articles Written by Foreign Authors	Percentage	<i>Merkur</i>	Total Number of Articles	Articles Written by Foreign Authors	Percentage
1989	127	8	6.2	2003	156	21	13
1990	143	5	3.4	2004	153	13	8.4
1991	143	6	4.1	2005	152	14	9.2
1992	132	17	5.3	2006	149	9	6.0
			4.7 Mean				9.5 Mean

NLR consistently rates as the most international publication with a mean of 41.5 percent foreign authors during 1989-92, and this number increases to well above half its writers during 2003-06. However, these numbers reflect a trend towards an ever increasing international, but not European profile, since a large share of its foreign writers are Americans. Again, this is concomitant with *NLR*'s avowed "Internationalization", which Perry Anderson spelled out in 'Renewals' from 2000: "for better or worse [...] its [*NLR*'s] writers have continued to come essentially from its homelands. This we would like to change. The time should come when the contributors to *NLR* are as extra-Atlantic as its contents" (p. 24). By 2003-2006, *NLR* has put this into effect; as the table shows, well over half of its contributors are from abroad at this point in time.

Overall, *Merkur* is most closed off to foreign writers, but there is an observable increase from a slim 4.7 percent to 9.5 per cent in 2003-06, which is consistent with its greater share of European and international articles during this time.

By contrast, *Esprit* reverses this trend and shows a decline in the number of foreign contributors, from 16.8 percent to just below 12 percent. One reason for this is that *Esprit* spends more time discussing matters closer to home, chiefly the "French malaise" after the No-Vote in the Constitutional Referendum. Secondly, as mentioned before, *Esprit* - unlike *Merkur* - publishes more articles on philosophical and theoretical matters during 2003-06, in which it relies on primarily French writers and intellectuals. One can infer, therefore, that although the level of European articles increases between 1989 and 2006, this does not translate into an increase in representation of voices from abroad.

3.4 Reprinted and Commissioned Foreign Articles

Following this general overview, I would like to focus more closely on how many of the sample articles are republished and/or translated texts from other publications or originally commissioned texts, as this will provide a more accurate picture of the form of exchange undertaken.

Republished and/or translated texts are defined in this context as reprints from daily newspapers or transcripts from conference speeches which the

journals, especially *NLR*, draw on. This form of exchange is based on contact between the respective editorial staff of the publications (or, in the case of conference papers presumably with the speaker directly), and consists of obtaining copyright and permission to translate and reprint articles. The editorial input required consists then of translating and editing for the in-house style of the journal in question. In a few instances such articles are preceded by a new introduction, but in the vast majority of cases they are simply inserted into the journal and the reference to the original place of publication is given only in a footnote or at the end of the article.

Original contributions by foreign authors, however, depend on an existing network between the journal's editorial staff and an available pool of freelance authors from which these texts are commissioned. What is more important, these texts allow for a different dimension of incorporating foreign viewpoints and perspectives.

Consider for example two texts from two 1989 issues of *Esprit*. One is the article 'L'Ostpolitik Française' by Ingo Kolboom,¹¹ originally published in the German daily newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on 1 March 1989 and reprinted and translated in *Esprit's* June issue of the same year. The article is presented without any introductory reference to the source of the article and only a small reference to the original place of publication of the article given at its end. In the text, Kolboom compares and contrasts German and French policies towards Eastern Europe and concludes with the need to overcome the political division between Eastern and Western Europe, a view in line with *Esprit's* concern at the time.

The other article, also from 1989, is 'Incertitudes Polonaises',¹² and takes the form of an interview between *Esprit's* editors and Polish political scientist Aleksander Smolar. Smolar is working at the CNRS (Centre national de la recherche scientifique) and, during Poland's transition period, acted as advisor to the first post-communist prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Currently he is

¹¹ Ingo Kolboom, 'L'Ostpolitik Française', *Esprit*, 151 (1989), 121-124, translated from 'Vorreiter, Mahner, Bremser – und nun? Französische Ostpolitik von de Gaulle und Adenauer zu Mitterrand und Kohl', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 March 1989.

¹² Aleksander Smolar, 'Incertitudes polonaises: Entretien avec Aleksander Smolar', *Esprit*, 157 (1989), 100-104.

Chairman of the Stefan Batory Foundation, a political forum for Polish Western-orientated intellectuals established in 1988 by the American financier and philanthropist George Soros.¹³ In the interview, Smolar provides an account of Poland's transition towards capitalism from an economic, political and historical perspective and offers a prognosis about the development of democracy in his home country, which he – as a professor of political science in Paris and attuned to French debates and cultural contexts – recounts here for *Esprit's* readership. His account of Polish history and of the current political transition serves to make the case for Poland as an inalienable part of European traditions to which it can now finally return; the deserved “retour à l'Europe” (p. 104). Smolar's desire to overcome divisions between Eastern and Western Europe, and to inscribe Eastern Europe as part of the whole of Europe, is not unlike Kolboom's argument, yet the texts reveal different ways in which these views can be interpolated into the journals.

While the reprinting of an article published elsewhere can expose the readership to potentially unfamiliar viewpoints, and implant “foreign” arguments in national contexts, commissioned articles arguably leave more room for another level of engagement and exchange of views. Contributors such as Smolar can negotiate between French and Polish cultural contexts and frame arguments for the readership in ways that will resonate with their own cultural references and markers. Note that when he outlines the process of the democratisation of Polish society, he refers to the French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville to do so. He explains: “[l]a démocratisation de la société dans un sens tocquevillien, qui s'effectue depuis la guerre, est également un facteur favorable à la démocratie puisque la société est dominée par la culture de la classe moyenne” (p. 104). Similarly, an article by an Austrian political scientist of Polish descent on the democratic movements in Poland and Hungary asserts that the inspiration for all Eastern European reform movements were French, and by extension “European”, ideas: “Les ‘idées européennes’ des droits de l'homme et du citoyen, nées de la Révolution française, sont le facteur commun

¹³Source: Stefan Batory Foundation Homepage
<<http://www.batory.org.pl/english/about/activity.htm>> [accessed 2 March 2007].

à tous ces mouvements de réformes.”¹⁴ In these instances, the reference to Tocqueville and to the French Revolution provide *Esprit*'s readership with an instantly recognisable and meaningful reference for comparison.

Thus, commissioned articles provide an opportunity for the transposition of arguments and ideas into different frameworks by those authors who can navigate between different cultural contexts. Arguably, this rearticulation and rephrasing of arguments enlivens discursive contact and an exchange of viewpoints. Even if commissioned articles are an indicator of a more active involvement, the translation and reprinting of articles from other publications also displays the degree to which the journals are receptive to facilitating textual exchange outside their own realm.

The following tables are based on the sample articles and show how many commissioned or republished articles the journals print within their pages.

¹⁴ Andreas Pribersky, 'L'identité nationale des mouvements démocratiques en Hongrie et en Pologne', *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 97-106 (p. 97).

Table 5. Foreign Authorship in the Sample Articles

5.1 ESPRIT 1989-1992

2003-06

<i>Esprit</i>	Articles	Reprinted/ Translated Articles	Commissioned Articles	<i>Esprit</i>	Articles	Reprinted/ Translated Articles	Commissioned Articles
1989	8	2	2	2003	19	0	3
1990	14	2	5	2004	17	0	2
1991	10	0	1	2005	5	1	0
1992	9	0	2	2006	13	2	1
Total	41	4	10	Total	54	3	6

5.3 NLR 1989-1992

2003-06

<i>NLR</i>	Articles	Reprinted/ Translated Articles	Commissioned Articles	<i>NLR</i>	Articles	Reprinted/ Translated Articles	Commissioned Articles
1989	6	1	1	2003	5	1	3
1990	7	1	1	2004	4	0	2
1991	5	2	0	2005	7	0	3
1992	6	0	2	2006	4	0	1
Total	24	4	4	Total	20	1	9

5.3 MERKUR 1989-1992

2003-06

<i>Merkur</i>	Articles	Reprinted/ Translated Articles	Commissioned Articles	<i>Merkur</i>	Articles	Reprinted/ Translated Articles	Commissioned Articles
1989	3	0	0	2003	11	1	3
1990	11	2	0	2004	9	1	0
1991	6	0	0	2005	12	1	2
1992	9	2	0	2006	11	0	0
Total	29	4	0	Total	43	3	5

During 1989-92, *Esprit* leads the way in originally commissioned articles (23 percent of the sample articles), followed by *NLR* (12.5 percent) while *Merkur* does not feature any such articles but relies instead only on translated articles previously published elsewhere. Once more one can deduce that *Esprit* emerges as most receptive to views from abroad, *NLR* takes the middle ground, while *Merkur* seems least concerned with facilitating this form of textual exchange.

Further, the origin of the source texts, especially during 1989-92, points to sources from outside, rather than from within Europe. *NLR* does not reprint from other publications directly but uses transcripts from conference papers at international conferences in Latin America and the United States and, to a lesser degree, Europe.¹⁵ It is revealing that *Esprit* makes use of only one article from a German publication - a reprint from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* - and one text originally given as a conference paper. The other two translated articles are from arguably the best known intellectual journal, the *New York Review of Books*.¹⁶ Similarly, *Merkur* also only translates one article from the French *Le Monde*, but largely relies on US publications for its reprinted texts.¹⁷

However, the numbers alone say little *on which* topics foreign writers are given a voice. A closer look at the topics on which they write is also revealing, though. For example, *NLR* features most commissions from foreign writers

¹⁵ Slavoj Žižek, 'Eastern Europe's Republics of Gilead', in *NLR*, 183 (1990), 50-62, originally delivered as a paper at the colloquium 'Ideology and Psychoanalysis', University of California (San Diego, 28 April 1990); Étienne Balibar, 'Es gibt keinen Staat in Europa: Racism and Politics in Europe today', *NLR*, 186 (1991), 5-20, originally delivered as a speech at the congress on 'Migration and Racism (Hamburg, 27-30 September 1990); Lucy Magri, 'The European Left between Crisis and Refoundation', *NLR*, 189 (1991), 5-19, originally delivered as a lecture on a seminar convened by the Instituto Cajamar and the Workers Party (São Paulo, 14 September 1991).

¹⁶ See above Ingo Kolboom, 'L'Ostpolitik Française', and János Kis, 'Le défi de la démocratie en Europe de l'Est', *Esprit*, 156 (1989), 44-48, originally delivered as a paper at a conference to the *National Endowment for Democracy* (Washington, May 1989); Fritz Stern, 'L'Europe vue d'outre-Atlantique', *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 82-90, originally published in *New York Review of Books*, 7 December 1989; Timothy Garton Ash, 'Dix considérations sur la nouvelle Europe', *Esprit*, 163 (1990), 113-117; originally published in *New York Review of Books*, 14 June 1990.

¹⁷ Serge-Christophe Kolm, 'Teutomanie und Pascals Wette - Zur deutschen Wiedervereinigung', *Merkur*, 494, (1990), 345-350, originally published in *Le Monde*, 21 February 1991; J.H. Elliott, 'Eine Welt. Verhängnis und Vermächtnis der europäischen Expansion', *Merkur*, 517 (1992), 308-319, originally published in *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration: Catalogue of an Exhibition of the National Gallery of Art*, Washington; Daniel Bell, 'Einige Ausblicke ins 21. Jahrhundert', *Merkur*, 500 (1990), 965-972, originally published in *Dissent*, Spring 1990.

during 1989-92 in relation to the then ongoing Maastricht debate. In the view of the journal, the rejection of Maastricht would herald Europe's move towards a social, worker-friendly Europe, while its approval would bring about a Europe in which selfish, big-business interests determine the agenda. Unsurprisingly, *NLR* relies in this instance not only on British voices but on European authors drawn from locales such as Denmark, Italy and Sweden in order to lend credibility and rally support against its opposition to the treaty.¹⁸

In *Esprit*, the revolutions of 1989 provide the canvas for the making of a truly European event, and, accordingly, the journal attempts to present views from abroad in order to evaluate and provide context. Of the ten articles by foreign contributors, five alone were published in 1990, when the bulk of its articles on 1989 appeared and are written by mostly Eastern Europeans or Germans on the subject of reunification.¹⁹ Further proof of this interest in the topic appears in the form of a dossier entitled "Journal de l'Est",²⁰ in which *Esprit* publishes texts by mainly French journalists, who were sent out as a part of their journalism training to Eastern European cities in order to research and write about the social and economic developments in those countries – about the state of the press in Hungary, say, or the new entrepreneurs in Poland – and to present these to *Esprit's* readership.

However, by 1991-92 the number of foreign or republished articles on Europe declines sharply in *Esprit*. Although its focus does not move away from Europe as a whole, French authors are now producing the main bulk of texts connected to discussions of Eastern Europe, as the initial enthusiasm and celebratory tone is quickly replaced by more fretful and cautious voices from French intellectual circles. The same goes for a discussion of the Maastricht

¹⁸ Expressed in articles such as Lucy Magri, 'The European Left between Crisis and Refoundation', *NLR*, 189 (1991), 5-19; Göran Therborn, 'The Life and Times of Socialism', *NLR*, 194 (1991), 17-33; Niels Finn Christiansen, 'The Danish No to Maastricht', *NLR*, 195 (1992), 97-102.

¹⁹ See the aforementioned article by Andreas Pribersky, 'L'identité nationale des mouvements démocratiques', as well as François Fejtö, 'Itinéraire personnel. De Budapest à Paris et de Paris à Budapest: Entretien avec François Fejtö', *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 51-58; Rudolf von Thadden, 'L'Allemagne malgré elle', *Esprit*, 160 (1990), 47-56; Lothar Baier, 'Contre la réunification', *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 65-68.

²⁰ Dossier, 'Journal de l'Est', *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 107-129.

treaty in a dossier 'Questions d'après Maastricht'.²¹ It includes only one interview with William Pfaff, an American columnist for the *International Herald Tribune*, entitled 'Maastricht/États-unis et retour',²² to provide the outsider's perspective, but it is otherwise entirely written by French authors. So even though *Esprit* leads the way in terms of foreign contributions, it does not systematically include foreign voices in proportional measure on each topic.

During 2003-06, the distribution of foreign writers is again clustered around particular themes. *NLR*'s commissioned texts from this time pertain to exclusively French issues such as the No-Vote, the debate about the headscarf ban in French schools, and the 2005 riots in the *banlieues* of Paris.²³ But while there is a larger than usual interest in France, for reasons which we will discuss in the following chapters, hardly any texts on other European issues or countries are present, with the exception of one text by a Turkish author on the possible accession of Turkey to the EU.²⁴

In *Merkur*, American writers feature prominently because the journal, by contrast to most German and European publications, staunchly supported the US-led invasion in Iraq. Hence, republished texts from American journals such as the *New York Review of Books* or *Dissent* are used in this instance to voice the critique of Europe's indecisiveness in the run-up to the Iraq War.²⁵ However, *Merkur* also includes more commissioned texts from the new European member states. One Polish contributor, for example, frequently publishes texts on the Eastern European perspective towards Europe, indicating that the role and relevance of the former Eastern bloc countries in Europe is more widely

²¹ Dossier, 'Questions d'après Maastricht', *Esprit*, 186 (1992), 5-84.

²² William Pfaff, 'Maastricht/États-unis et retour', *Esprit*, 186 (1992), 5-13.

²³ Jean Baudrillard, 'Holy Europe', *NLR*, 33 (2005), 24-26 and 'Pyres of Autumn', *NLR*, 37 (2006), 5-8; Bernard Cassen, 'ATTAC against the Treaty', *NLR*, 31 (2005), 27-36; Emmanuel Terray, 'Headscarf Hysteria', *NLR*, 25 (2004), 118-28.

²⁴ Çağlar Keyder, 'The Turkish Bell Jar', *NLR*, 28 (2004), 65-84.

²⁵ Russell Berman, 'Demokratischer Krieg, repressiver Frieden. Über den real existierenden Antiamerikanismus', *Merkur*, 651 (2003), 570-583; Walter Laqueur, 'Europa im 21. Jahrhundert', *Merkur*, 676 (2005), 653-666. On the same topic see also Tony Judt, 'Was wir zu verlieren haben: Über das amerikanisch-europäische Zerwürfnis', *Merkur*, 649 (2003), 383-395, originally published in *New York Review of Books*, 27 March 2003; Marc F. Plattner, 'Souveränität und Demokratie', *Merkur*, 660 (2004), 281-294, originally published in *Policy Review*, 122 (2003/04).

acknowledged and seriously considered. This suggests a partial overlap with *Esprit's* thematic concerns.²⁶

In *Esprit*, the origin of foreign writers during 2003-2006 is slightly more varied than in *Merkur* and includes Poles, Turks and Ukrainian writers, as well more familiar and predictable names such as Timothy Garton Ash.²⁷ However, contrary to *Merkur*, and indicative of *Esprit's* attitude towards the United States at the time, American writers are no longer represented in its articles. Where the Iraq invasion and Europe's position in its aftermath are discussed, these articles are written by French contributors, seemingly confirming the idea that the level of foreign authors depends chiefly on the topic under discussion.

3.5 Emerging Trends

Some trends which have become evident from these tables might be summarized as follows. Firstly, *Esprit* consistently features the greatest number of articles on Europe and is most strongly concerned with facilitating exchange and including foreign authors. *Esprit's* position as the most "Europeanized" journal of the three is in line with recent large-scale, longitudinal studies on the level of Europeanization of national newspapers, which find that "French media are among the most Europeanized" when compared to other European newspapers on a consistent level over an assessed period from 1982 until 2003.²⁸ For the other journals the picture is more variegated. While *Merkur* is certainly the most "national" publication of them all, the number of sample articles and foreign authors suggests that quantitatively their interest and reporting on Europe increases most between 1989 and 2003. Yet in *NLR*, the

²⁶ See the articles by Adam Krzeminski, 'Hauptsache nach Europa. Polnische Modernisierungsschübe', *Merkur*, 645 (2003), 36-47; 'Was macht der trojanische Esel Amerikas im Irak?', *Merkur*, 655 (2003), 1067-1072; 'Die europäische Außenpolitik entsteht im Osten', *Merkur*, 671 (2005), 256-262.

²⁷ Bronislaw Geremek, 'Penser l'Europe comme communauté', *Esprit Supplement*, 298, (2003), 5-12; Kemal Dervis, 'L'Europe et la Turquie: la frontière, le projet politique et l'histoire', *Esprit Supplement*, 309 (2004), 3-9; Grygoriy Nemyria, 'L'Ukraine et l'Europe: l'histoire reprend', *Esprit*, 312 (2005), 52-64; Timothy Garton Ash, 'Y a-t-il des fondations morales de l'Europe', *Esprit*, 326 (2005), 106-120.

²⁸ Stefanie Siffert, et al, 'Segmented Europeanization: Exploring the Legitimacy of the European Union from a Public Discourse Perspective', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 45 (1) (2007), 127-155 (p. 140).

reverse holds true: while the journal becomes more “international” in outlook, European articles have in general decreased in number. Hence, while there are signs of a stronger involvement and increased interest in *Merkur*, *Esprit*'s engagement remains roughly consistent over time, while *NLR* is moving in another direction.

However, one trend common to all the journals relates to the increase in articles with an outright European framework. As the sample articles indicate, the topic of Europe is addressed more frequently as the main framework of discussion, rather than as a secondary or additional framework. This may be interpreted as a sign that Europe has become a more discernable, manifest entity in its own right.

Finally, it was established that this does not automatically translate into a stronger convergence and exchange between the journals or into a higher level of participation of foreign authors. Foreign writers, it was suggested, feature especially in order to support or to enhance credibility for certain topics. Yet on other topics the interpretative dominance is reassigned to the journal's own writers. Therefore, we cannot discern a systematic concern with facilitating more European viewpoints or with including more foreign voices during the period examined here.²⁹ While we can point to some evidence of increase, and partial overlaps between *Merkur* and *Esprit*, this does not extend to *NLR*. Similarly, even though the European framework becomes more prevalent, one can not conclude that the journals as a whole have become more systematically interlinked during the time period considered.

²⁹ This is supported by studies, the results of which are summarized by Hans Jörg Trenz in 'Measuring Europeanisation of Public Communication: The Question of Standards', *RECON Online Working Paper*, 2007/12
<<http://reconproject.eu/projectweb/portalproject/RECONWorkingPapers.html>>
[accessed 14 December 2007].

Chapter 4

A Common Public Sphere or the Bonding Effects of a Common Threat?

Discussion in the Journals, 1989-1992

From the general overview of the composition of the journals, this chapter will turn its attention towards the analysis of selected articles. The ramifications of 1989 for the changing European landscape and, to a lesser extent, the discussion about Maastricht will provide the thematic focus of this analysis of *Esprit*, *NLR* and *Merkur*. The aim is to establish how the sense of a European identity, as defined and outlined in Chapter Two, is expressed, shaped and re-shaped in these journals. Which discursive strategies of identity formation can we observe? What forms of “self-ascription” are taking place and which historical or cultural values are identified as a common and defining legacy? What political vision for contemporary Europe is espoused - and to what purpose? Finally, which forms of exclusion of the Other are evident? In conjunction with the subsequent chapter, the overall aim is to evaluate to what extent the framework of the EPS is relevant and necessary to potentially common, shared articulations of a European identity. It was established earlier that, within a public sphere, participants would not necessarily have to *agree* on all events and issues, but rather share an understanding, about the same “criteria of relevance” as proposed by Risse. The question to what extent these common criteria are apparent in the journal discussions about Europe will provide the guiding focus of this analysis.

4.1 *Esprit*

4.1.1 *Esprit's* European Agenda

Esprit's interpretations of the events of 1989 have to be understood in the context of its broader agenda for Europe. A text by Paul Thibaud, one of *Esprit's* Europe editors, entitled “L'Europe et la crise des valeurs politiques”,¹ touches upon many topics that will become leitmotifs and issues of contention in *Esprit's*

¹ Paul Thibaud, ‘L'Europe et la crise des valeurs politiques’, *Esprit*, 146 (1989), 34-44.

articles throughout the four-year period. In the following, I would like to briefly introduce the argumentative framework for much of *Esprit's* Europe analysis about "rehistoricizing" and "repoliticizing" Europe. These positions, the following analysis will also show, are derived in parts from a specifically French cultural identity background.

Thibaud's article maintains that the Europe of today was forged out and is still determined by the traumas of the Second World War. These experiences constitute the *ultima ratio* for the existence of European cooperation today and explain why Europe has a moral obligation to harness the "mauvais instincts collectifs" (p. 35), such as nationalism and racism, that exist everywhere in the world. In other words, Europe's catastrophic history provides it with a compelling moral imperative to uphold democratic and pacifist ideals everywhere and to act as a force for good. In order to fulfil this role, the article maintains that Europe must first come to terms with its past and effectively "s'émanciper du passé" (p. 35). Only then can Europe's role, which as yet is regrettably slippery and uncertain, be defined more clearly. As Thibaud sees it: "l'Europe est aujourd'hui un impératif mais elle continue d'échapper à notre prise" (p. 34). This deficit can be remedied, he explains, only by a shift in attitudes from the current fixation on economic cooperation, to a fuller understanding of Europe's historical dimension.

Thibaud foresees also that in the new, "postnational" order, the primacy of the nation state will be challenged, and that therefore "[I] Europe est la dernière chance des nations."² Consequently, it will become necessary to inscribe Europe rather than the nation state as the centre of political legitimacy and as the rightful expression of a democratic political order within an international, institutional framework. According to Thibaud it is necessary that Europe "s'inscrit dans ce processus d'institutionnalisation de l'international" (p. 35).

Thibaud's article leaves no doubt about the fact that these developments will bring about a qualitative change in the sense of European identities and belongings. "D'une certaine manière, en mettant les nations au défi de s'adapter

² Ibid, quoted here from Jacques Moreau, *L'Europe quand même* (Paris: Syros, 1984), p. 44.

à un monde qu'aucun empire ne peut plus prétendre dominer, le niveau mondial et le niveau européen suscitent un renouvellement de leur identités" (p. 44), he notes. Yet this renewal of European identities will always have to be informed by a sense of historical awareness and underlined by a commitment to a democratic political order.

A similar view is adopted in a text from 1990 by Olivier Mongin, *Esprit's* editor-in-chief, who speaks similarly about the need to reconnect the current understanding of Europe to a sense of "destin historique en un projet politique, et de ne pas confondre l'Europe avec une simple *intifada* économique."³ An awareness of its "historical destiny" and a sense of Europe as a political project – this sums up in brief the argumentative thrust that is apparent throughout the *Esprit* articles, upon which rests much of the following discussion for interpreting such events as the 1989 revolutions.

In *Esprit*, the question of European identity is without a doubt perceived as something that needs to be emphasized, and valorized, a "project" in the making, much like Girault's understanding of identity (discussed in Chapter Two). The following analysis will reveal the attempt to understand the new circumstances in which Europe found itself, and to contextualize these in a distinctly historical and political context. Over the four year period, the articles reveal changing and sometimes conflicting ideas about the role that Eastern Europe should play in the new European framework, and about the identity that the new Europe could project.

Specifically, three phases in the discussion of 1989 and its aftermath can be pinpointed. Initially the discussion focuses on articulating historically-grounded, inclusive notions of European commonalities and values shared by both Eastern and Western Europe. This gives way in the second phase to a discussion about the political future of Europe, in which the newly democratized Eastern European countries serve as a positive mirror image for the jaded Western European democracies. In the third phase, towards 1991 and 1992, the question of European identity is formulated more and more in terms of a

³ Olivier Mongin, 'L'Europe et la question nationale', *Esprit*, 163 (1990), 129-131 (p. 129).

clear “us” and “them”, in which a Western progressive part of Europe is opposed to a nationalistic regressive Eastern European part.

4.1.2 The 1989 Revolutions: Historical Europe Reunited and Reborn

The previous chapter had established that *Esprit* runs quantitatively far more articles than *Merkur* and *NLR* on Eastern Europe. Although frequency should not be automatically equated with greater significance,⁴ in this case it is safe to say that *Esprit* attaches far more weight than other journals to the events in Eastern Europe as a European event. *Esprit's* reception is far more positive and welcoming than the other journals. It systematically aims to embed the events in the context of historical, political and identitarian changes for Europe - contexts, which are developed to a much lesser extent in *Merkur* and *NLR*. For these reasons, the treatment of *Esprit* will be slightly more extensive than for *NLR* and *Merkur*.

As the revolutions unfold at a fast pace throughout Europe - from the first free elections in Poland in June 1989, to Hungary's opening of its border with Austria as the first step towards the fall of the Berlin Wall in November; the resignation of the Czech and Slovak Communist party leadership and the rise of Václav Havel as the country's president in November/December, right to Ceaușescu's execution by the Romanian military on Christmas Day 1989⁵ - *Esprit* continuously comments on their significance for the entirety of Europe. In the view of the journal, Europe is finally developing from an artificial political structure into an organic and cohesive entity because the “right” side of history has obtained the upper hand. This view is based on contextualizing the events of 1989 in a European historical narrative of freedom and liberty overcoming the odds against repression. Two historical reference points are being evoked specifically. The first is a comparison of 1989 to the French Revolution in 1789. The second – and more immediately relevant – refers to the Yalta conference of

⁴ As pointed out by David Deacon, ‘Analysing Texts’, in *Researching Communication: A Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis*, ed. by David Deacon, et al (London: Arnold 1998), pp. 132-159 (p. 132).

⁵ See Tony Judt, *Postwar*, pp. 585-636.

1945. “Yalta” becomes a byword for the tragic division into an Eastern and a Western Europe.

The comparison with the French Revolution is first made in an *Esprit* editorial which uses a very fierce and impassioned rhetoric to describe the events in Eastern Europe:

la force révolutionnaire de 1789, la ‘raison dans l’histoire’ comme dirait Hegel, s’est réalisée en 1989 à l’Est. Au nom de la liberté – et de l’égalité! – les peuples opprimés depuis des décennies ont renversé l’édifice vermoulu et corrompu des sociétés communistes baptisées ‘démocraties populaires’.⁶

The text suggests that both revolutions were motivated by the same noble quest for liberty and equality. The suffering of the people of Eastern Europe dignifies their deeds, which will pave the way for a new future: “l’avenir de nouveau ouvert pour des peuples entiers, qui ont payé plus que de raison, souvent au prix du sang, au nom de la plus grande imposture politique, économique et morale de l’histoire” (p. 4). And the text concludes that bearing in mind the great historical injustices that Eastern Europe has experienced, the West must look favourably, not condescendingly, upon the re-entry of the East into Europe. “Il importe désormais de favoriser leur rentrée dans l’histoire européenne et mondiale, sans condescendance” (p. 4).

The invocation of the French Revolution here provides the historical justification for the subsequent declarations of solidarity towards Eastern Europe and its re-entry into Europe. It also serves to emphasise the specifically European dimension of the revolutions. 1989 is presented as a true historical watershed, comparable in importance and relevance to 1789, pursuing the same lofty goals that motivated the French in their quest for “liberté”, “égalité” and “fraternité”. Hence, 1989 is understood in *Esprit* in some ways as a replay of the liberal-democratic, radical promise of the French Revolution.

In the article from *Esprit*’s 1990 February issue, already mentioned in the previous chapter, Andreas Pribersky proclaims:

⁶ Éditorial, ‘1989 à l’Est’, *Esprit*, 155 (1989), 3-4 (p. 4).

[I]es ‘idées européennes’ des droits de l’homme et du citoyen, nées de la Révolution française, sont le facteur commun à tous ces mouvements de réformes. En effet, cette revendication des Droits de l’homme et du citoyen, [...] correspond dans les pays d’Europe centrale à une tradition qui remonte à la propagation des idées de la Révolution française au sein de l’Europe depuis la fin du XVIIIe siècle.⁷

The driving forces behind the events are the ideals of the French Revolution – ideals which have supposedly been part of the European tradition since the eighteenth century. The references to the French Revolution and the connotations attached present an historical anchoring point and provide the justification for Eastern Europe’s rightful and jubilant “return” to the European pantheon; in marked distinction to the discussion of *Merkur* and *NLR*, as we will see later on.

The second reference point is the more recent history from 1945 onwards. The events of 1989 are put into the context of postwar events: that of the tragic division of Europe into two different political blocs in the wake of the Yalta accords, to which the revolutions provide the redeeming counterforce. They embody the triumph of democratic, pan-European ideals over communism. After all, Aleksander Smolar reminds us in his article ‘Incertitudes polonaises’, “l’identification avec l’Europe a toujours été omniprésente”.⁸ On balance, the events of Eastern Europe entail an act designed to “surmonter Yalta”,⁹ according to an article by Pierre Hassner, which must be seen as the “grande affaire de cette fin du siècle” (p. 116).

The narrative of overcoming Cold War divisions and the rightful return to Europe is established from the outset of the revolutions in 1989 and serves to emphasise the moral case of Eastern Europe’s return to Europe. Consider, for instance, Fritz Stern’s analysis in an article from February 1990, ‘L’Europe vue d’outre Atlantique’.¹⁰ Here he points to Poland as an example of a country that has reclaimed its “true” European heritage after 40 years of communism.

⁷ Andreas Pribersky, ‘L’identité nationale des mouvements démocratiques en Hongrie et en Pologne’, *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 97-106 (p. 97).

⁸ Aleksander Smolar, ‘Incertitudes polonaises: Entretien avec Aleksander Smolar’, *Esprit*, 157 (1989), 100-104 (p.103).

⁹ Pierre Hassner, ‘Vers l’Est du nouveau?’, *Esprit*, 148-149 (1989), 108-117 (p. 111).

¹⁰ Fritz Stern, ‘L’Europe vue d’outre-Atlantique’, *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 82-90.

La Pologne, dans un grand élan national, a réclamé la liberté; les Polonais ont revendiqué leur héritage historique comme faisant partie intégrante de l'Europe. Ils ont réussi –jusqu'à présent – à renverser pacifiquement quarante ans de domination communiste [...] (p. 83).

The analysis is built on the conviction that there exists a definable source of European cultural traditions and commonalities which have persisted over many hundreds of years. The fifty-year division of the Cold War is a mere aberration that was imposed upon people of Eastern Europe, set in motion through the Yalta Conference that had no bearing on their true belonging and allegiance as Europeans.

The French interest in Eastern Europe, of course, also has a long historical pedigree and is perhaps most developed in regard to Poland, with which France shares close cultural, political and religious ties dating back to the eighteenth and nineteenth century. For these reasons, the interest in (Catholic) Poland is more pronounced in *Esprit*, than in say the Czech Republic or Hungary. *Esprit's* particular interest in the Catholic French-Polish connection is also evident in an article entitled 'Quelle Europe?' from 1990.¹¹ The author is the late Jean Marie Lustiger, who was born to Polish Jews in France and who converted to Catholicism in 1940 at the age of 13. He later became Archbishop and Cardinal of France, and throughout his career advocated interfaith dialogue. Lustiger invokes in a fervent tone the indivisible historical unity of Eastern and Western Europe.

L'Europe n'a jamais été brisée ni démembrée. Elle n'a jamais cessé d'exister comme une unité culturelle et spirituelle, solidaire dans son histoire passée, solidaire dans son présent, solidaire dans son destin et sa vocation à l'égard des autres civilisations et des autres continents (p.119).

Grand rhetoric is used to sketch out a picture of European unity that had to be suppressed by Eastern Europeans under the yoke of communist regimes: "pendant cette longue période, l'intelligentsia officielle, les dirigeants politiques de l'Europe de l'Est ont rêvé l'Europe occidentale comme la part désirable, enviée et censurée de leur propre identité, prisonnière du carcan de l'idéologie marxiste" (p. 120).

¹¹ Jean Marie Lustiger, 'Quelle Europe?', *Esprit*, 163 (1990), 117-126.

The “propre identité” is of course the pan-European identity of Eastern Europeans, which after having been suppressed is now allowed to re-emerge, for “[l]e communisme est rejeté comme un corps étranger”.¹² The view that Europe is brought together by a common history and identity which have been only temporarily disrupted by the imposition of an alien political system is also evident in Pierre Hassner’s aforementioned article ‘Vers l’Est du nouveau’. In it, he refers to a unspecified speech by François Mitterand, then French president, in which Mitterand expressed a plea to “considérer la division actuelle entre les deux parties de l’Europe comme une affaire de circonstance” (p. 110). Hassner argues that while the division of Europe was a matter of circumstance, in other words, a factor beyond one’s deliberate control, the reunification of Europe presents the logical consequence of history unfolding: “l’évolution de la réalité historique” (p. 110).

The fact that *Esprit* sets the events of 1989 into the framework of the last fifty years and the overcoming of Cold War divisions is in itself neither unusual nor special. Other journals discuss this aspect as a matter of primary significance. What is remarkable in *Esprit* is the extent to which the events are so exclusively and immediately claimed as “European” events. *Esprit* dedicates much less attention to discussing the events of 1989 in the context of the changes to the Soviet Union, but concentrates right from the beginning on them heralding the beginning of a reunited Europe. Its articles about Eastern Europe, we have seen above, are tinged with an infallible moral certainty about where Eastern Europe truly belongs.

This is further reinforced by *Esprit*’s repeated expressions of solidarity with Eastern Europe. While future difficulties are envisaged and the need for patience acknowledged, there seems to be no doubt in the minds of most authors that Eastern Europe will take its seat in the newly reformed Europe - with a helping hand from the West. Consider, for example, this statement from one of *Esprit*’s editorials: “Accroître l’interdépendance économique, culturelle de

¹² Éditorial, ‘Démocratie et nationalisme’, *Esprit*, 154 (1989), 3-5 (p. 3).

l'Est et de l'Ouest européens est une tâche à notre portée.”¹³ Note also Hassner's voice who acknowledges that the “route de la réconciliation paneuropéenne comme celle de l'unité ouest-européenne est nécessairement faite de patience et de compromis” (‘Vers l'Est du nouveau?’, p. 115). He calls upon the readers “à développer cette nécessaire confiance qui permettra de nouveaux développements de notre coopération et un avenir que nous ne pouvons pas encore imaginer” (p. 115).

To sum up, *Esprit* relates here a compelling historical narrative that sets Eastern Europe firmly in the tradition of “European” values and cultural affinities, in which the last fifty years are presented as a tragic interruption of the common historical legacy of Europe. This reunification project is seen not in terms of political expediency, but grounded in the historical commonalities and a sense of what Thibaud calls “fidélité européenne” (‘L'Europe et la crise’, p. 40). This Europe, *Esprit* proclaims, is aware of its shared values and can point to a common and long-standing European identity. This view is certainly an exception, rather than the rule in the journals. In fact, *Esprit* is the only of the three journals discussed here that deviates from what Norman Davies has called an “unspoken acceptance of the division of Europe into Eastern and Western spheres.”¹⁴ For as we shall see, this unspoken acceptance informs much of *NLR*'s and *Merkur*'s views at the time.

4.1.3 Relaunching Europe's *Raison d'Être* as a Democratic Project

Leaving the immediate aftermath of 1989 behind, *Esprit* shifts the focus of the articles increasingly to the long-term political prospects of the Eastern European countries, which inevitably means onto the prospects for democratization. In this second phase *Esprit* seeks to analyse Eastern Europe as a model for a renewed “repoliticization” or “redemocratization” of the Europe. Here, I will consider how democracy is posited as the *raison d'être* for the newly reunited Europe. Secondly, I will discuss how *Esprit* constructs the Eastern European countries as a positive “mirror image” through which the jaded, over-

¹³ Éditorial, ‘Faut-il aider Gorbatchev?’, *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 3-4 (p. 4).

¹⁴ Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (New York: Pimlico, 1997), p. 40.

institutionalized Western European democracies can return to their democratic roots. Especially in 1990-91, this sense of hope and optimism for European political renewal prevails in the majority of *Esprit's* articles. Only towards the last phase, as we will see in the final section, is this argument being turned on its head.

Two points are relevant in placing Eastern Europe as the beacon of democratic renewal for the rest of Europe. The first point builds on the idea that democracy has proved victorious over communism as a form of governance. Democracy, moreover, is also taken as a specific European ideal and aspiration that represents the pinnacle of enlightened, progressive European values. The second claim relates to the procedural aspect of democracy and the role that civil society movements and NGOs play in establishing a new democratic order. According to *Esprit*, this form of civil society could become a new model for the fatigued and overly institutionalized democracies of the West.

To begin with, the majority of articles stress how 1989 will catapult Europe into a future rich in possibilities. Fritz Stern, for example, notes that Europe is “à mi-chemin d'une transformation totale” (‘L'Europe vue d'outre-Atlantique’, p. 82) which entails the destruction of old orthodoxies and certainties in Europe at a time of “nouveaux espoirs, [...] des nouvelles visions, avec la sentiment d'un avenir divinement et dangereusement ouvert” (p. 82).

Inevitably, the end of old certainties will induce nervousness in the Western parts of Europe, which have to awaken from their comfortable status quo and take it upon themselves to reintegrate the Eastern European states and in turn redefine their self-understanding. “Il y a l'inquiétude légitime à l'Ouest sur l'accueil de cette part de l'Europe à réintégrer dans une Europe occidentale qui se serait bien satisfaite de son douillet statu quo et qui doit encore une fois se redéfinir [...] (Éditorial, ‘1989 à l'Est’, p. 4). Europe's need to redefine itself and to venture into this new and open future is precipitated by the 1989 events, but is being met largely with trepidation. Yet, in *Esprit's* view, these changes should be welcomed with open arms because they represent not only uncertainty but the chance for a democratic renewal for Europe. Moreover, these changes will represent the victory of European democratic ideals over

communism for which the Central/Eastern European states have purportedly always stood. Consider again the aforementioned interview with Aleksander Smolar and his analysis of the Polish example, a country, which, as he explains, always had impeccable democratic credentials.

Il existe un capital politique non négligeable: cinquante ans de refus du totalitarisme brun et rouge. Depuis le partage de la Pologne en 1939, les Polonais rêvent de 'normalité', c'est-à-dire de démocratie, de l'État de droit et enfin du retour à l'Europe ('Incertitudes polonaises', p. 104).

Democracy and the rule of law are equated here with the "return to Europe", which Poland has earned through its democratic ideals and principled stand against totalitarianism in all shapes and forms. The question of democracy as an ideal and as a form of governance therefore becomes one of the main discussion points for *Esprit*. It becomes central not only in relation to Eastern Europe but for the future of Europe as a whole, since: "le débat sur la nation européenne n'est pas séparable de celui qui porte sur l'avenir de la démocratie".¹⁵ With the onset of new and unprecedented political realities, Europe as a whole will have to find and assume a new role.

In this new political entity, the practice of democracy and democratic ideals which the Eastern European countries have strengthened and revived through their revolutions will give new impetus to a Europe which has been held together so far mainly by economic expediency and necessity. Élie Cohen expresses this view as follows: "l'Europe de l'Est abolir en une nuit un système qu'on disait bâti pour l'éternité et l'Europe des Douze cesser d'être une affaire de technocrates et marchands".¹⁶ This is also the tenor of the early *Esprit* editorials, which proclaim that "l'Europe qui devra voir le jour sera avant tout une entité politique" ('Démocratie et nationalisme', p. 4). Note also how Pierre Hassner sums up what is at stake in the Europe of the future. In his view, it is Europe's challenge to turn the events of 1989 into a lasting and convincing victory for democracy in Europe: "transformer la défaite du communisme en victoire de la démocratie."¹⁷ Western Europe must abandon its status quo and

¹⁵ Olivier Mongin, 'Poujadisme intellectuel?', *Esprit*, 164 (1990), 91-100 (p. 96).

¹⁶ Élie Cohen, 'Inquiétudes pour l'Europe des Douze', *Esprit*, 160 (1990), 57-75 (p. 57).

¹⁷ Pierre Hassner, 'Communisme impossible, démocratie improbable!', *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 78-81 (p. 81).

Eastern Europe is to become the catalyst for renewing Europe's *raison d'être*. In these instances, the events of 1989 are linked directly to the possibility of redemocratizing Europe as a whole. Effectively, *Esprit* appropriates the events in Eastern Europe in order to posit "democracy" as a unifying and lasting value of the historically reunited Europe.

Yet what exactly should this newly politicized Europe look like? What is distinct or different from the current democratic procedures that are already in place in Europe? In order to answer this, we must look more closely at the discussion about civil society as a model for new forms of democratic legitimacy.

4.1.4 The Eastern European Mirror Image: Civil Society and Maastricht

The role and relevance of civil society groups for the 1989 revolutions was widely discussed in the wake of the events of that year. According to the Centre for Civil Society at the London School of Economics, "the events in central and eastern Europe were indeed instrumental in bringing the topic of civil society to the attention of social scientists in the West"¹⁸ for the first time. In fact, their neglect of these developments is seen to be the reason behind the glaring failure of the social sciences to predict the fall of communism before it occurred. Only in the aftermath was the relevance of a civil society - in the form of functioning NGOs, civic initiatives, and action groups for democratic societies - emphasized and repeatedly discussed. In *Esprit*, however, the concern with civil

¹⁸ London School of Economics, Centre for Civil Society, 'What is Civil Society?' <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm> [accessed 9 May 2007].

Some voices did of course highlight the relevance of civil society groups in Eastern Europe before the collapse of the Eastern bloc in 1989. For example, Tony Judt in 'The Dilemmas of Dissidence: The Politics of Opposition in East-Central Europe', *Eastern European Politics and Societies*, 2 (2) (1988) 185-241, critically considers the role of dissidents, intellectuals and writers, but also the formation of single-issue civic action groups and their impact on the unfolding political developments. Another important historian who has always stressed the importance of these underground developments is Timothy Garton Ash in the collection of essays, *The Uses of Adversity. Essays on the Fate of Central Europe* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990). These essays were originally commissioned pieces for the *New York Review of Books* and parts of it were also translated and republished in many cultural journals and newspapers - amongst them *Esprit*. His analysis of the 1989 events has become hugely influential and he has been often hailed as one of the few truly "European voices". *Esprit's* editor Olivier Mongin for example considers Timothy Garton Ash "le meilleur journaliste européen". See the article 'Le plan de Stanley Hoffmann pour la nouvelle Europe', *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 91-96 (p. 91).

society did not only begin at this stage, but was apparent throughout the 1980s. The notion of a functioning civil society corresponds with *Esprit's* aim of redemocratizing and rejuvenating Europe because it presents an opportunity for an overhaul of an overly technocratic style of governance that is inhibiting the articulation of the "people's will". In other words, the nature of the revolutions with their emphasis on a peaceful, sovereign citizen's movement provides an appealing positive model for the established democracies of the West.

Esprit frequently refers to the 1989 revolutions as the revolution of "les peuples" ('Démocratie et nationalisme', p. 3) or alternatively "les citoyens", who have been motivated by "l'autodétermination des peuples et pour les droits du citoyen" (Pribersky, 'L'identité nationale', p. 98) This quest for self-determination and citizens' rights is central to *Esprit's* call for a new Europe. Consider, for example, this section headline in one of *Esprit's* articles, "Le printemps des citoyens, la nouvelle Europe et le retour à l'Europe".¹⁹ Beyond this somewhat romanticized language of the "peuples" and the "printemps des citoyens", there exists, however, a more detailed account of how this popular revolution occurred and its political implications for the rest of Europe.

This concern with the role of civil society is manifested by printing texts of figures who were directly involved in the events of 1989, activists or dissident intellectuals. One such example is an article by Janos Kis, 'Le défi de la démocratie en Europe de l'Est',²⁰ that presents what could be regarded a policy outline of how the Eastern European states could guarantee a peaceful transition to democratic states with the help of civil rights groups. The emphasis on the role of civil society groups is also evident in other texts by Eastern European intellectuals, such as the aforementioned Alexander Smolar, who explains the role of the Polish *Solidarity* movement, and Andreas Pribersky, who also lays out in detail the role, ideology and relevance of the Hungarian *Democratic Forum*. As is to be expected, all these accounts are highly sympathetic to the democratic opposition movements and can be seen as a somewhat belated attempt on the part of *Esprit* to acknowledge the role of civil

¹⁹ Jean-Louis Morisot, 'Le Printemps des peuples vu par Timothy Garton Ash', *Esprit*, 161 (1990), 139-142 (p. 141).

²⁰ János Kis, 'Le défi de la démocratie en Europe de l'Est', *Esprit*, 154 (1989), 44-48.

society and civic initiatives in bringing about political self-determination through peaceful, democratic means.

The quest for political sovereignty and democracy by the “people” in civil society groups coincides with ideals which *Esprit* holds in high regard. After all, if the events of 1989 represent a return to a historically united Europe that is marked by a commitment to democratic values and ideals, then the rise of civil society groups in the East indicate the possibility of steering towards a more democratically organized European Union – or so the argument goes. Their role becomes especially pertinent in relation to the perceived democratic deficit, widely discussed in connection with the debates about Maastricht.

Esprit makes it plain that Western and Eastern Europe are undergoing two contrary developments. In the article, ‘Inquiétudes pour l’Europe des Douze’, the author Elie Cohen juxtaposes these developments as follows. While one part of Europe is engaged in rewriting politics and asserting its democratic rights, the other, wealthier part of Europe is engaged in the increasingly inscrutable process of drawing up European directives. Cohen criticizes the increasingly opaque power and decision-making structures within the European Union and contrasts them to the momentous developments in Eastern Europe: “peut-on durablement fermer la porte à l’Est pendant que l’Europe des nantis se livrerait à des négociations Byzantines sur la 2e directive ‘Banque’?” (‘Inquiétudes pour l’Europe des Douze’, p. 58).

This form of critique of the EU’s internal workings became a recurring complaint in the other journals and also in mainstream media publications at the time. In *Esprit*, the criticism of the lack of democratic participation is evident in several texts during these years, as in the 1989 article ‘Europe: La Panne’. In this article, the author, Louis Bouret writes in connection with the decision-making processes of the European Union: “il est permis de se demander si la politique du fait accompli technocratique [...] n’a pas atteint ses limites.”²¹ The politics of “fait accompli” entails investing new and unprecedented levels of power and sovereignty away from the nation state and in restricting the possibility of democratic participation. Cohen similarly interprets the treaty as a

²¹ Louis Bouret, ‘Europe: La Panne’, *Esprit*, 151 (1989), 124-125 (p. 124).

case in which “mesures apparemment techniques supposent des abandons de souveraineté et portent en eux une nouvelle hiérarchie des pouvoirs” (‘Inquiétudes pour l’Europe des Douze’, p. 60).

Still, the persistent criticism of the lack of national sovereignty does not lead to an outright renunciation of the European project. Doubts are raised and criticism is levelled, but the faith in Europe is apparent throughout. For example, Olivier Mongin, *Esprit’s* editor-in-chief, postulates in a text from 1991 that a debate for or against Europe is outdated, since Europe is here to stay. To take delight in its failure would be highly irresponsible. “Troublée par l’histoire, elle [Europe] doit reconnaître ses limites, mais il est ridicule, indigne et irresponsable de se réjouir par avance de son échec. Pour ou contre l’Europe? Cette polémique est sournoise et régressive.”²² If Europe itself is not negotiable - this much *Esprit* admits - it is, however, necessary to debate and discuss European shortcomings and limitations, most pressingly the lack of democratic participation and increasingly limited possibilities to exercise national sovereignty.

It is here that the much vaunted civil society concept is introduced, as a remedy to reinstall popular sovereignty in lieu of inscrutable directives and remote decision-making processes. Inspired by the example of the events of 1989, *Esprit’s* articles and editorial pieces throughout the four-year period dwell on the chances and possibilities of reconfiguring a democratic participation on a Europe-wide basis. Olivier Mongin writes with certainty that: “le respect de la souveraineté populaire invite à imaginer que l’avenir de la démocratie passé par l’émergence d’une culture démocratique dont les vecteurs ne seront plus seulement ceux de la nation” (‘Poujadisme intellectuel?’, p. 97). This new democratic culture, he asserts, will have to entail a “nouvelle action civique” (p. 97), long lost in the Western democracies. Eastern Europe, in its dignified show of reclaiming popular sovereignty on a national basis, becomes the inspiration for reinvigorating Europe as a democratic project at a time when the West feels an acute sense of loss of popular sovereignty and democratic participation.

²² Olivier Mongin, ‘Une Europe sans fantasmes?’, *Esprit*, 176 (1991), 5-10 (p. 9).

As before, *Esprit* embeds the discussion of civil society into a distinct, namely exclusively European framework. The previous section was concerned with explaining how Eastern Europe provides a new political *raison d'être* for Europe with “democracy” becoming a unifying factor. In this section, civil society symbolises the possibility of democratic renewal on a procedural level. In both instances, Eastern Europe serves to fulfil a “mirror” function in which Western Europe can return to its own democratic roots, which have been lost in the focus on economic cooperation and institutionalism.

4.1.5 The Inversion of Roles: Eastern Europe and the Threat of Nationalism

Thus far, this analysis has concentrated on the purported positive aspects of a European democratic renewal based on a sense of historic unity. *Esprit's* optimism and jubilation is not maintained throughout, but in a third stage shifts towards a distinct sense of concern regarding the lack of progress Eastern European countries are making towards European integration. Again, this shift in argument coincides with a general sense of disillusionment at the time concerning the difficult transition process of the Eastern European countries. Of concern for the present discussion is to demonstrate how an inversion of roles between Eastern and Western Europe is taking place: rather than an inspiration for the jaded Europe, Eastern Europe becomes a burden for the West. Now, Western Europe emerges again as a stabilizing democratic influence at a time when Eastern Europe's civil society is waning and gives way to the emergence of dangerous nationalist tendencies, rather than following the path of virtuous, progressive democracies that *Esprit* has so ardently sketched out for them - as the myth of a French “civilizing mission”²³ requires.

Specifically, I would like to focus on the aspect of nationalism in order to show how the coverage of Eastern European themes assumes a distinctly worried and pessimistic tone. No longer is the question of European identity

²³ Robert Gildea, ‘Myth, memory and policy in France since 1945’, in *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe: Studies in the Presence of the Past*, ed. by Jan-Werner Müller (Cambridge: CUP, 2002) pp. 59-75 (p. 72).

formulated as an inclusive construction or by positing Eastern Europe as a mirror held up to the West, but rather moves towards a Self/Other construction in which Western Europe represents true European values while Eastern Europe displays more regressive characteristics.

The view that the emerging democracies are possibly less stable than hoped for and do not necessarily represent impeccable “European” - read: enlightened and progressive democracies - is already evident in some of *Esprit's* articles by 1990. Amongst them, Fritz Stern's article ‘L'Europe vue d'outre-Atlantique’ succinctly illustrates the inversion of the roles that is allocated to Eastern and Western Europe at this stage. The article deals amongst other issues with the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe and juxtaposes these developments with the situation in Western Europe, specifically the forthcoming signing of the Maastricht treaty in 1992. He notes: “quelques paradoxes historiques méritent d'être notés: “l'Europe de 1992 manifeste le déclin du nationalisme, pendant que les grands événements d'Europe de l'Est annoncent la résurrection de l'orgueil national” (p. 85). Two contrary developments, so says Stern, are taking place in Europe: while the West enters a new phase of cooperation and essentially experiences a decline of nationalism, the East is undergoing a resurrection of national pride and fervour.

The causes for this dangerous nationalism - here *Esprit* is quite unequivocal - lie in economic disparities between the East and West. Pierre Hassner, one of *Esprit's* cautious and admonishing voices, raises concerns about these inequalities which will most likely lead to a rapid disillusionment in the East. This initial discontent, he forecasts, caused by economic hardships, is likely to be compounded by unbridled capitalism that will precipitate the arrival of defensive, xenophobic, and anti-Western nationalist sentiments. “La dureté des politiques d'austérité, [...] et [...] d'un capitalisme sauvage peuvent fort bien produire des réactions anti-occidentales et xénophobes aboutissant à des dictatures populiste et nationaliste” (‘Communisme impossible’, p. 80).

These fears are not exclusive to *Esprit's* own French commentators but are shared also by the analysis of the numerous “foreign” commentators

featured in *Esprit*. The Hungarian historian, François Fejtö, for example, concurs that economic disparities will give rise to undemocratic scenarios. “Le vrai problème de l’avenir est économique. Dans ce contexte, toutes les démagogies sont possibles.”²⁴ Aleksander Smolar, although he speaks so enthusiastically about Poland’s historic democratic foundations and its allegiance to Europe, sees the danger that in the current conditions civil society remains weak, marred by “un manque de savoir-faire social” (‘Incertitudes polonaises’, p. 104). He also emphasises that economic uncertainties will undermine the fabric of a fragile civil society still in search of its place.

If the root causes of this nationalism are identified as economic hardship, it must be added that a certain degree of criticism about the West’s emphasis on economic shock therapy for the Eastern bloc is also evident in *Esprit’s* own pages. For example, Paul Thibaud remarks that “le triomphe actuellement de l’Europe est [...] d’abord un triomphe du libéralisme”,²⁵ rather than the lasting triumph of democracy over communism as sketched out by Pierre Hassner one year previously. Against the backdrop of increasing disillusionment in the East due to widening economic cleavages between East and West, *Esprit* does, however, rally its defences and sketches out how this problem should be addressed within a European framework. After all, *Esprit* pronounces that “le nationalisme est devenu la principale source d’inquiétude quant à l’avenir de l’Europe”,²⁶ and needs to be addressed accordingly. Thus the West needs to make its influence felt as a stabilizing model for the Eastern European countries. Initially, this view is expressed rather straightforwardly by Timothy Garton Ash, who articulates the idea in an article originally published in the *New York Review of Books*. He writes that it is necessary for the West to act as a stabilizing influence and to project values of a *liberal* democracy as a counterforce to the nationalist tide, by forging ahead with “la promotion de la démocratie”²⁷ in these countries. Put simply, the roles of Eastern and Western

²⁴ François Fejtö, ‘Itinéraire personnel. De Budapest à Paris et de Paris à Budapest: Entretien avec François Fejtö’, *Esprit*, 159 (1990), 51-58 (p. 54).

²⁵ Paul Thibaud, ‘L’Europe, essai d’identification’, *Esprit*, 176 (1991), 47-63 (p. 50).

²⁶ Pierre Hassner, ‘L’Europe et le spectre des nationalismes’, *Esprit*, 175 (1991), 5-23 (p. 6).

²⁷ Timothy Garton Ash, ‘Dix considérations sur la nouvelle Europe’, *Esprit*, 163 (1990), 113-117. (p. 116), originally published in *New York Review of Books*, 14 June 1990.

Europe have been reversed: the initial emphasis and infatuation with the East as a model for a democratically reinvigorated Europe has been replaced by the conviction that in fact the established democracies of the West need to take the lead and project and promote democracy on their doorstep.

In several of *Esprit's* other articles, however, nationalism does not just present any threat, but a threat specifically to European democratic values. We have established in the previous sections how *Esprit* constructs democracy as a specifically European ideal and achievement. Moreover, the introductory section already referred to Thibaud's text in which he expresses Europe's constant need to be on guard against racist or nationalist tendencies. These views are reiterated also in another article by Thibaud from 1991, 'L'Europe, essai d'identification', in which he notes emphatically that Europe presents "le centre du monde, l'école de la mondialité, le lieu où les nations s'aident mutuellement à réaliser leur vocation démocratique."²⁸ Democracy amounts to an obligation and "vocation" for Europeans, for "la démocratie est clairement associée aux idées de progrès et de modernité" (p. 62). These modern democracies represent European ideals whereas nationalism represents a bygone era which has no space in this modern and progressive Europe.²⁹ The notion that Europe represents the pioneering, value-led light in which all nations can fulfil their calling, is perhaps indicative again of a specifically French school of thought, and restricted to *Esprit*, but not debated in the other journals.

Europe's guiding light is now called upon to return the nations of Eastern Europe to a democratic path, and to uphold the unfulfilled promise of the 1989 revolutions. The article by Jérôme Sgard, entitled 'L'utopie libérale en Europe de l'Est',³⁰ establishes that the Eastern European countries have since 1989 followed an ultraliberal economic trajectory which has in turn depoliticized the political space and fatally weakened the prospects of a civil society that would encourage political dialogue and democratic participation of the citizens. This has given rise to a culture in which populist and nationalist sentiments can

²⁸ Paul Thibaud, 'L'Europe, essai d'identification', *Esprit*, 176 (1991), 47-63 (p. 62).

²⁹ As suggested also by Marc Olivier Padis in 'La relève politique de l'Europe de l'Est', *Esprit*, 165 (1990), 142-145.

³⁰ Jérôme Sgard, 'L'utopie libérale en Europe de l'Est', *Esprit*, 183 (1992), 62-84.

fester and take hold. He goes on to suggest that as of 1992 the revolutions of 1989 are no longer perceived in Eastern Europe as the echo of 1789, but as its defeat: “les révolutions de 1989 ne sont pas reçues en Europe centrale comme l'écho lointain de celle de 1789: elles seraient vues plutôt comme son ultime défaite, qui est aussi celle du contrat social et de la volonté de progrès” (p. 73). Thus, Sgard sketches out the development that he sees as having taken place in the Eastern European countries: from the embodiment of the ideals of the 1789 revolutions, to their “defeat”, from the possibility of a developed political space and a social contract to a rampant economic ultraliberalism.

This development - away from European values and positions towards more insular and nationalist positions - is evident amongst the Eastern European intelligentsia. Sgard sees the possible faultline as follows: “entre une *intelligentsia* intégrée aux échanges et aux courants de pensée européens, et des sociétés qui restent fermement ancrées dans les cultures politiques plus ou moins hostiles aux diverses formes d'universalisme occidental” (pp. 71-72). Without hesitation he declares that the “pro-European” forces constitute the progressive wing, while any ideology that insists on “le discours de la nation et de la tradition” (p. 63) is outdated.

With Sgard's 1992 article the discussion about Eastern Europe and its place in Europe has come full circle: from the initial promise, hope and enthusiasm that is invested in the revolutions of 1989 as the new dawn of a historically reunited and politically rejuvenated Europe, the argument now changes gear. Crucially, “nationalism” provides a powerful negative foil against which the “West” posits itself as the carrier of progressive democratic European values.

Here, I attempted to establish the relevant interpretative frameworks which were apparent in the discussion of *Esprit's* coverage of the 1989 events in Eastern Europe and during the subsequent transition period. In doing so, the aim was to demonstrate the shifts in the arguments and the different ways in which Eastern Europe is tied into the discussion of the newly emerging Europe. From establishing a historically based common narrative for Eastern and Western

Europe, *Esprit* moves to formulating Eastern Europe as an initially positive mirror image which serves as an inspiration for the jaded and overinstitutionalized democracies of the West. This view finally gives way to the conviction that Western European democracies need to prop up the fledgling transition countries who are displaying nationalist tendencies. At this stage, *Esprit* retreats to establishing boundaries and Eastern Europe is being set up as the negative embodiment of true Western European values.

In the following section, we will turn to *NLR* and *Merkur*, in order to establish where these interpretative frameworks and mechanisms of identity construction overlap or deviate. Crucially, it will emerge that the concern about nationalism as a threat to European values is one of the unifying concerns apparent in all three journals.

4.2 *NLR*

4.2.1 *NLR's* European Agenda

As established in the introduction, *NLR* is interested in “international socialism”, rather than in a European framework of analysis in which national interests and concerns can be overcome or dissolved. Generally, *NLR* is concerned much less than *Esprit* with promoting the idea of a Europe defined by shared historical ideals and values. Neither is Europe the inevitable and logical political category above and beyond the nation state in a postnational age that *Esprit* makes it out to be. In some regards, *NLR's* position is typical of the largely sceptical British discourse on Europe, which remains at a distance from the continental discourses. Britain's entrenched Euroscepticism is often explained with reference to its “imperial legacy”,³¹ which is seen as partly responsible for the country's reserved and ambivalent attitude towards its role as a “mere” member state in the European Union, now that its “mantle of ‘imperial’ hegemon” (p. 102), has been taken over by the United States. However, *NLR's* criticism of the EU, we shall see in the following, is not born out of this historical baggage, and

³¹ Anne Deighton, ‘British Imperial Memories and Europe’, in *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe: Studies in the Presence of the Past*, (see Müller, above), pp. 100-121 (p. 102).

is not expressed as a critique of surrendering British political sovereignty, which underlines many British anti-European discourses.

Rather, the journal's main bone of contention is that the EU propagates a systematic and relentless expansion of neoliberal economic policies. Accordingly, the EU is discussed primarily as an example of a transnational organisation which provides a legitimising framework for market liberalisation and the promotion of a free trade agenda. As such, the EU has, in the view of one *NLR* contributor, first and foremost served as "the handmaiden to continental Europe's postwar boom."³² Where *Esprit* wants to re-establish a Europe that is aware of its historical anchorage and sense of political mission, it is conceived in *NLR* primarily as an arena of conflicts between European business interests and those of European workers. The outcome of these conflicts will primarily define what kind of Europe will emerge. However, Europe is merely one, by no means decisive, arena in the world where these two clashing interests collide within an increasingly globalized economy.

These critical comments having been made, one must nonetheless point out that *NLR's* view of Europe does not only consist of EU-Europe. As will be shown, the question of alleged common European history and values does enter the discussion at some strategic points, especially when the question of a social Europe is being debated. As suggested in Chapter Two, Europe can be stretched to serve diverse political purposes and ideals; here we will see that Europe, for *NLR*, serves to express the desire for a transnational social space.

Some of the elements that provide the backdrop to the shifting discussions about Eastern Europe in *NLR* can be summed up as follows: a socialist agenda and critique which is directed against the EU-Europe, and a principled rejection of Eurocentrism and nationalism, coupled with a commitment to universally defined "cosmopolitan Enlightenment ideals". All these factors define and sometimes also limit *NLR's* discussions about Eastern Europe. By "limit", I mean in this context that *NLR*, more than the other journals, adheres to ideological views which often predetermine its outlook and leave little room to expand or develop arguments. For this reason also, the discussion

³² George Ross, 'Confronting the New Europe', *NLR*, 191 (1992), 49-69.

over the four year period does not develop to the same extent as in *Esprit*. The following analysis will aim to highlight how the discussion of Eastern Europe evolves according to different interpretative frameworks in order to gauge the extent to which *NLR*'s discussion follows similar - or different - trajectories as in the French journal.

4.2.2 After 1989: The “New” European friends

In contrast to *Esprit*, *NLR* hardly declares the events of 1989 in Eastern Europe to be the beginning of a new “Europe”. There are no articles celebrating a glorious return to Europe and no articles pointing out how Eastern and Western Europe have historically developed out of the same European intellectual, political and spiritual influences. The absence of such a historically defined “united Europe”, however, does not imply that the historical impact of 1989 is lost on *NLR*, quite the contrary. Yet the crises and convulsions taking place in Eastern Europe are not primarily seen as a new beginning for *Europe*, as *Esprit* makes out, but rather as a crisis for *socialism* as a political project. In the September issue of 1989, Ralph Miliband proclaims in his article ‘Reflections on the Crisis of Communist Regimes’ that a “vast mutation” is going on throughout the Communist world, which undoubtedly constitutes one of the “great turning points in the history of the twentieth century.”³³ He continues: “[w]e know what this immense historic process is taken to mean by the enemies of socialism everywhere: not only the approaching demise of Communist regimes and their replacement by capitalist ones, but the elimination of any kind of socialist alternative to capitalism” (p. 28).

The question of what form of international socialism might be salvaged in the wake of the events of 1989 becomes the main concern of *NLR*'s coverage, and this is true also of discussions of Europe. Mary Kaldor, a regular contributor to *NLR*, describes the relevance of 1989 for Europe in her article ‘After the Cold War’ as follows.

³³ Ralph Miliband, ‘Reflections on the Crisis of Communist Regimes’, *NLR*, 177 (1989), 27-36 (p. 27). Miliband was a founding member of *NLR* and influential figure of the British New Left. He was born in Brussels, where his family – originally Polish Jews from Warsaw – had settled in 1924. The family fled at the beginning of the Second World War and moved to Britain. He died in 1994. His two sons, Ed and David Miliband, are members in Gordon Brown’s cabinet.

Indeed what is taking place, in the aftermath of 1989, is a political struggle for the future of Europe. Whether 1989 was a victory for the neo-liberal Right, [...] or a victory for the new style social movements that came to prominence in the 1980s, whether East-Central Europe is to be annexed, economically, socially and culturally, by the West, or whether we can expect a new evolution of systems in both East and West – all this depends on politics, on our own contributions to the debates and campaigns of the 1990s.³⁴

Kaldor's article represents an attempt to foretell the future of the "East-West relationship" on the basis of an historical overview which begins with the end of World War II. Although this period is recounted as the imposition of a Stalinist system on Eastern-Central Europe, Kaldor does not portray this history as the division of a previously united continent and its ultimate reunification.

Equally, in a thematically similar article in the same issue by the eminent academic Fred Halliday, entitled 'The Ends of the Cold War', the historical background provided is an account of the history of Europe in relation to the political divisions and partitions after the two world wars of the twentieth century.³⁵ He concedes that the question of Europe has been central during the decades of the Cold War. He writes: "throughout the four frozen decades that have passed, the core issue, the central terrain of rivalry, has been Europe, and the socio-political system prevailing there" (p. 6). Consequently, he argues, the question of how Europe will evolve does merit a certain level of attention. He is quick, however, to deflect any suspicions of Eurocentrism by adding that the real tragedies of the Cold War have occurred in the "Hot Wars" during that period especially in Asia, Africa and in Latin America (pp. 6-7). Europe is therefore just one of the many regions which will have to begin a process of reassessment and reorientation. *NLR's* self-conscious reluctance to indulge in a view perceived as Eurocentric effectively prevents a deeper engagement with the question of how Europe might position itself in the wake of the political changes in Eastern Europe

³⁴ Mary Kaldor, 'After the Cold War', *NLR*, 180 (1990), 25-41 (p. 26-27). Kaldor is Professor of Global Governance at the LSE and a frequent *NLR* contributor. She is also a founding member of the END (European Nuclear Disarmament) movement.

³⁵ Fred Halliday, 'The End of the Cold War', *NLR*, 180 (1990), 5-25.

Where *Esprit* relies on the idea of an imagined shared history and common European values derived from the ideals of the French Revolution, *NLR* restricts its account to postwar history and the ideological battles during the Cold War. The interpretation offered by *Esprit* is not even alluded to in *NLR*. Thus, while the notion of the return to a common European home is evident amongst *Esprit's* French and foreign contributors, it does not feature at all in this British publication. This lack of engagement with the notion of “historically intertwined, newly reunited Europe” indicates already the very different mindsets and outlooks that are in play here, between which little exchanges or even acknowledgement of different positions is taking place. It comes as no surprise, therefore, when Mary Kaldor concludes her article with a plea for a renewed dialogue with what she calls “our *new* friends in the East” (p. 84). They are precisely “new” friends, not old, long-lost friends with whom we have been finally reunited, as *Esprit* would claim.

4.2.3 Doubts about Democracy in Europe

In *Esprit*, the emphasis on “redemocratizing Europe” is relevant to its declarations of European “renewal”. In *NLR*, however, deep-seated scepticism of the particular form of democracy that is being promoted in the post-revolution climate again limits the development of such a European perspective. Evidently, the journal is not opposed per se to the revolutions; in fact, *NLR* “salutes” this “wave of people power in Eastern Europe.”³⁶ The general tenor is a cautious welcoming of the “awakening of political life” and agreement that the events of 1989 are in fact motivated by a “popular thirst for democracy”.³⁷ Yet *NLR* is wary of overt jubilation about the tentative redemocratization of Eastern Europe, which it considers still too fragile. The editorials are quick to point out, for example, that the political developments have “brought no improvement in the economic situation nor prevented an escalation of ugly incidents of national suppression and violence.”³⁸ And by early 1991 the editorials have definitely taken a more sombre turn: “[f]ollowing the ‘revolutions of 1989’ there was a

³⁶ ‘Themes’, *NLR*, 179 (1990), 1-3 (p. 1).

³⁷ ‘Themes’, *NLR*, 174 (1989), 1-3 (p. 1).

³⁸ ‘Themes’, *NLR*, 177 (1989), 1-3 (p. 1).

widespread belief that a new era of peace was dawning in the world and that democracy was carrying all before it. One year later the sanguine hopes of that time have been belied”.³⁹

This interpretation derives from an underlying scepticism of the prevailing form of democracy, which *NLR* sees as being “imposed” on Eastern Europe. After all, *NLR* has an altogether different concept of democracy. The journal advocates a “participatory democracy that upholds the values of socialist humanism”⁴⁰ as the only viable option. Democracy should be first and foremost a means of invoking social rights and a system that can “pacify the contradictions of the capitalist market” (Camiller, ‘Beyond 1992’, p. 3). The form of Western liberal democracy that is evoked so jubilantly in *Esprit* as the path towards freedom and self-determination, however, is, in *NLR*’s interpretation, “guilty by association” with detrimental free-market policies. Its main dereliction of duty is considered to be “acquiescence in the inhuman effects of capitalism and imperialism” (p. 2). The following two texts – one by the late Italian philosopher and historian of political thought Norberto Bobbio, the other by Peter Gowan, a member of *NLR*’s editorial board - illustrate the ambivalence about the implications of democracy that characterize most of *NLR*’s articles during this time.

Norberto Bobbio’s article ‘The Upturned Utopia’⁴¹ emphasises first of all the positive achievements of liberal democracies, namely to have secured the “freedoms of modern man”, and he reminds readers of the “slow and arduous” process through which “our democracies” (p. 38) have been achieved. Bobbio, however, never makes clear who or what is meant by “our”: it might well refer to European, or more generally “Western” democracies, but in any case he makes no attempt to render a European framework explicit, which is broadly typical of *NLR*’s approach. Consider, by contrast, how on numerous occasions *Esprit* had established democracy as a specifically European accomplishment. In *NLR*, however, such a positively defined European framework is scrupulously avoided. With regard to Eastern Europe Bobbio then goes on to argue that,

³⁹ ‘Themes’, *NLR*, 185 (1991), 1-3 (p. 1).

⁴⁰ ‘Themes’, *NLR*, 180 (1990), 1-3 (p. 2).

⁴¹ Norberto Bobbio, ‘The Upturned Utopia’, *NLR*, 177 (1989), 37-40.

despite all the achievements and guarantees of securities, “the law-based liberal-democratic state” is no adequate framework to solve problems of today, especially in those countries which are in the process of transition, as this form of democracy is too corroded by free-market influences.

Similarly, a text by Peter Gowan published in 1990 begins with a statement that “*conventional wisdom* does not for a moment doubt that the peoples of Eastern Europe have at last entered the realm of freedom and self-determination.”⁴² Yet Gowan is sceptical whether this is really the case or whether the countries have not in fact merely substituted one imposed system - socialism - for another, namely capitalism. Gowan asks whether the transition processes really amount to a “political democratization” or whether they do not just represent another “capitalist social transformation” (p. 66). In short, he is unconvinced that the needs of Eastern Europe can be adequately met by democratization. The reservations voiced here to a degree reflect *NLR*’s preoccupation with readjusting its own theoretical position on socialism.⁴³ Therefore, the critique voiced against the dominance of a capitalist democratic framework that is threatening to engulf the Eastern European countries does not involve the question of how these countries will integrate into a *European* democratic framework.

Although *NLR* recognises the inherent value and appeal of “liberal democracy”, it does not consider this to be an adequate basis for promoting a European *renewal*. In fact, *NLR* takes issue with the very idea of European democratic renewal as it is laid out in *Esprit*, for example. This point is made not by one of *NLR*’s British contributors, but by the well-known Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic Slavoj Žižek. The article ‘Eastern Europe’s Republics of Gilead’⁴⁴ deals in the main with the rise of nationalism in Eastern

⁴² Peter Gowan, ‘Western Economic Diplomacy and the New Eastern Europe’, *NLR*, 182 (1990), 63-85 (p. 63). [Emphasis mine].

⁴³ This concern is apparent in articles such as Jürgen Habermas, ‘What does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking on the Left’, *NLR*, 183 (1990), 3-23, and in Robin Blackburn, ‘Fin de Siècle: Socialism after the Crash’, *NLR*, 185 (1991), 5-67.

⁴⁴ Slavoj Žižek, ‘Eastern Europe’s Republics of Gilead’, *NLR*, 183 (1990), 50-62, originally given as a conference paper at the University of California (San Diego, 28 April 1990) The article’s title, Žižek explains, alludes to the dystopian “Republic of Gilead” that the Canadian writer

Europe. I will discuss nationalism further below; at this point, however, I would like to draw attention to the beginning of the article, where Žižek criticises what he terms Western Europe's misdirected "gaze". Taking issue with the broadly defined "Western" stance towards Eastern Europe, he begins his text with the rhetorical question why the "West" is so fascinated by recent events in Eastern Europe and delivers the following answer in the form of a somewhat sophistic Freudian analysis:

What fascinates the Western gaze is the re-invention of democracy. It is as if democracy, which in the West shows increasing signs of decay and crisis, lost in bureaucratic routine and publicity-style election campaigns, is being rediscovered in Eastern Europe in all its freshness and novelty. The function of this fascination is thus purely ideological: in Eastern Europe the West looks for its own lost origins, for the democratic experience of 'democratic invention'. In other words, Eastern Europe functions for the West as its Ego-Ideal: the point from which the West sees itself in a likeable, idealized form, as worthy of love (p. 50).

Žižek does not further specify which countries he is alluding to, nor does he provide evidence or examples to support his assessment. His argument does, however, represent an instance of what I identified above, in the discussion of *Esprit*, as the "use" of Eastern Europe as a Western "mirror image" and model for democratic renewal. Žižek points out that this mechanism has in fact little to do with incorporating Eastern Europe into a European framework, but rather is indicative of Western navel-gazing. His exposition can be read not only as a critique of the idea of a European democratic renewal, but also as an attack on what he sees as Western European self-absorption and Eurocentrism.

Thus far, neither *Esprit's* idea of a historically reunited Europe nor that of a newly democratic Europe is relevant or adequate for *NLR*. In this instance, the inherent scepticism towards the implications of "liberal democracy" explains why *NLR* does not posit "democracy" as an adequate category for explaining the changes that Europe is undergoing. In fact, the premise of a "democratic renewal" is dismissed as a narcissistic Western prism. Even so, this does not

Margaret Atwood has depicted in her novel *The Handmaid's Tale*: a republic in which "a moral-majority fundamentalism reigns" (p. 62).

deter *NLR* from pronouncing Eastern Europe as an agent for a social “renewal” of Europe, as will be shown below.

4.2.4 The Chances of a Social Renewal for Europe

For *NLR*, a new *social* framework is the prerequisite for a European regeneration. Already in 1989 an editorial pronounces that “socialist renewal remains the only basis on which the problems of the [Eastern European] region can be lastingly tackled”.⁴⁵ The search for such a “socialist renewal” is motivated by a sense of discontent over social policy in Europe. We have already seen how in *Esprit* the possibility of a new beginning has been posited on the basis of discontent over the undemocratic and inscrutable decision-making processes epitomized by Maastricht. Similarly in *NLR*, as Chapter Three has already indicated (see Section 3.4), Maastricht serves as a springboard for advocating a vision of a renewal of Europe which incorporates - to an extent at least - the question of Eastern Europe.

While *Esprit* has identified the lack of democratic processes as its main concern in relation to Maastricht, *NLR* stresses how the treaty will tip the already markedly neoliberal policies in Europe even further towards the interests of big business. On the question of democratizing Europe, Mary Kaldor’s aforementioned article, for example, makes only passing reference to the need for a “democratization of new and existing trans-European institutions” (p. 36). This is not to say that the argument pertaining to a “lack of democracy” is entirely absent. It is mentioned in many of the articles, such as a 1992 article by Niels Christiansen which discusses the Danish No-vote to the Maastricht treaty. The author makes mention of the fact that “the bureaucracy in Brussels is too far away, and besides, is impervious to the claims of popular movements” and pronounces that, overall, “the EC suffers from what has been called a ‘democratic deficit’”.⁴⁶ By and large, however, the discussion of the European democratic deficit is simply not as important to *NLR*’s critique of Maastricht as it is in *Esprit*.

⁴⁵ ‘Themes’, *NLR*, 176 (1989), 1-3 (p. 1).

⁴⁶ Niels Finn Christiansen, ‘The Danish No to Maastricht’, *NLR*, 195 (1992), 97-102 (p. 101).

Both journals identify civil society groups, more commonly referred to in *NLR* as “social movements”, as the potential sources of European renewal. Of special importance to *NLR* are traditional labour movements and trade unions, though it also grants much attention also to the social movements emanating from Eastern Europe.⁴⁷ Their main role in a European context is to redress Europe’s existing economic and social imbalances, which are currently under even greater threat from the Maastricht treaty. Patrick Camiller, for example, has the following to say on the issue of Maastricht.

Whatever elements of indicative planning it [Maastricht] may have contained, the programme of European integration has been progressively stripped down to a core idea that the removal of national barriers to capital movement and economic activity will clear the path to dynamic renewal of the European economy.”⁴⁸

He then calls upon the European labour movements and trade unions to provide a positive counterbalance to this economic onslaught. For it is only if the “organized labour movements of continental Europe”, and the “European Left” as a whole unite, Camiller claims, that they can provide an “alternative to 1992” (pp. 10-11). Other articles, such as one by John Grahl and Paul Teague entitled ‘The Cost of Neo-Liberal Europe’, also point to the way in which Europe has been “hijacked by corporate interests”,⁴⁹ resulting in a complete absence of a “social space” (p. 48). The authors then appeal for a united Europe in which the dispersed national trade unions need to rally together in order to ensure a unified European social space.

Undermining these proposals, however, is always an intermittent scepticism about their viability. Intellectual historian Donald Sassoon has pointed out that this uncertainty was characteristic of the European socialist movement which found itself marginalized during the neo-liberal resurgence of the early 1990s.⁵⁰ Accordingly, Peter Gowan, in his article ‘Western Economic

⁴⁷ See for example: Andrzej Walicki, ‘From Stalinism to Post-Communist Pluralism: The Case of Poland’, *NLR*, 185 (1991), 92-121; Petr Uhl, ‘The Fight for a Socialist Democracy in Czechoslovakia’, *NLR*, 179 (1990), 111-119.

⁴⁸ Patrick Camiller, ‘Beyond 1992: The Left and Europe’, *NLR*, 175 (1989), 5-19 (p. 8).

⁴⁹ John Grahl and Paul Teague, ‘The Cost of Neo-Liberal Europe’, *NLR*, 174 (1989), 33-51 (p. 49).

⁵⁰ See Donald Sassoon, ‘The New Revisionism’, in *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (New York: The New Press, 1996), pp. 730-755.

Diplomacy and the New Eastern Europe', heavily criticizes the "Western" goal of striving for the quickest possible transition to capitalism in Eastern Europe without taking account of the social costs of such a development, and remains unconvinced that social forces there will be able to exert any real influence. Similarly, Italian author Lucio Magri notes that Europe is in fact marked by an inherently "weak capacity to foster and support mass movements"⁵¹ amongst workers, which will also limit the possibility for co-operation between East and West. Thus, although Magri is deeply committed to the idea that Europe's social problems need to be addressed in a pan-European rather than national framework, he is doubtful about the chances of success. Where the possibility of a renewal is seriously discussed, however, it depends on an alliance between Eastern and Western European "reform forces". For example, one of *NLR*'s editorials pronounces that "as the West European governments prepare to give up many of their national regulatory levers, an alliance between the Western Left and socialist reform forces in the East could throw back the neo-liberal offensive of the past decade and place planned social advance once again at the heart of debate on the continent."⁵²

Accordingly, Camiller writes that "the European Left should in principle welcome the idea of a genuine integration of the economic and cultural resources of a continent whose fragmentation has underlaid two world wars in this century" ('Beyond 1992', p. 11). Note that this quotation is one of only a few occasions where *NLR* refers to the "continent" of Europe, not just "EU - Europe" in the sense of a political or economic entity. When it comes to relaunching a socialist Europe, the Eastern European countries are being quite readily integrated into a European framework in order to pronounce a European social renewal. In fact, it presents the only instance in which *NLR* declares East and West to be part of a common *European* framework and united and motivated by a common goal. Moreover, the "reform forces" not only share the same goal, but are also made out to be the carriers of expressly "European" traditions which constitute the "cosmopolitan Enlightenment ideal" (p. 9). This "ideal"

⁵¹ Lucio Magri, 'The European Left between Crisis and Refoundation', *NLR*, 189 (1991), 5-19 (p. 8).

⁵² 'Themes', *NLR*, 175 (1989), 1-3 (p. 1).

encompasses the values of “liberty, equality and solidarity for all residents of Europe” (p. 15). In fact, Camiller argues, the current struggle over Europe is in his view at the core of the “destiny of the three-hundred-year tradition of the Enlightenment” (p. 16). For the socialist movement is the carrier of these ideals: “the socialist movement could rightly claim to be the inheritor of the Enlightenment ideal of a Europe in which national antagonisms had been overcome” (p. 6).

In a similar vein, Mary Kaldor’s article stresses the role of social movements throughout the 1980s and discusses the future part that they might play in establishing a new sense of pan-European solidarity and social justice. The Western peace movements in the 1980s built “links with peace, green and human rights groups in the East”, as a result of which “the individual isolated dissident gave way to social movements as a new form of opposition in East-Central Europe” (‘After the Cold War’, p. 34). Kaldor asserts, like Camiller, that these movements represent the “proud and honourable socialist tradition in Europe – of workers’ movements, ideas and education” (p. 37).

On the basis of these existing links between Eastern and Western groups, Kaldor asserts that a new direction for Europe might be viable. Currently, she detects a trend of an “Americanization of Europe”, marked by “high levels of military spending, high levels of private consumption, a kind of unifying materialist culture, and pockets of poverty especially in the European periphery” (p. 35). However, she also envisages a second possible direction for Europe.

The second direction, proposed by the new social movements, emphasizes their concerns about peace, the environment, gender, multiculturalism and democracy. This would involve a more equal relationship between East and West Europe in which there was change in the West as well as the East (p. 36).

As Kaldor sees it, Europe in its present form is a dystopia, marked by materialism, capitalism, and militarism. The realisation of a socialist, pacifist, and green Europe will depend crucially on the re-uniting of Eastern and Western social movements. These social movements, she maintains, will be the

main factors in European renewal, rather than the integrating forces of shared history and democracy as propounded in *Esprit*.

The social renewal which *NLR* advocates here might build on the involvement of Eastern Europe, but it is in fact restricted to promoting *NLR*'s predetermined agenda of a social Europe. Thus, while *NLR* criticizes "Western" discourse for its allegedly narcissistic gaze in connection with a democratic renewal, it in fact appropriates Eastern Europe in a very similar fashion when it comes to calling for a European social renewal.

4.2.5 Nationalism: Bonding Against the Agreed Enemy

This final section will address how *NLR* uses a European framework in connection with the question of nationalism, a theme that enters *NLR*'s articles extensively from 1990 onwards. As mentioned earlier, in *NLR*'s opinion, the "Enlightenment ideal of a Europe in which national antagonisms had been overcome" (Camiller, 'Beyond 1992', p. 6) provides the desirable state of affairs.⁵³ It goes without saying that nationalism is unequivocally condemned and considered a threat and challenge that must be taken seriously. After all, as Žižek caustically remarks in 'Republics of Gilead', the eruption of nationalism "in all its violence has always taken by surprise the devotees of international solidarity" (p. 57). Thus, nationalism in Eastern Europe is reported in a distinctly alarmed tone. Žižek explains: "The dark side of the processes current in Eastern Europe is thus the gradual retreat of the liberal-democratic tendency in the face of the growth of corporate national populism with all its usual elements, from xenophobia to anti-Semitism" (p. 51). The reasons behind this explosion of nationalist sentiment are, as in *Esprit*, chiefly attributed to instability and imbalances created by the "capitalist purgatory"⁵⁴ to which the West has consigned the Eastern European countries. Peter Gowan considers the West's economic policies directly responsible for the emergence of "authoritarian

⁵³ At least as a principle or state of mind: where the dissolution of the nation state also implies free trade and economic liberalism, *NLR* does invoke the right of nations to reassert their borders quite readily, as in the following text by Alain Lipietz, 'The Debt Problem, European Integration and the new Phase of World Crisis', *NLR*, 178 (1989), 37-51.

⁵⁴ 'Themes', *NLR*, 182 (1990), 1-3 (p. 2).

populist and nationalist movements” (‘Western Economic Diplomacy’, p. 80) in Eastern Europe.

Crucially, *NLR* does not see nationalism as confined to Eastern Europe. Instead, it alleges that these developments are closely matched in Western Europe where they are prevalent in the form of racism and demagogic populism. Whereas *Esprit* uses “nationalism” to posit the progressive European West against a regressive East, *NLR* depicts it as a *common* European denominator deriving from an entwined history. In this view history is about to repeat itself, at a time when “*fin de siècle* capitalism becomes mired in its own contradictions”.⁵⁵ As Camiller points out, national antagonism is one of the key themes of European history that have been detrimental in the past to the development of European solidarity.

Just as the nation-state has become a barrier to social and economic advancement within the geographic space of Europe, so have the nineteenth century or earlier identities of European citizens become a factor of often quite explosive division within most of the major European countries (p. 15 -16).

This perspective is further established in a text entitled ‘Nationalism and Politics in Eastern Europe’ by Ernest Gellner, the eminent theorist of nationalism.⁵⁶ Gellner explains the current rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe by setting it in a larger historical context. His point of departure is the Congress of Vienna in 1815, from where he charts the different stages and developments that nationalism has undergone in the emergent European nation states. There is no room here to go into the detail of Gellner’s highly sophisticated exposition of the causes of nationalism in relation to industrialisation and modernity. It is relevant to note, however, that he considers nationalism in Eastern Europe as a development that is regrettable but unsurprising, because foreseeable. “The political reaffirmation of ethnic identity”, he remarks, is part of a pattern that is now “being played out in new, indeed completely original circumstances” (p. 133).

⁵⁵ ‘Themes’, *NLR*, 193 (1992), 1-3 (p. 1).

⁵⁶ Ernest Gellner, ‘Nationalism and Politics in Eastern Europe’, *NLR*, 189 (1991), 127-134.

The article serves as a reminder that the events in Eastern Europe are by no means unprecedented but can be understood to some extent as a variation of processes which Europe has witnessed throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Gellner's article is written in very matter-of-fact prose and does not make any overt declarations that posit "nationalism" as a shared "European" burden or legacy. It reads, however, as a sober and restrained antidote to *Esprit's* paternalistic and self-congratulatory accounts of nationalism as a solely Eastern European affliction.

An article by Benedict Anderson, entitled 'The New World Disorder', paints an even broader canvas.⁵⁷ Here, as in Gellner's text, nationalism is placed in its historical context and analysed as the manifestation and result of deeply conflicting and troubling imbalances caused by industrial capitalism, mass communication and mass migrations. Eastern Europe is mentioned in this text as only one example of a region where "nationalism and ethnicity are very likely to move in" (p. 7) to replace lost ideologies. Crucially, in Anderson's analysis nationalism is not a sign of political atavism. Rather, it can display distinctly modern tendencies and is evident everywhere in the world, including in Europe. In fact, a particularly virulent form of nationalism is alive and well, he reminds readers, in the United Kingdom, where the IRA is conducting a ruthless terror campaign feeding on a "local nationalist appeal" (p. 13).

To sense these [nationalist] forces one does not need to go outside Old Europe itself. As the crow flies, Belfast is less than 500 kilometres from London, but has been an armed camp for the past twenty-five years, despite British use of the most sophisticated urban counter-insurgency methods against the IRA (p. 12-13).

Anderson's comparison serves to highlight the notion that nationalism is in fact a pervasive European phenomenon which can be explained historically and is now experiencing a revival in distinctly modern permutations. Eastern Europe is not being singled out as the wayward, deviant European "Other", as in *Esprit*. Instead, nationalism provides a common thread that links these countries together.

⁵⁷ Benedict Anderson, 'The New World Disorder', *NLR*, 193 (1992), 3-15.

For an explicit statement which highlights this “shared European experience”, we can now turn to the article by the French writer Étienne Balibar; ‘Es gibt keinen Staat in Europa: Racism and Politics in Europe today’.⁵⁸ (The article owes its partly German title to the fact that Balibar delivered it as speech at a conference in Germany, and in this printed version, *NLR* has retained the reference to the original German.) The text’s central message - though in terms of style and terminology immediately recognizable as atypical for *NLR* – is consonant with Gellner’s and Anderson’s analysis of the problems of racism and nationalism in Europe: unsurprisingly, perhaps, since Balibar is firmly anchored in the political Left. He states explicitly that Europe is historically at once marred, but also united by the ideology of nationalism. His article attempts to set into context the problem of a resurgent nationalism and racism which he sees as central to the understanding of Europe.

The ending of the political division of Europe is a progressive development of immense historical significance. It is understandably accompanied by a certain enthusiasm among intellectuals for the idea of ‘European culture’ and one can share this enthusiasm which is productive of new ideas and projects. But the mass ideological reality corresponding to this culture is *at first* one of exacerbated nationalisms (p. 8).

Balibar warns that the idea of a positively defined European culture should be approached with scepticism. Instead, it is necessary to look at the issue of European nationalism. For Balibar, Europe presents a “historical problem without any pre-established solutions,” and nationalism is part of this dilemma:

European culture, and so the very idea or myth of Europe, intrinsically contains, [...] two specifically racist ideological schemes which are likely to continue producing memory and collective-perception effects: the colonial schema, and the schema of anti-Semitism (p. 12).

In posing the question of nationalism as a unifying European trait, Balibar spells out what is only implied in the other texts. Unlike in *Esprit*, where “nationalism” serves as a category for differentiation between the “progressive and the

⁵⁸ Étienne Balibar, ‘Es gibt keinen Staat in Europa: Racism and Politics in Europe today’, *NLR*, 186 (1991), 5-20, originally delivered to the Congress on Migration and Racism (Hamburg, 27-30 September 1990).

regressive Europe”, in *NLR* it serves as a unifying factor that enables inclusion in a historically defined Europe, a framework which *NLR* scrupulously avoids in other instances. Here Eastern Europe becomes part of Europe because it follows a historically recognisable pattern. These “colonialist and anti-Semitic schemes” continually produce variations of racism and nationalism in different guises, which include both the populist, demagogic nationalism in Eastern Europe and the murderous “modern” nationalism of the IRA.

Finally, if for *NLR*, liberal European democracies are not a viable alternative that would contain this nationalism, since they are “tainted” by association, what is? Again, the “universal” Enlightenment values already invoked in relation to the European tradition of workers’ solidarity come into play once more. In the 1992 article ‘The Crisis of Today’s Ideologies’,⁵⁹ Eric Hobsbawm identifies all “right-wing, demagogic, xenophobic, nationalist regimes” as “the most dangerous phenomenon of our fin-de-siècle” (p. 64). The only values which might be able to counter them are those “of freedom, reason and civilization” (p. 64). Similarly Camiller points also to the way in which these ideals can be achieved by referring to that classical Enlightenment maxim, the “universal programme of emancipation” (‘Beyond 1992’, p. 11).

In short, the discussion of nationalism in Eastern Europe does not declare the existence of two different “Europes” (and a strict hierarchy as to which is preferable). *NLR*, as I have shown, is in most instances very reticent in constructing its arguments around a shared European history. In this instance, however, an overarching European framework is made explicit and nationalism becomes the common binding denominator between Eastern and Western Europe.

In order to analyse the discussion about Eastern Europe in *NLR*, it has been necessary to first point to the different aspects that determine *NLR*’s discourse on Europe, which include: internal reservations about promoting a possible Eurocentrism, general doubts about the neoliberal nature of European integration, and a prism which is primarily concerned with the aspect of

⁵⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, ‘The Crisis of Today’s Ideologies’, *NLR*, 192 (1992), 55-65.

socialism versus capitalism, rather than with the question of establishing a new European framework. They all explain in parts why *NLR* is initially not as prone as *Esprit* to invoking a European framework and to including Eastern Europe as part of a recognisable European space.

It was indicated earlier how *NLR* completely bypasses the idea of a historically united Europe or the use of European democracy as an integrating political concept. In neither of these cases are the changes in Eastern Europe discussed as a relevant factor in the emergence of the new European landscape. However, where *NLR*'s own agenda comes into play, namely that of a "socialist renewal", the reform forces are credited as the carriers of these European Enlightenment values. Overall, relatively little evidence of a cross-cultural dialogue and hence of a common public sphere between the journals is taking place. Each advertises different roles for Eastern Europe in the new Europe. While there is disagreement between *NLR* and *Esprit* as to the relevance of certain categories, such as the role of history and that of democracy in light of 1989, the question of nationalism, however, is considered in *NLR*, as it is in *Esprit*, as the determining factor in the further development of Europe. In the concluding part of this comparison we will now turn to *Merkur* in order to assess where its discussions differ from, or correspond to, what has been ascertained so far.

4.3 *Merkur*

4.3.1 *Merkur*'s European Agenda

In *Merkur*, one must differentiate clearly between the notion of the political Europe and that of Europe as a cultural or civilizational ideal. For, while the journal is largely unconvinced of European political integration, it celebrates Europe as represented by figures of "high" culture, such as Thomas Mann and Mozart, and regards itself as bound to classical European traditions and values. Moreover, Germany is seen to provide a special contribution to this European civilization. For example, a translated text on the prospects of German reunification originally published in *Le Monde* by the French academic Serge

Christophe Kolm has the following to say on Germany's cultural depth and contribution to "European civilisation".

Das wahre Deutschland, [...] ist der Name einer Kultur von einem Reichtum einer Kraft der geistigen wie der emotionalen Tiefenschichten, die sie zu einem der imponierendsten Zeugnisse der Menschheit erheben und zu einem der beiden Pole der europäischen Zivilisation.⁶⁰

Kolm does not specifically mention what the second "pole of European civilisation" is, but one is inclined to speculate that he has France in mind, given that the author is French himself. What is most revealing about this passage, however, is that *Merkur* publishes this "praise" of German culture from the pen of a foreigner - possibly because it would be unacceptable for German intellectuals to use such hyperbolic language. One might infer from this quotation that it does indeed express the way in which *Merkur's* editors would like to think about German culture, even if they are unable to say so outright.

Yet this ideal of Europe as a superior civilizational model should not be confused with the contemporary EU Europe, since politics should not be guided by assumptions of shared values or cultural commonalities but by political expediency and national self-interest alone. Lord Ralf Dahrendorf (who will be quoted extensively in the following, since he is *Merkur's* most prominent source of essays on Europe) points out that a political Europe should grow out of the pursuit of overlapping interests: "Europa als politische Realität entsteht aus gemeinsamen Interessen der bestehenden Staaten, die ihrerseits in rechtliche und institutionelle Form gegossen werden."⁶¹

Merkur's main argument against too deep an integration is that only sovereign nation states can guarantee functioning democratic representation and ensure peace and security for its citizens. Therefore, *Merkur* is arguing for a Europe in which nations cooperate but at no point surrender too much sovereignty. In this regard, *Merkur's* discourse is different from the views of a majority of German intellectuals, which have been largely unequivocal about the necessity for a strong Europe in order to neutralize and contain the dangers that

⁶⁰ Serge Christoph Kolm, "Teutomanie" und Pascals Wette: Zur deutschen Wiedervereinigung', *Merkur*, 494 (1990), 345-350 (p. 349).

⁶¹ Ralf Dahrendorf, 'Europa der Regionen?', *Merkur*, 509 (1991), 703-707 (p. 705).

strong nation states potentially pose; a position which is in turn determined by Germany's own disastrous historical experience. Therefore: "[t]o be a 'good European German' [...] means to have finally overcome the country's militarist and nationalist past and to have learned the right lesson from history."⁶²

Merkur's arguments are, however, not determined by this specific German discourse about Europe, which is based on the country's historical experience. Rather, editor Karl Heinz Bohrer advocated that a country's relationship with historical memory should be foregone in favour of a more acute "socio-analysis of the present",⁶³ unconstrained, one might infer, by historical taboos.

The journal repeatedly makes the case for the continuous relevance of the nation as the main ordering category – while conceding that exactly these borders are being eroded and dissolved in the new "postnational" age. To *Merkur* the nation state is not only relevant as the guarantor for peace and democracy but also as the sole legitimate political actor. Thus Dahrendorf writes in one of his columns: "Staat heißt nun mal nach wie vor Nationalstaat" and "Europa ist kein Ersatz für den Nationalstaat".⁶⁴ As a result of this emphasis on the role of the state, there is less attention paid to the role of civil society and peace movements, which *Esprit* and *NLR* explore. Instead, the discussion focuses on the role of the state, on treaties and organisation, and on the way in which these organisations will shape the Europe that is emerging in the wake of the events of 1989. For example, concerning the role of the economic importance of the European Union, Rüdiger Altmann writes:

Ziel der europäischen Einigung ist weder die Wiederbelebung des christlichen Abendlandes noch irgendeiner anderen Vergangenheit, noch die Restabilisierung nationaler Traditionen, noch eine wirtschaftlich gefestigte Frontstellung nach Osten. Aufgabe der Europäischen Gemeinschaft ist die Herstellung eines gemeinsamen Marktes seiner Mitglieder.⁶⁵

⁶² Thomas Risse, Daniela Engelmann-Martin, 'Identity Politics and European Integration: The Case of Germany', in *The Idea of Europe* (see Pagden, above), pp. 287-313 (p. 287).

⁶³ Adam Chalmers, 'Refiguring the European Union's Historical Dimension', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 5 (2006), 437-454 (p. 442).

⁶⁴ Ralf Dahrendorf, 'Eine deutsche Identität', *Merkur*, 493 (1990), 231-235 (p. 234).

⁶⁵ Rüdiger Altmann, 'Der Nomos der Marktgemeinschaft. Zur Rekonstruktion Europas durch die politische Ökonomie', *Merkur*, 489 (1989), 960- 973 (p. 963).

Consequently, the rationale for the Maastricht treaty is presented as follows:

Die westeuropäischen Staaten schließen sich in der Vollendung des Binnenmarkts 1992 wirtschaftlich und später in einer Europäischen Politischen Union politisch zusammen, weil sie allein zu klein sind, um den Anforderungen ihrer Bürger nach Steigerung wirtschaftlichen Wohlstandes und Gewährleistung physischer Sicherheit gerecht zu werden.⁶⁶

Altmann declares this form of economic-political cooperation preferable to utopian visions of a common “European home” which are not conducive to solving the “real” problems which Europe has to face up to. Dahrendorf writes: “dieses unpräzise, träumerische, eigentlich utopische Europa löst kein einziges Problem” (‘Europa der Regionen’, p. 705). Furthermore, Karl Heinz Bohrer points out that a coherent European idea or cultural unity does not exist and amounts to nothing more than “eine rein ideologische Formel [...] ohne Realitätsgehalt”.⁶⁷

Initially, *Merkur* aims to maintain this neat distinction between political pragmatism and Europe as a carrier of civilizational ideals and values. There are no set ideas about what exactly 1989 might entail for Europe, nor are the same hopes attached to “European renewal” as in *Esprit* or *NLR*. Over the course of the four years this position begins to soften slightly and there emerges a greater awareness that the developments in Eastern Europe will affect Europe’s identity. However, this more “inclusive” view is swiftly reversed in relation to the discussion of nationalism, which follows a pattern similar to *Esprit* and *NLR*, as it provokes strong declarations of European Enlightenment values.

4.3.2 Rejecting Utopias

Initially, *Merkur* rejects the idea of a historically united and tragically divided Europe that *Esprit* so passionately invokes. Unlike in *NLR*, where there was no engagement with this concept at all, *Merkur* shows an attempt at least to respond to these ideas, even though it does not concur with *Esprit*’s interpretation.

⁶⁶ Ernst Otto Czempel, ‘Konturen einer Gesellschaftswelt. Die neue Architektur der internationalen Politik’, *Merkur*, 500 (1990), 835-851 (p. 844-845).

⁶⁷ Karl-Heinz Bohrer, ‘Provinzialismus (VI) Europrovinzialismus’, *Merkur*, 512 (1991), 1059-1068 (p. 1064).

Merkur's authors criticize the trend towards "rehistoricizing" the year of 1989 in a specific European context. They find fault with the outpourings of jubilation and with the parallels that are being drawn between the current events and the French Revolution of 1789. These ideas are voiced by the German writer Jochen Schimmang, who describes what he sees as a trend amongst German intellectuals and politicians to fall back on readily available, but ultimately vacuous comparisons between 1989 and 1789.⁶⁸ Schimmang notes: "[e]s scheint als fordere der schöne Gleichklang 1789/1989 zur Sinnproduktion geradezu heraus" (p. 341), and mocks the way in which eminent journalists from other German publications such as *Der Spiegel* and *Die Zeit* have used these juxtapositions. For Schimmang, these declarations reveal a facile, romanticized enchantment of intellectuals with the notion of popular uprising. Another text published one year later by the political scientist Claus Offe similarly dismisses the metaphors of a common European home as "Augenblickserfindungen mit absichtsvoll undeutlichem semantischem Gehalt".⁶⁹

In essence, the objections to these comparisons stem from to the idea that the "common cultural Europe" is considered by *Merkur* as an empty ideological formula, a position more thoroughly explained in a text by Michael Rutschky entitled 'Mitteleuropa: Rückblick auf eine kurzfristige Utopie'.⁷⁰ In the article, the author dismisses the entire edifice on which *Esprit*, for example, builds its ideal of a common, united European space as an unqualified intellectual construction which elevates alleged shared cultural and historical values to hide real existing differences. The author refers specifically to the writings of Eastern European intellectuals which have stressed their countries' impeccable resistance towards Soviet hegemony and innate allegiance to Western European culture and identity (as we have seen for example in Smolar's exposition in *Esprit*). Rutschky does not specifically discuss the

⁶⁸ Jochen Schimmang, 'Die Wiederkehr des Weltgeistes: Unsystematische Anmerkungen zum neuen Glauben an die Geschichte', *Merkur*, 494 (1990), 340-344.

⁶⁹ Claus Offe, 'Das Dilemma der Gleichzeitigkeit. Demokratisierung und Marktwirtschaft in Osteuropa', *Merkur*, 505 (1991), 279-292 (p. 280).

⁷⁰ Michael Rutschky, 'Mitteleuropa. Rückblick auf eine kurzfristige Utopie', *Merkur*, 516 (1992), 183-200.

resonance of this concept amongst Western European intellectuals, but alleges that this construction of a culturally cohesive and united “Mitteleuropa” which conflates Western with Central/Eastern Europe is in essence “ein kulturelles Identitätschema” (p. 185) and a “utopisches Selbstbild” (p. 186) that naively celebrates cultural pluralism under an all-embracing label of the “European” space, whilst glossing over existing cultural and historical disparities between Eastern and Western Europe. This is potentially even dangerous, Rutschky remarks, since culture and identity are not necessarily concepts which promote peace and understanding. He writes: “Kultur und Identität haben, das macht nicht friedfertig, wie wir inzwischen wissen, es führt direkt zum Krieg” (p. 192). The idea of a historically united, common European space that is promoted by Eastern European intellectuals is a dangerous utopian vision. Instead, Europe should be defined only by common political interests.

Rutschky likewise dismisses *NLR*’s dream of salvaging a socialist Europe as the unrealistic fantasies of a unified Europe. He writes: “[d]er Sozialismus, sagen die Utopiker, der jetzt zusammenbricht, ist gar nicht der gewesen, der einmal kommen soll – an der Utopie des Sozialismus halten wir fest. Dasselbe gilt für die Utopie Mitteleuropa. Was de facto sich in Mitteleuropa abspielt, davon wird sie nicht berührt” (p. 187).

The repudiation of the idea of a common cultural or of a socialist Europe displays at least a modicum of engagement and familiarity with other visions of Europe. If *Merkur* alleges that these utopias are untouched by reality then what does it consider as the relevant factor in the discussion? Crucially, as the following section will show, *Merkur* in this initial phase does not feel compelled to situate or to include Eastern Europe as part of a new European identity, or to proclaim a new European beginning. Instead, *Merkur* prefers to focus on the institutional and procedural aspects of the political developments.

4.3.3 The Free-Market Road to Democracy

A majority of *Merkur*’s texts emphasize the economic and security implications of 1989 in relation to the EU and concurrent international organizations such as NATO. For example, Peter Bender writes that a possibly enlarged European

Union would change the political status quo: “[a]us einer westeuropäischen Gemeinschaft würde eine europäische Gemeinschaft, die nicht mehr identisch wäre mit der Nato”.⁷¹ Another text by an American writer, Daniel Bell, stresses the economic aspects, which he refers to as the “Einschluß Osteuropas in einen europäischen Handelsblock”.⁷²

Democracy occupies a large part of the discussion about Eastern Europe, but is treated in a very different manner than in *Esprit* or *NLR*. Specifically, I would like to indicate three aspects relevant to *Merkur’s* discourse on democracy. Firstly, democratization is discussed in its global implications, rather than as a merely European phenomenon. Secondly, the connection between democracy and economic free-market reforms is considered elementary to the advent of democracy. And thirdly, there is a conviction that democracy can only ever thrive in a nation state rather than through the workings of civil society or social movements, as emphasised in *Esprit* and *NLR*.

Merkur largely concurs with and follows the then-influential “third wave theory” of democratization (as coined by Samuel Huntington) in order to explain the Eastern European transition processes, according to which these democratization processes are to be understood as part of a larger worldwide phenomenon of democratization waves.

As in *NLR*, *Merkur* eschews a distinctly European framework in favour of a discourse which sees the emergence of democracy as the result of *global*, political and economic processes. There is only one instance where Dahrendorf refers to the events of 1989 as “das Jahr der europäischen Freiheit”,⁷³ but the overall framework is not that of a distinctly European achievement as in *Esprit*.

Merkur frequently makes the point that democracy can only flourish in a free-market economy. For example, one of the articles by Lord Dahrendorf interprets the revolutions of 1989 as a quest for democracy and market economy, which is then directly equated with freedom: “Es geht um Demokratie

⁷¹ Peter Bender, ‘Über der Nation steht Europa: Die Lösung der deutschen Frage’, *Merkur*, 495 (1990), 366-376 (p. 374).

⁷² Daniel Bell, ‘Einige Ausblicke ins 21. Jahrhundert’, *Merkur*, 500 (1990), 965-972 (p. 968).

⁷³ Ralf Dahrendorf, ‘Die Sache mit der Nation’, *Merkur*, 500 (1990), 823-834 (p. 823).

und Marktwirtschaft, also um Freiheit.”⁷⁴ The quest for democracy and market economy is the main driving force for the revolutions in 1989, Dahrendorf claims: “[e]s geht schlicht um die Alternative: Bürokratie und Planwirtschaft oder Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft” (‘Deutsche Kopfschmerzen’, p. 1022). For *Merkur*, political freedom and democracy can only flourish where economic deregulation and free trade have gone before. This correlation is voiced in no uncertain terms. Indeed, the question of democracy in Eastern Europe and the chances for its success are thus directly linked to economic performance. Democracy is the main “currency” of the international system to which Eastern Europe will have to subscribe, in the same way, as it will have to absorb a free-market system as the entry ticket into an international system.

Another article even goes so far as to allege that stable and reliable Western Europe, specifically Germany, is in a position to install democracy in those countries by grace of its economic might and “organisational” capabilities: “Der europäische Osten ist auf niemanden mehr angewiesen als auf die Deutschen, auf ihre Wirtschafts- und ihre Organisationskraft. Deswegen hängen auch die Chancen der Demokratie dort von ihnen weit mehr ab als von allen anderen Westeuropäern und den Amerikanern.”⁷⁵

The discussion of democracy in Eastern Europe is interpreted as the emancipation of those states into newly sovereign, functioning nation states. *Merkur*, as was mentioned in the introductory section, places great emphasis on the relevance of the “nation”. Accordingly, when it discusses the advent of democracy in the Eastern European countries, it relates this to the formation of sovereign, democratic nation states. The German sociologist Ulrich Oevermann emphasizes here the “notwendige Verklammerung von politischem Nationalstaat und demokratischer Herrschaft”⁷⁶ in Eastern Europe. Similarly, Dahrendorf points out that 1989 has also signified the return of the sovereign nation state. In his aforementioned text ‘Die Sache mit der Nation’, he discusses

⁷⁴ Ralf Dahrendorf, ‘Deutsche Kopfschmerzen-Angst vor dem Wandel’, *Merkur*, 489 (1989), 1019-1023 (p. 1022).

⁷⁵ Claus Koch, ‘Zwischen östlichem Staatsbedürfnis und westlicher Marktgesellschaft: Experimentierfeld Deutschland’, *Merkur*, 503 (1991), 97-111 (p. 110).

⁷⁶ Ulrich Oevermann, ‘Zwei Staaten oder Einheit? Der dritte Weg als Fortsetzung des deutschen Sonderweges’, *Merkur*, 492 (1990), 91-107 (p. 91).

the return of the nation state in Europe in relation to Germany and Eastern Europe. His analysis interprets the events of 1989 as, amongst other things, a resurgence of the nation state, the sole form of governance in which democracy and freedom can flourish. For the revolutions to succeed, it was necessary

daß Länder, eben Nationalstaaten, sich als solche wiederfanden und aufhörten, bloße Versatzstücke eines in sozialistischer Fertigbauweise hergestellten Blocks zu sein. Für Polen und Tschechen und Ungarn und Rumänen und manche andere hieß im Jahre 1989 die Freiheit zugleich die Wiederkehr des souveränen Nationalstaats [...] (p. 824).

Merkur sees the role of the state in delivering and ensuring democracy as much more important than that of the civil society groups discussed extensively in *Esprit* and *NLR*. While *Merkur* welcomes the concept of a politicised “bürgerliche Zivilgesellschaft”, it is generally sceptical about its relevance in promoting democracy. This is most apparent in the fact that none of its writers are actually prominent dissidents, or members of civil society groups. Granted, Ralf Dahrendorf sketches out the position of Eastern European intellectuals in his column ‘Europäisches Tagebuch III’,⁷⁷ but their role is largely discussed as an afterthought in most articles.⁷⁸

Consequently, the possibility for exchange between East and West, which is so crucial to the declarations of a “renewal” as sketched out in *Esprit*, are completely absent here. Claus Koch, for example alleges that “die Aufbruchsbewegungen im Osten haben keine neuen Ideen in den Westen bringen können” (‘Zwischen östlichem Staatsbedürfnis’, p. 100). In short, the social movements are simply not made out to be the agents of a European renewal, a reinvigoration of political life in Europe, or as vital to establishing a social Europe. In fact, Koch’s text also takes issue with the way in which the revolutions have been appropriated by the West as representative of a romanticized democratic idea. He writes:

[d]ie gewaltlosen Volkserhebungen, welche die Implosion des Kommunismus in Osteuropa vollendeten, waren keine Revolutionen. Sie

⁷⁷ Ralf Dahrendorf, ‘Europäisches Tagebuch II’, *Merkur*, 521 (1992), 737-741.

⁷⁸ One such exception is an article by Axel Honneth, ‘Soziologie. Eine Kolumne. Konzeptionen der civil society’, *Merkur*, 514 (1992), 61-66. This article offers an attempt to define and historically locate the role and relevance of civil society in political philosophy, but is critical about what it sees as largely unclear and romanticized notions of civil society.

als Revolutionen hochzuloben, liegt heute vor allem dem liberalen Konservatismus im Westen am Herzen. Er will damit den Umsturz in Osteuropa für sich vereinnahmen, als eine Option für die westliche repräsentative Demokratie – und nebenbei für ihre politische Klasse (p. 109).

Since *Merkur's* discussion is built on the foregone conclusion that Eastern Europe will have to adapt to the "Western" political and economic system, this in turn leaves little room for discussing the potential that Eastern European civil society groups could bring to a specific European framework. Consequently, the sense of introspection and self-criticism as well as the calls for a "redemocratizing" of the European space, are absent from *Merkur's* pages.

This section has demonstrated the different interpretative frameworks which are used by the journals in their discussions of democracy in Eastern Europe. These differences are, to an extent, attributable to political left/right differences and therefore unsurprising; however, I would suggest that they are also indicative of larger disagreements about the merit and value of democracy as a common European framework. Whereas *Esprit* promotes democracy as a specifically European set of values and achievements and as the new "raison d'être" for Europe, the understanding in *NLR* and *Merkur* is markedly different. Whereas *NLR* rejects the form of liberal democracy that is being promoted in those countries, *Merkur* aligns itself with a specific discourse of the political Right, which emphasizes the role of the economy and nation state to functioning democracies in Eastern Europe. Democracy is not posited as an ideal in its own right and certainly not a European achievement.

4.3.4 Maastricht and the Rapprochement between Europe East and West

Thus far, *Merkur's* discourse has been relatively unperturbed by the events of 1989. It acknowledges that fundamental changes are taking place, but the journal has neither tuned in to a sense of euphoria about Eastern Europe, which it would then have to disavow, nor is it forced to defend and readjust its own compromised position like *NLR*. *Merkur's* discussion of democracy amounts to a one-way street, since it is simply assumed that the East will be integrated into

the Western European model. Consequently, *Merkur* does not feel compelled to include or incorporate Eastern Europe as an integral or inevitable part of the European framework, or to locate it as a source of its own “renewal”. This implicit understanding is maintained throughout, as the difficult transition process takes its course. While *Merkur* also takes the line that Western Europe is in a state of democratic crisis, which becomes more and more evident in the “Maastricht” debate, it certainly does not look to Eastern Europe for a new impetus.

Up to this point there is only scant evidence of a more inclusive formulation of European identity in the wake of 1989. Rather, *Merkur* works with clearly defined boundaries between Eastern and Western Europe. Eventually, however, these strict boundaries dissolve. There are examples of articles which signal a growing acceptance of the idea that Europe will be altered not only politically, but also psychologically by the East. The distinction between Europe as a political and cultural entity is beginning to break down, and an acknowledgement towards cultural and identity questions is evident in two different texts by Christian Meier, which aim to explain and contextualise the events of the previous year. According to the author, 1989 serves as a much-needed “heilsamer Schock” which will awaken people out of their cosy “Blockmentalität” that has defined the European “Nachkriegsdenken”.⁷⁹ He also notes that the newly emerging Europe will be composed out of “sehr verschiedenen und einander noch kaum gewöhnten westlichen und östlichen Ländern” (p. 386), with the result that a new understanding of European identity will become necessary:

Und es wäre eine wichtige Aufgabe, kollektive Identifikationen auszubilden, die den neuen Verhältnissen in irgendeiner Weise entsprechen. Denn die nationale Identität hatte ja etwa die Funktion, den Einzelnen einem Ganzen zugehörig zu machen, innerhalb dessen er wirklich Teil des ins Ungemessene gewachsenen Weltgeschehens sein konnte. Und entsprechende Vorgänge innerhalb des Identitätsbereiches könnten angesichts der neuesten Geschichte notwendig werden.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Christian Meier, ‘Die “Ereignisse” und der Umbruch im Weltsystem’, *Merkur*, 495 (1990), 376-387 (p. 386).

⁸⁰ Christian Meier, ‘Vom “fin de siècle” zum “end of history”?’, *Merkur*, 500 (1990), 809-823 (p. 822).

Even so, it is too early yet to foretell how this new identity will be composed, since Europeans themselves do not yet comprehend the changes surrounding them. This, at least, is also the prevailing tenor in Claus Koch's essay published in early 1991, which alleges that "[w]as da plötzlich auf der Tagesordnung erscheint, müßte die Westeuropäer in größte Aufregung versetzen. Doch nichts dergleichen. Sie ahnen wohl, daß ein Jahrhundert europäischer Geschichte abgeschlossen ist, aber sie können die neue Tagesordnung noch nicht lesen" ('Zwischen östlichem Staatsbedürfnis', p. 100).

In ensuing articles, the question of how Eastern Europe will fit into the new Europe is posed directly in relation to the Maastricht discussion. Although *Merkur* affirms Maastricht as a positive development to bring about economic integration, the journal nonetheless also features articles which focus on the glaring gap between economic integration and political representation. More concretely, *Merkur*, like *Esprit*, bemoans the danger of a "depoliticization" of the European space, in which the voice of the European citizen – or "Citoyen", in the formulation that Koch prefers (p. 402) – goes unheard. Three texts should be mentioned in this connection: one by a French historian, Joseph Rovin, and two articles written by the aforementioned German professor of law and philosophy, Meinhard Miegel.

Rovin is perhaps better known as a frequent contributor to *Esprit*,⁸¹ and the views expressed in this article are indeed reminiscent of *Esprit's* view of Europe. For example, Rovin emphasises the historic and cultural dimensions of Europe and proclaims that it is "ohne Zweifel eine *Kulturgemeinschaft* und heute schon weitgehend eine *Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft*". In this text, Maastricht symbolizes the lag between economic integration and an increased European awareness. "Die europäische Integration ist in Maastricht vorangekommen, aber nicht das europäische Bewußtsein" (p. 208). This lack of a common awareness is a serious shortcoming, and he sees a due need to espouse a

⁸¹ Joseph Rovin, 'Europa der Vaterländer oder Nation Europa', *Merkur*, 516 (1992), 200-210. Rovin (1921-1994) was born into a German-Jewish family, but immigrated to France at an early age and converted to Catholicism. He authored numerous books on Franco-German history and cultural relations.

common value system. The question as to what exactly Europe should represent is adumbrated as follows:

[v]on der Idee einer Nation Europa sollte die Notwendigkeit eines gemeinsamen Wertebewußtseins abgeleitet werden, das vermittelt und gepflegt werden muß. Die Demokratie ist nun einmal nicht in China entwickelt worden, und die Menschenrechte wurden nicht von den Mayas formuliert (p. 209).

Rovan here advocates a shared system of values that builds on distinctly European achievements of democracy and human rights as the foundation of a shared understanding of the newly emerging Europe. The fact that a text by Rován is included in this journal might be taken as an indication that *Merkur* becomes more amenable towards an understanding of a contemporary Europe built on common historical values.

The attempt to frame European integration in a cultural and historical context is also apparent in Meinhard Miegel's articles. In his texts, untypical for *Merkur*, Maastricht is explored not as a means for economic integration but as a way of renegotiating and reconceptualizing European borders as historic conductors for "cultural exchange", rather than as the classical markers of the nation state. Miegel writes: "[m]it der Vollendung des Europäischen Binnenmarktes eröffnet sich für die derzeitigen Grenzregionen die Chance, ihre historische Funktion erneut zu übernehmen, das heißt den Übergang vom Eigenen zum Fremden fließend zu machen".⁸² Above and beyond this interpretation, he asserts that Maastricht will come to eventually impinge on the hitherto unmoved and unaffected Western Europe.

Ungleich bedeutsamer als diese europaweiten Bewegungen von Kapital, Gütern und Menschen dürfte jedoch zumindest mittelfristig die Veränderung der europäischen Psyche sein. Dabei sollte der Westen keinesfalls glauben, der Osten öffne sich einseitig westlichen Werten und Prioritäten. Dafür sind diese zu verschlissen. Vielmehr werden je länger, je stärker auch östliche Werte und Prioritäten im Westen Einfluß gewinnen. [...] Ob hieraus eine neue Synthese europäischen Denkens und europäischer Sichtweisen erwachsen wird, bleibt abzuwarten. Mit Sicherheit wird sich jedoch das europäische Bewußtsein in ganz Europa, im Osten wie im Westen, verändern.⁸³

⁸² Meinhard Miegel, 'Die Rolle Deutschlands und Europas in den Migrationen des 20. Jahrhunderts', *Merkur*, 503 (1991), 111-119 (p. 115).

⁸³ Meinhard Miegel, 'Das verunsicherte Europa', *Merkur*, 521 (1992), 733-736 (p. 736).

Miegel addresses outright for the first time in *Merkur's* articles that the Maastricht treaty will affect the European psyche. He also raises the possibility that Eastern European values and priorities will have a role to play in this new Europe, even though he fails to explain how and to what extent. Both Rován's and Miegel's texts from 1992 employ a markedly different framework than the main corpus of *Merkur's* texts from 1989 onwards. The texts formulate a more inclusive and encompassing notion of Europe and point to the changes which will eventually alter and affect Europe's "psyche" in as yet unguessed ways. Moreover, they now acknowledge European identity as a valid and relevant vector in the changing European landscape, rather than as dismissing it as the empty ideological rhetoric seen earlier by *Merkur's* editor.

4.3.5 Nationalism: Eastern "Tribalism" Versus Western Political "Civilization"

If *Merkur's* discourse moves towards a more inclusive, accommodating understanding of the newly emerging Europe, a limit is quickly reached when the question of nationalism enters the debate. *Merkur* here follows a similar line of argument to the one propagated in *Esprit* and discriminates between two different types of Europe.

According to Claus Koch, this division runs as follows. He states that "alle Westeuropäer einschließlich der Westdeutschen das Nationale hinter sich lassen wollen und keine Lust haben, es sich von den noch halbautoritären, staatsbedürftigen Osteuropäern noch einmal aufdrängen zu lassen" ('Zwischen östlichem Staatsbedürfnis', p. 99). Therefore, two different types of democracy are currently observable in Europe.

Die Demokratie, die sich die Osteuropäer jetzt errichten müssen, ist eine ganz andere Demokratie als sie in Westeuropa zur Debatte steht. Sie muß in dieser mithin vormodernen Region erst einmal repräsentativ und pluralistisch werden, um Konflikte zu bewältigen, die der Westen nicht mehr kennt. Die nur schwach mit Institutionen ausgefüllte und noch lange nicht politische Demokratie des Ostens wird sich mit den überinstitutionalisierten, nachpolitischen Demokratien des Westens nur schwer verständigen können (p. 99).

We notice here how in a similar manner to *Esprit*, the dividing line between Eastern and Western Europe is sharply drawn between “pre-modern” Eastern Europe and a “post-political” Western Europe. Koch sees no viable antidote to these contrasting developments, now that the short-lived euphoria has come to a rather abrupt end: “Kurz nur wie ein Regenbogen strahlte über dem Osten Europas die Idee der Demokratie als einer Gemeinschaft der Freien und Gleichen” (p. 106).

Instead, the spectre of nationalism is making its presence felt amongst the “semi-authoritarian” Eastern European countries, as Dahrendorf recognizes in one of his many articles on nationalism. “Das vielerörterte Thema hat eine neue Aktualität gewonnen in den Jahren der europäischen Freiheit und der deutschen Einheit” (‘Die Sache mit der Nation’, p. 828). He describes the current situation as one in which “im sicherheitspolitischen Vakuum und in der inneren Anomie des östlichen und südöstlichen Europa Gefahren lauern, gegen die kein Kraut gewachsen ist” (‘Europa der Regionen’, p. 706). These developments are dangerous, chiefly because they entail according to Dahrendorf’s analysis the splintering of a heterogeneous, but stable nation state into smaller minority groups and ethnic communities which threaten to undermine the efficacy of the nation state.

Only in Western Europe does he find the nation state still intact. “Es sieht ganz so aus, als stünde der heterogene Nationalstaat zumindest außerhalb Westeuropas heute unter Druck” (p. 704). This is especially worrisome, since Dahrendorf considers this heterogeneous nation state as “die größte Errungenschaft der politischen Zivilisation” (p. 704). The developments in Eastern Europe are therefore seen as a rejection of civilisation and a return to “tribal” existences: “jener merkwürdige und beunruhigende Prozeß, den man als Rückkehr zu den Stämmen, zur Stammesexistenz beschreiben muß” (p. 704). This regression is a response to the uneven political and economic developments in Eastern Europe, and can be understood as the “Ungeduld derer, die allzulange auf die Segnungen von Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft warten müssen” (p. 704). Empathy aside, he is nevertheless clear that these developments represent the inversion of the values of Enlightenment and

reason, and the return to Kant's "selbstverschuldete Unmündigkeit" (p. 704). Dahrendorf highlights the contrast between the irrational, tribal nationalism as one which defies and undermines the achievements of political civilization and Enlightenment.

The irrational elements of a tribal nationalism are also noted in Michael Rutschky's aforementioned text, in which he talks about his "Angstphantasien was noch kommen könnte, wenn Mitteleuropa die nationalistischen Utopien seiner diversen Ethnien weiterverfolgt" ('Mitteleuropa', p. 195). For him, the prospect of a separate "kulturelle Identität für jedes Dorf" (p. 195) presents the ultimate threat to political civilisation.

Other texts focus less on the question of the nation state and more on the development of a viable democracy in Eastern Europe in the light of nationalism; but here too the schism between the "enlightened" progressive West and the irrational political space of Eastern Europe is made explicit. Claus Koch does not shy away from a frank analysis of the chances of nationalism in Eastern and Western Europe: "[d]er Nationalismus, der in Osteuropa heraufzieht, ist, noch ehe er zum Ruf nach harter Ordnung und nach Ausschluß des Fremden wird, ein Ausdruck der Anarchie" ('Zwischen östlichem Staatsbedürfnis', p. 110). This onset of anarchy will enable authoritarian leaders to install themselves in fragile democracies which bear no resemblance to "liberalen Demokratien nach westlichem Muster" (p. 110). After all, Koch characterizes Western democracies as places in which "Nationalismus und Bonapartismus höchstens noch vorübergehend Chancen haben" (p. 110).

Interestingly, however, *Merkur* appeals to the strength of a united Europe as a potent force for good in curtailing nationalistic excesses. In the face of this danger, Dieter Grimm notes that the prospect of a united Europe becomes more appealing than ever: "angesichts der nationalen Exzesse in den ehemals sozialistischen Staaten Osteuropas kann man ein vereintes Europa nicht hoch genug einschätzen".⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Dieter Grimm, 'Verfassungsreform in falscher Hand? Zum Stand der Diskussion um das Grundgesetz', *Merkur*, 525 (1992), 1059-1073 (p. 1066).

Similar to *NLR*'s call for a universal and enlightened cosmopolitanism as a corrective against nationalist forces, *Merkur* also appeals to the guiding lights of "freedom" and Enlightenment in order to curb contemporary nationalism.

Jetzt, im Jahr 1992, sind die Hoffnungen auf eine neue Freiheit kräftig untermischt mit Zweifeln und Ängsten. Rechtsstaat und Marktwirtschaft stoßen auf beharrliche Hindernisse in den neuen Demokratien in Mittel-, Ost und Südosteuropa, und es wird noch geraume Zeit vergehen, bevor ihre Verfassungen fest in Bürgergesellschaften verankert sind. Aber das Licht flackert noch, und für diejenigen unter uns, die die Freiheit über alles andere lieben, ist nichts wichtiger als dieses Licht vor feindlichen Winden zu schützen und ihm Nahrung zu geben, so daß es ganz Europa und die Welt jenseits seiner Grenzen aufklären kann.⁸⁵

To recapitulate, we noted that *Merkur* initially relies on an instrumental political and economic conception with no attempts to incorporate or inscribe Eastern Europe as part of a common historical or cultural space. Eventually, there are indications of more inclusive formulations, which at least acknowledge the impact that Eastern Europe might eventually bring to the newly emerging Europe. However, this does not lead to a substantial or prolonged engagement. Indeed, when it comes to the question of nationalism, Eastern Europe is labelled again as the unenlightened, "tribal" or at least semi-authoritarian Other, whereas Western Europe is guided by the powers of reason.

4.4 Conclusion

The main questions outlined at the beginning of the chapter were defined as follows. How, and through what mechanisms is European identity delineated and articulated in the cultural journals, and to what extent is the European public sphere relevant and necessary to articulations of European identity? On the basis of the above discussion, we can draw the following preliminary conclusions.

Firstly it has become apparent that the formulation of European identity is treated differently in each of the journals and is moreover continually shifting within the journals themselves. At times, Eastern Europe is made out to be an

⁸⁵ Ralf Dahrendorf, 'Moralität, Institutionen und die Bürgergesellschaft', *Merkur*, 520 (1992), 557-569 (p. 558).

inalienable part of Europe, at other times Eastern Europe becomes the West's mirror image or "Other". The journals seem to veer between different mechanisms of inclusion, exclusion or mirroring but do not follow a systematic pattern. This would confirm in part also the findings of the quantitative overview, which indicated that the amount of articles about Europe does not follow a gradual increase, but occurs according to peaks and troughs in the reporting.

Secondly, generally speaking, the journals have a very different understanding of Europe and employ different criteria of relevance when discussing it. Primarily, the journals aim to further a specific agenda which they consider to be relevant in connection to Europe. It would appear, then, that the question of the journal's ideological background is a much more salient factor in determining how the discussion about Europe will unfold. In other words, the political, religious and cultural prejudices that define the profile of each of these journals also determine their view on 1989 and the consequences for Europe.

While *Esprit* and *NLR* emphasise the role of civil society groups, they highlight various ways in which these groups might bring about a social or political renewal. *Merkur* dismisses altogether the relevance of these social movements to a European framework and is in any case unconvinced by the need for such a renewal: after all, it is expected that Eastern Europe will simply conform to the Western European model. Consequently, disagreement prevails over the criteria of relevance in discussing these issues. While *Esprit* considers the understanding of a politically divided, but culturally and historically united European continent as integral, this view is not at all shared in the other journals. In *NLR* it does not feature as a relevant category, and in *Merkur's* opinion the concept of the common European home is in fact a spurious claim. Similarly, while *Esprit* promotes democracy as a specifically European achievement and a unifying element that will become the new *raison d'être* of the European political landscape, *NLR* and *Merkur*, for different reasons, beg to differ. Neither of these two journals addresses democracy in a specifically European context, but they instead emphasise the global dimension of democracy and the link between democracy and a free-market economy. Therefore, *Esprit's* vision of Europe as bound by the values of progressive,

liberal democracies does not emerge as a commonly agreed framework. We can conclude that no overarching debate or acknowledgement between these divergent views is taking place here and that a common prism on how to evaluate the events of 1989 in a European context is missing.

This brings me to the third point. Throughout this chapter I argued that the topic of nationalism provokes a compelling response in all of the journals. While *Esprit* and *Merkur* see the phenomenon as an atavistic development that affects mainly Eastern Europe, *NLR* maintains that nationalism in Eastern Europe is just a variation of an old European affliction. All journals agree, however, that nationalism, with its nationalistic, populist and racist tendencies, presents a major threat to, or inversion of, European Enlightenment values, defined as those of Enlightenment and Reason. Each of the journals singles out slightly different keywords that Enlightenment connotes – “Progress” and “Emancipation of the People” in *NLR*, “Reason” and “Freedom” in *Merkur*, and “Progressive” and “Liberal” Ideas” in *Esprit*. Yet the perceived threat of nationalism galvanizes these intellectuals into formulating what Europe allegedly stands for. Amidst the confusion and discord of how the new Europe should be understood, the threat of nationalism acts as a catalyst, I would contend, that triggers a consensual rejection of nationalism in favour of a liberal, democratically defined Europe which celebrates values of reason and enlightened governance. This shared sense of European identity is, however, less the result of an internal, gradual process of increasing European debate and intellectual exchange than motivated by the sudden need to confront emerging questions of democracy and to ward off the threat of increasing nationalism.

Based on these observations, how relevant is a common public sphere to formulating European identity? Certain common points of reference and the rephrasing of arguments between the journals have been noticeable only to a limited extent. Yet this shared view of European identity as defined by what we might call “Enlightenment values” has occurred here less as the outcome of argumentative dialogue and exchange than in response to an external perceived “threat”. The hypothesis was that processes of debate and increased

interconnectivity would be relevant and integral to the articulation of a more defined discursive sense of European identity. Yet in this instance, the question of nationalism has been more pertinent to formulating a common European identity than processes of argumentative exchange and debate between the journals. Thus, one might tentatively observe a “reverse link” between the public sphere and identity formation. Not the public sphere has shaped a common identity, rather, one might suggest, the galvanizing of a common European identity has shaped a public sphere, in which criteria of relevance overlap.

The following chapter will analyse the discussion of the journals eleven years on and will aim to provide a more conclusive answer as to whether the EPS can contribute to a sense of a European identity that is the synthesis of an inclusive dialogue of debate, dialogue and transnational exchange.

Chapter 5

Reaching Outwards and Retreating Inwards. Discussion in the Journals, 2003-2006

Despite Western worries over Eastern Europe's readiness for sharing Europe's alleged liberal democratic, "enlightened" values, the process of political "reintegration" eventually led to the membership of those countries in May 2004. This chapter's analysis will begin in 2003, and although the question of the Eastern European accession still features to some degree in the journals, the main focus of debate has shifted elsewhere. At this stage, the discussion about the proposed European Constitution, and more pertinently its rejection by the French voters in 2005 provide the background for several discussions about the state of Europe. Yet the American-led Iraq invasion in 2003 provides the trigger for a shared debate across all the journals about Europe's role in the world and the values it should or could project.

5.1 *Esprit*

Esprit's overarching concern during 1989-92 was with heightening European historical awareness and with rejuvenating its democratic procedures towards a more participatory, direct democracy. Especially in 2003-2004, the discussion has become centred on defining European values on a philosophical and ethical level, while the question of what Europe signifies politically and historically seems to have solidified somewhat: the "historically reunited" Europe, as defined in the previous chapter, presents the "true" Europe. Even though this definition has become part of *Esprit's* repertoire, the journal feels compelled to explore in detail what exactly the values of this "true" Europe now amount to.

The question of values is pivotal, *Esprit's* editor-in-chief Olivier Mongin claims, since "des valeurs ne sont pas un supplément d'âme mais irriguent inéluctablement les décisions à venir concernant le futur de l'Europe [...] et du

reste du monde.”¹ What is perhaps most striking in the unfolding debate about European values is that, although it arises out of a sense of “crisis” about Europe’s role in the world, *Esprit* does not develop these values in opposition to a negative Other. Rather, as the following discussion aims to show, European values are formulated as a vision of cosmopolitan understanding and acceptance of the Other. The last chapter has demonstrated how in its discussion of Eastern Europe, *Esprit* veered between formulations of inclusion and exclusion. However, this chapter will argue that, eleven years on, *Esprit* strives to circumvent these codes of inclusion/exclusion as a basis for European identity and to formulate positively defined values in its stead. Evidently, some of these texts are marked by a tension between these two possibilities. On the one hand, there is an underlying desire to establish limits and borders which can delineate the divisions between European and Non-European; on the other hand there is an aspiration to the philosophical ideal of openness, acceptance, inclusion and the attempt even to dissolve the distinction between Self and Other. Both tendencies are apparent to greater or lesser degree at different points in time.

5.1.1 The Constitutional Treaty: Completing the European Chapter

Post -1989

The debate about the proposed Constitutional treaty is a central theme in *Esprit*, even though neither *Merkur* nor *NLR* share this interest. Generally speaking, there is no common or overlapping debate about the merits or disadvantages of the Constitution between the journals, but is confined mainly to *Esprit*. The journal’s point of departure is that the ongoing national debate in France – dominated by the protest of the French Left revolving around a social Europe versus a neoliberal Europe – is an essentially displaced debate which fails to focus on the “real” issue that the Constitution raises.

This “real issue”, according to Mongin, is the urgent task of finalising an historic definition of Europe which can no longer be avoided in the wake of the events of 1989 and more recently of 9/11. “[L]e déplacement du débat sur le

¹ Olivier Mongin, ‘L’Union européenne, l’Europe et ses valeurs?’, *Esprit*, 298 (2003), 19-24 (p. 24).

modèle social est également significatif pour l'Europe, pour une Europe qui ne peut plus, après 1989, après le 11 septembre 2001, se soustraire à une entreprise de redéfinition historique."² This analysis of the ongoing French debate as a mere displacement for the allegedly "real" issues proved, with the benefit of hindsight, to be rather ill-judged. For the French No-Vote in 2005 was a demonstration of how serious the French felt about concerns for a social Europe. Yet although social issues are mentioned during 2003-04 by *Esprit's* editors and writers, those who opposed the Constitution on these grounds are criticized for harbouring anti-European sentiments and French isolationist leanings.³ In the wake of the No-Vote, *Esprit* did eventually wake up to these "displaced" concerns and engaged more thoroughly with the social dimension, we shall see later on. However, during 2003-04 the Constitution is presented as a project with an altogether "nobler" purpose than providing adequate welfare provisions for European citizens.

At the time, *Esprit* aims to present the prospective Constitution as a positive European success story which will codify European values into a positive historical and political framework. One *Esprit* editorial maintains that it "comporte une signification historique profonde et apporte des novations importantes."⁴ The Constitution is made out to be the manifestation of a positively defined Europe which elevates 1989 and the developments thereafter as the defining European narrative. The rationale for the Constitution is presented as the completion of the European project. Padis declares for example that the Constitution will redefine Europe as follows: "[I]a Constitution n'a pas pour vocation d'accoucher d'une 'nation Europe' mais doit aider à dégager l'originalité de la communauté européenne comme invention institutionnelle et comme projet historique."⁵ More than that, it will aid Europe in

² Olivier Mongin, 'Les deux préalables d'un débat sur l'Europe. Le socialisme et la mondialisation', *Esprit*, 309 (2004), 67-74 (p. 72).

³ See Marc Olivier Padis, 'Constitution européenne: que veut dire la bataille du "non"?', *Esprit*, 308 (2004), 6-14.

⁴ Éditorial, 'Désamours européens', *Esprit*, 306 (2004), 3-5 (p. 4).

⁵ Marc-Olivier Padis, 'Le moment postfédéral de l'Europe: Introduction', *Esprit*, 291 (2003), 6-8 (p. 9).

a necessary “reconnaissance de ses valeurs”⁶ and serve to answer “la question identitaire” (p. 10).

An article by Christophe Leonzi and Fabien Raynaud provides further elaboration of these points.⁷ In their view, the Constitution would represent the culmination of Europe’s success story since 1989, with its difficult integration of disparate social, cultural and political systems between Eastern and Western Europe.

Cette nouvelle étape de nature politique vise à relancer la dynamique de l’intégration européenne, dans le contexte des bouleversements intervenus en Europe et dans le monde depuis 1989. Cette refondation du projet européen s’efforce de donner à l’Union une identité et un contenu politique à la mesure des défis auxquels elle est confrontée depuis l’effondrement du monde soviétique (p. 130).

Not all the arguments for the Constitution are phrased so grandiloquently, but are buttressed by more concrete and pragmatic arguments. Politically, the Constitution will aid the “renforcement de la légitimité fondatrice par un socle démocratique plus solide” (p. 131) since it can satisfy the legitimacy requirements of the newly enlarged Union. Padis similarly points out that it will formalise the hitherto largely informal relations within the European Union and “fixer les règles du jeu avant l’asphyxie institutionnelle” (‘Constitution européenne’, p. 7). Ultimately, though, Leonzi and Raynaud always invoke the historical dimension to make their case. The authors assert that a rejection of the Constitution would be tantamount to “un refus implicite du processus d’élargissement de l’Union européenne engagé depuis la chute du mur de Berlin” (p. 147). In so saying, they allege that those who reject the Constitution are in fact Cold War retrogrades who refuse to acknowledge the realities of the post-1989 world and the ensuing enlargement process. Instead, they are longing for a return to “une Europe organelle plus ou moins mythique, organisée autour d’un couple franco-allemand mû par la France” (p. 147).

With this sleight of hand, the case for the Constitution is inevitably tied to a vote for or against the enlargement, for or against affirming and welcoming

⁶ Olivier Ferrand, ‘Trois scénarios pour l’avenir de l’Europe’, *Esprit*, 291 (2003), 9-32 (p. 21).

⁷ Christophe Leonzi, Fabien Raynaud, ‘Une nouvelle phase européenne? Lecture du projet de Constitution européenne’, *Esprit*, 310 (2004), 129-148.

Europe's path since 1989, for a forward-looking Europe which embraces the new realities against an alleged mythical and backward-looking Europe of bygone days.

This argument retraces points already raised during 1989-1992, according to which Eastern Europe is now returning to its true spiritual home. The late Bronislaw Geremek emphasises in an article from 2003 that “c'est l'élargissement à l'Est, illustrant la fin de la guerre froide et celle de la division de l'Europe, qui donne sa réalité à l'idée d'unification de l'Europe.”⁸ And in the same vein, the Hungarian Miklos Haraszti speaks once again of the “rêve historique”,⁹ which began in 1989 and is now being completed through the political act of enlargement in May 2004 and the prospective Constitution for Europe. These views are reiterated here to signal that those countries which underwent the revolutions of 1989, together with the old Europe, constitute the *true* version of Europe, as they share the same values. Countries such as Turkey are, however, not inherently “European”, for reasons given as follows.

5.1.2 The Debate about Turkey: A Challenge to Europe's Self-Conception

On the matter of a possible entry of Turkey into the EU, Olivier Ferrand makes the following point.

Ce pays [Turkey] représente en effet un changement de nature de la construction européenne. Jusqu'ici, les élargissements ne posaient pas de difficulté car ils concernaient des États appartenant au cœur de l'Europe: intuitivement, ils avaient vocation à devenir membre de l'Union ('Trois scénarios', p. 28).

According to this quotation, the European member states from the 2004 enlargement round are “intuitively” European, whereas Turkey would alter the nature of what it means to be European. This is also apparent in an interview with the Turkish economist Kemal Derviş.¹⁰ Towards the end of the interview, the following statement is put to the interviewee by *Esprit's* editors.

⁸ Bronislaw Geremek, 'Penser l'Europe comme communauté', *Esprit*, 298 (2003), 5-12 (p. 6).

⁹ Miklos Haraszti, 'Plus d'Europe, mais pas moins d'Amérique', *Esprit*, 296 (2003), 178-180 (p. 178).

¹⁰ Kemal Derviş, 'L'Europe et la Turquie: la frontière, le projet politique et l'histoire', *Esprit*, 309 (2004), 3-9.

L'Europe s'est construite sur le refus de la shoah; elle a défini initialement ses frontières d'un point de vue éthique. Puisqu'il est question ici de savoir ce qu'est l'Europe, sur quelles bases elle peut se construire, la Turquie a-t-elle un rapport particulier avec ce qui s'est produit lors de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale [...]? (p. 9).

More interesting than Dervis's response (in which he outlines the alleged deep relationship of respect and dialogue which Turkey has enjoyed with its Jewish community throughout history), is *Esprit's* assertion that Europe is defined by the common rejection of the Holocaust and that since Turkey does not share the Holocaust as a central, defining experience in relation to its European history, the country's membership in the EU would endanger this construction.

This view is based on the alleged common rejection of the Holocaust by all European countries which perpetrated it, or were to varying degrees implicated or affected by it. Turkey was no participant in either of these European events; therefore, the country's potential membership would have to be justified through other means and thus would present a departure from the current self-understanding of Europe. It should be added, however, that positing the Holocaust as constitutive of a European identity (a topic briefly discussed also in Chapter 2.2.2 'Current European Identity Models') is not propagated by *Esprit* repeatedly or systematically throughout. Moreover, it does not form the basis of an outright rejection of Turkey as a possible candidate country. Rather, *Esprit* aims to incorporate Turkey and the challenge which it poses to perceived notions of "Europeaness", by emphasising that European values are able to reach outwards towards the unknown Other. In order to understand this form of reasoning, it is necessary to digress from the subject of Turkey for a moment and to turn to the philosophical debate conducted in *Esprit* at this time on the subject of European values. This will subsequently shed some light on *Esprit's* arguments for Turkey's entry into the European Union.

5.1.3 Philosophical Questionings of Europe: The Legacy of Jan Patočka

An *Esprit* dossier entitled 'Le Destin suspendu de l'Europe' in its December

2004 issue is key to understanding the journal's thinking on Europe.¹¹ This dossier, which is mainly devoted to the thought of the Czech phenomenologist philosopher Jan Patočka (1907-1977),¹² and to a lesser degree to the philosopher and theologian Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929),¹³ offers a substantive and complex exploration of their philosophical enquiry on the meaning of the concept Europe. Moreover, the analysis contained in these essays provide an insight into *Esprit's* value-led sense of European identity, and the relevance it assigns to historical memory in understanding, and furthering such a European identity.

Mongin explains in the introduction to the dossier that its aim is to reassess and reinterpret Patočka's philosophical inquiry into the concept of Europe, which was deeply influenced by the caesura of the First World War and the experience of the slaughter in the trenches.¹⁴ Patočka's thought serves as a reminder of the need to maintain an appreciation of the moral and ethical responsibilities of the entire twentieth century history. Europe once stood for a certain way of life that encapsulated cultural and intellectual traditions and an awareness of its moral and ethical duties, which were reduced to rubble with the First World War. Regrettably, Mongin says, the 1914-1918 war is today largely eclipsed by the Second World War as a common reference point in the European consciousness, yet there is due need to return to an understanding of Europe as outlined by Patočka, especially in the current climate in which Europe is mainly understood as a "Europe procédurale" (p. 7).

According to Patočka's thought, Europe must be understood as defined by its "vocation universelle". Europe is anchored in distinct roots but this does not mean that Europe is forever tied to these roots. Rather, Europe is able

¹¹ Dossier, 'Le destin suspendu de l'Europe', *Esprit*, 310 (2004), 6-73. Of the seven articles in the dossier, five are discussed here: Olivier Mongin, 'Jan Patočka, la rupture de 1914 et l'*Esprit* européen', 20-27; Marc Crépon, 'Penser l'Europe avec Patočka. Réflexions sur l'altérité', 28-44; Frédéric Worms, 'Quelle universalité pour l'Europe?', 50-56; Jean Marc Ferry, 'Quelle Europe chrétienne?', 45-50; Abdennour Bidar, 'Le destin de l'Europe spirituelle', 64-73.

¹² See 'Research Focus: The Philosophical Work of Jan Patočka', Institute for Human Sciences <http://www.iwm.at/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=46&Itemid=243> [accessed 18 January 2008].

¹³ See Arnold Betz, 'Franz Rosenzweig, Essay and Exhibit', Divinity Library Jean & Alexander Beard Library, Vanderbilt University <<http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/rosenzw/rosenart.html>> [accessed 2 May 2008].

¹⁴ Olivier Mongin, 'Expérience du front et pensée de l'Europe', *Esprit*, 310 (2004), 6-8.

always to “transcend” these through the application of reason. Marc Crépon’s text rephrases Patočka’s leading ideas as follows.

C’est sa vocation universelle qui définit l’Europe. Si elle se trouve tributaire d’un triple héritage (la Grèce antique, le christianisme et la philosophie des Lumières) le caractère particulier de cet ancrage (historique et géographique) se trouve transcendé dans l’avènement d’une rationalité qui se veut universelle (‘Penser l’Europe’, p. 30).

The use of reason is for Patočka the guiding principle of such a universal calling. However, this rationality must always imply an “ouverture au reste du monde” (p. 32) and an overriding belief in “idéaux humanistes” (p. 34). Europe must open up and constantly “decentre” itself, in order to remain universal. However, it must do so *without* imposing itself on the rest of the world, but remain guided by the principles of reason and a constant questioning of its own role. Frédéric Worms formulates this as follows: “l’impossibilité d’abandonner et même la nécessité de préserver quelque chose d’universel pour l’humanité, incarné dans la raison” (‘Quelle universalité’, p. 52).

However, this ideal of a benevolent and enlightening European “vocation universelle” has been distorted or perverted throughout European history, Patočka notes, by three possible scissions or threats: firstly, by nationalism, because it entails chauvinistic and exclusionist traits; secondly, by totalitarianism in all its forms because it violates central tenets of the dignity and sanctity of every human being; and thirdly, by imperialism, with its tendency to view Europe as a superior civilisation. These aberrations, he maintains, have led to a state in which Europe does not remain open towards the rest of the world but runs the danger of turning inwards on its own imagined roots. Consequently, from a European standpoint, the identity of the other is always experienced “contre un premier risque ou une première menace, son repli sur une identité particulière ou nationale” (‘Quelle universalité’, p. 52).

Esprit picks up Patočka’s enquiry by raising the question as to whether it is possible to define Europe in such an open, extended manner, rather than through its limits. This would require that a European identity projects positive ideals towards the outside world. “Mais cette identité ne s’atteint pas seulement par les menaces ou les violations qui la révèlent *en la brisant*. Elle s’atteint

aussi par les actes et les œuvres qui la révèlent en l'affirmant" (p. 55). Rather than attaining an identity in response to threats, only an affirmative understanding of European identity will lead to a state in which Europe can open up towards alleged threats and strive towards "une ouverture sur l'altérité, ou plutôt les 'altérités' qu'elle rencontre en elle et au-dehors d'elle" (p. 54).

Abdenour Bidar's article then even claims that this would provide the basis for a new "homme européen" for whom "l'Europe doit lui apparaître comme un élément *constitutif* de sa propre conscience de soi" ('Le destin', p. 67). Evidently, this new "European man" would be a "homme sans horizon" (p. 70) who stands for universal values which exclude the above-mentioned aberrations of "nationalismes, totalitarismes, impérialismes que dénonce Patočkà" (p. 70).

The point of this digression was to explain the two main principles behind *Esprit's* reasoning outlined in this dossier. Firstly, the necessity for a positively defined European identity, secondly the requirement to "project" such a positive identity beyond Europe's shores in a spirit of openness rather than by creating walls and borders. These are also at the root of *Esprit's* discussions about Europe and Turkey, to which I now return.

5.1.4 Turkey and Islam: Incorporating the Religious Other

We began by saying that the Turkey discussion includes references to European roots and values, especially to recent European history, from which they note Turkey has been absent. I also suggested that this does not lead to declaration about the incompatibility of Turkey and Europe, but is presented as a chance for a new understanding of Europe. This argument is developed most clearly in Jean Marc Ferry's 'Quelle Europe chrétienne?'. The article probes the problems of modern day Europe in relation to questions of EU enlargement. Ferry considers Patočkà's views as perspicacious now, as when initially published, for he begins by saying that "[a]près 1989, l'appel à un élargissement de l'Union fait résonner cette parole en écho aux réflexions de Patočkà, tandis que se profile le spectre d'un nouveau fondamentalisme portant exclusion de ce qui n'est pas 'européen'" (p. 45). In the light of the new forms of exclusion of this

non-European”, he aims to come up with alternative ways of thinking about this non-European Other.

Ferry acknowledges that reflection on Europe needs to begin with “une recherche de son juste principe de fermeture” (p. 47). To him, Europe is clearly defined by Christianity; defined here however as Christian spirit and ethics, rather than solely the practising of the religion. Defining Europe as a Christian space does *not* therefore imply in his mind that further enlargement is restricted only to fellow Christians: “[i]l n’implique en aucune façon que l’élargissement doive se limiter aux peuples de tradition chrétienne” (p. 48). Rather, Christianity should be understood as the guiding European ethos – “le principe européen doit aussi à l’*Esprit* du christianisme” (p. 49) – which provides the underlying cultural foundation of the continent that has enabled a spirit of openness and tolerance to develop in Europe in the first place.

Those who are seeking to exclude Turkey on the grounds of its religious alterity are mistakenly falling back into negative schemes of us and them, and into an “argument d’exclusion de tout ce que n’est pas ‘européen’ au sens de l’héritage culturel” (p. 47) which is, “la voie la plus immédiate et la plus facile” (p. 47). The real challenge, however, is to build European identity as one “dont le principe consiste dans la disposition à s’ouvrir aux autres identités” (p. 46). This includes consequently the engagement with Turkey and the opening up of Europe’s Christian heritage, which might become necessary also for strategic reasons, Olivier Abel implies in an interview about the Turkey/Europe debate.¹⁵ He points out in no uncertain terms that without Turkey’s membership “[c]e qui m’inquiète, c’est que sans la Turquie, l’Europe n’est qu’un club postchrétien, un club de retraités de l’histoire” (p. 51).

In the remainder of this section, I would also like briefly to broach the topic of “Islam and Europe”, broadly defined. Even though these are different issues, the connecting thread here is the cultural and religious Otherness and the question of how, according to *Esprit*, it can be overcome. The reason why this topic does not occupy a larger section here is because it simply is not discussed in *Esprit* extensively. The topic carries much greater weight in

¹⁵ Olivier Abel, Michel Marian, ‘Le débat européen sur la Turquie. Quelle Europe? Quel projet? Quelle périphérie?’, *Esprit*, 322 (2006), 45-58 (p. 51).

Merkur, as we will see later, where it is discussed as a direct challenge to Western values. *Esprit* aims at a more dialogic engagement with Islam, but it does not paint a uniformly harmonious picture either and acknowledges to some extent threats posed by “Islamic fundamentalism” and “Islamic terrorism”. Mongin’s aforementioned text ‘L’Union européenne’, for example, points out that the continent needs to “répondre à la guerre des cultures, des identités et des religions qui est annoncée par certains, à la guerre idéologique et stratégique qui a cours depuis le 11 septembre 2001” (p. 22).

Similarly, Bruno Tertrais maintains that Europe is “une cible de choix pour la mouvance islamiste”,¹⁶ and that Islamic terrorism “pourrait être, *volens nolens*, l’une des clés intellectuelles et politiques d’une redéfinition à venir de la notion d’Occident” (p. 113). However, Tertrais’s text does not represent the majority opinion of *Esprit* articles, which by and large handle the topic more gingerly. Most texts aim to intervene in the larger debate, which, Olivier Abel declares, “oscille entre une vision anhistorique de l’islam et le scénario d’une radicalisation rampante de l’Islamisme.”¹⁷ Several of *Esprit*’s articles aim to reach a more positive understanding of the role of Islam in Europe, at which point the imprint of Patočka’s thought becomes recognisable again.

For example, the philosopher Abdennour Bidar alleges that Europe could offer Islam Europe’s universal moral and political values, which “éduquent nos consciences depuis le siècle des Lumières”.¹⁸ If it were possible to inscribe Islam into this culture of Enlightenment, Europe in return would learn to accept Islamic beliefs and enrich its own heritage. Consequently, Islam would not remain “un corps étranger, mais comme l’une des dimensions fondatrices de la conscience européenne” (p. 12). Abdelwahab Meddeb, a French-Tunisian writer and poet, concurs in his article that precisely these universal Enlightenment principles emanating from Europe could exert an “effet didactique sur l’islam, dans la guerre qu’il mène contre ses propres démons.”¹⁹ He concludes: “[l]a

¹⁶ Bruno Tertrais, ‘La question occidentale’, *Esprit*, 307 (2004), 114-129 (p. 112).

¹⁷ Éditorial, ‘L’élargissement européen, la Turquie et l’islam’, *Esprit*, 291 (2003), 4-5 (p. 4).

¹⁸ Abdennour Bidar, ‘Lettre d’un musulman européen. L’Europe et la renaissance de l’islam’, *Esprit*, 296 (2003), 9-31 (p. 12).

¹⁹ Abdelwahab Meddeb, ‘Europe, les conditions de l’universel’, *Esprit*, 301 (2004), 6-12.

reconquête d'une telle universalité aidera véritablement l'islam à se séparer de l'islamisme, pour la paix du monde" (p. 12).

The stress is placed here on European values acting as a universalising influence, rather than retreating into an adversarial encounter between two value systems. Again, the ideal of striving towards openness while at the same time defining and reassessing the own European heritage is central to *Esprit's* discourse at this time.

To conclude, it remains to be seen how durable and viable such a construction could prove to be in reality, where the luxury of intellectual equivocation and ambiguity obviously does not exist to this extent. Even so, I would argue that as an intellectual discourse, it represents a real step forward from the long-established scheme of a negative "othering".

5.1.5 Europe after the Iraq Invasion: Reasserting Universal Values

On the question of Europe's role in the run-up to the US-led invasion of Iraq, unanimity exists between *Esprit*, *Merkur* and *NLR* that Europe's behaviour represented a foreign policy debacle which exposed its inability for concerted action. All journals also include a discussion of what Europe's role in the future should consist of. In what follows, I would like to analyse how and to which end European values are highlighted in *Esprit's* interventions in response to the American-led invasion.

The need to promote European values as a positive counterforce towards the hegemony of the United States is explained by Mongin.

Si les valeurs propres à l'Europe antinazie et à l'Europe antistalinienne ont correspondu à des phases significatives de la formation de l'Union, si les valeurs de ces combats conservent tout leur sens, inscrire l'Union européenne dans l'histoire mondiale exige de promouvoir des valeurs spécifiques la distinguant de celles qu'impose de l'autre côté de l'Atlantique une stratégie néo-impériale de l'après-guerre froide ('L'Union européenne', p. 24).

While some European values still retain their validity today, Mongin deems it necessary to promote values that distinguish Europe from the neo-imperial tendencies which the US stands accused of. European values fulfil for Mongin the function of formulating an adequate response to what is perceived as

American “hyperpuissance”²⁰ in the “disorderly” post-9/11 world,²¹ when Europe has weakened and runs the danger of letting the US become the uncontested “empire du monde”.²²

Olivier Ferrand comes to a similar conclusion about Europe’s current standing. “Les grands États européens ont pratiquement disparu de la scène politique internationale, où les États-Unis règnent aujourd’hui sans partage”. In order to counter this tendency, he notes “il faut avoir une identité propre, un modèle à vocation universelle”, which will thrust Europe into a more decisive and defining role on the world stage (‘Trois scénarios’, p. 22).

If this is the prescribed remedy for Europe’s malaise, the question that follows is which values Europe should “promote” as a counterbalance to US dominance? This is indeed a tricky point, for although American “neoimperialism” is criticised and the need to counterbalance to US dominance spelled out, the majority of *Esprit* articles from that time claim that, despite these frictions, Europe and the US share essentially the same value system. Consider, for example, this exposition by Percy Kemp.

On pourrait en fait dire que l’Europe, aujourd’hui, ce sont les États-Unis. L’Europe est absente parce que l’Amérique est la prolongation des valeurs européennes. Cela a été le cas tout au long de la guerre froide, quand le camp occidental, mené par les États-Unis, était censé représenter les valeurs démocratiques occidentales et le camp socialiste mené par l’Union soviétique, les valeurs du despotisme oriental. L’Europe paie en ce sens le prix de la primauté qu’elle a accordée à l’Amérique dans la seconde moitié du siècle dernier.²³

Effectively, Kemp declares, Europe is still an undeniable part of a Western, democratic value system with the US at its helm. The dominant role of the US in shaping Europe throughout the Cold War, he notes, is undeniable and can not be shaken off. Therefore Kemp concludes that Europe will be unable to distinguish itself in real terms from the US. “C’est là le principal problème de

²⁰ The term “hyperpuissance” was coined by the French foreign minister at the time, Hubert Vedrine, to describe the US position in the wake of the Iraq invasion; it is not an expression used directly by *Esprit*.

²¹ An allusion to Tzvetan Todorov’s book: *The New World Disorder: Reflections of a European*, transl. by Andrew Brown (Oxford: Polity Press, 2005)

²² Olivier Mongin, ‘La rudesse des temps, ou l’entrée dans l’après-guerre froide’, *Esprit*, 298 (2003), 5-9 (p. 9).

²³ Percy Kemp, ‘Chaos et cosmos de l’après-guerre froide’, *Esprit*, 298 (2003), 10-39 (p. 22).

l'Union européenne, qui ne pourra le résoudre qu'en se démarquant culturellement et ethniquement des États-Unis d'Amérique" (p. 23). This is also voiced in the aforementioned text by Bruno Tertrais, who notes that Europe is an inseparable part of the "identité occidentale" ('La question occidentale', p. 101) which encompasses "la communauté euro-américaine" (p. 110).

Thus, the prospect of demarcating European values from American ones, which Mongin and Ferrand maintain as necessary, is not going to work according to these other writers, who emphasise that Europe still stands in America's postwar shadow and that, consequently, Europe's value system could be more aptly described as "Western", rather than distinctly "European". It is important to keep in mind that, despite French anguish and insecurity along the lines of "l'Europe peut elle vraiment s'affirmer face aux Etats-Unis?",²⁴ the rift between Europe and the US is always understood as one of different policies, rather than as a cultural rift or a clash of values. This position is also put forward by *Merkur* and *NLR*, and there appears to be agreement that European values are identical with Western, meaning American values. Unanimity prevails about the fact that European values are not distinct enough to stand on their own, and that Europe can only survive within the framework of a *Western* identity, a point which will be illustrated in the subsequent sections.

What, then, does *Esprit* propose in the face of the perceived American neoimperial current? While it is not possible to effectively demarcate European values in contradistinction to American ones, the notion that European values are already always universal values gains traction in *Esprit's* articles from that time. *Esprit*, I would argue, makes a virtue out of necessity: the impossibility of defining European values in the wake of the US-Europe crisis leads to a reassertion of European values as *universal* values which are only indistinguishable as such because they have already been disseminated so effectively.

This is evident in the aforementioned article with the apposite title 'Europe, les conditions de l'universel', by Abdelwahab Meddeb. His intellectual quest, as the summary in the table of contents describes, is raising the question

²⁴ Marc-Olivier Padis, 'La culture politique américaine, au singulier et au pluriel', *Esprit*, 307 (2004), 114-129 (p. 119).

of la vocation de l'homme européen" (p. 2) in the light of "positions politiques que l'actualité a provoquées" (p. 6), referring to the Europe/US divide. Meddeb refers to ideals of "cosmopolitique" (p. 11), as the expression of reason and humanism, and explains that the calling of "l'homme européen" can be traced back to: "la diffusion universelle des Lumières" (p. 11). His article implies that European Enlightenment values are still central today, but are by nature always also "universal" and therefore not distinctly recognizable as European ones.

Another text by the familiar pen of Timothy Garton Ash frames these ideas in slightly more pragmatic terms.²⁵ Ash calls upon the EU as a political entity, rather than Europe in general, to act on these universally valid cosmopolitan ideals which emanated from the Enlightenment and which still stand today. They can also act as a corrective to the current American aberrations:

[l]'Union européenne devrait servir à la construction d'un monde libre aider à parvenir à ce qu' Emmanuel Kant, dans son *Idée d'une histoire universelle d'un point de vue cosmopolitique*, ce texte extraordinaire appelait 'une union civile complète de l'espèce humaine' (p. 119).

To sum up, the debate in *Esprit* on European values is precipitated by a sense of crisis over its own inability to counter or match up to the US. Yet the recognition that the US and Europe are fundamentally intertwined leads to a reassertion of European values as *universal* ones, reasserting thereby the centrality of the French, and by extension European "vocation universelle".

5.1.6 After The French No-Vote

After the French No-Vote on the Constitution in May 2005, the emphasis of the debates, I will endeavour to show in the following, changes from a value-based one towards more strategic, geopolitical concerns about political expediency and efficacy. The continued US/Europe discussion, which will be briefly summarized, serves to illustrate this point. Thereafter I will return towards the theme of European enlargement in the aftermath of the rejection of the Constitution by the French electorate.

²⁵ Timothy Garton Ash, 'Y a-t-il des fondations morales de l'Europe?', *Esprit*, 326 (2006), 106-120.

The vexation about alleged American imperialism is still evident during 2005-06 in *Esprit*. However, now the discussion of the topic pertains more to questions of exerting diplomatic and military power, rather than to which European values might provide a counterweight towards American hegemony. For example, one *Esprit* editorial from 2006 alleges that the French No-Vote has again left Europe in a weakened position, marked by a lack of clear leadership and political will. Even so, out of this crisis a new European foreign policy must be born: “l’opposition aux États-Unis devait être l’acte fondateur d’une diplomatie européenne autonome”.²⁶ This imperative is to create “après la fin de guerre froide, une autre organisation du système international” (p. 4), which will bring about greater equilibrium in the international system, a view echoed in an extensive article from 2005 by Hassner and Tertrais.²⁷ The authors emphasize the need for a stronger, more concerted European foreign policy, based on the premise that the rejection of the Constitutional treaty has left Europe in a state of paralysis. Europe’s goal now must lie in creating a viable counterbalance to the US within the framework of international institutions. So while the idea remains facing up to undue American influence on the world stage and strengthening Europe’s voice, the emphasis is now firmly placed onto a more efficient European diplomacy, and enhanced military power.

This is evident also in the debate about Europe’s borders and future enlargement, a topic which is pushed back onto the agenda after the No-Vote, not least because for *Esprit* the two topics are inseparably intertwined. Since the Constitutional Treaty supposedly signified the completion of the European project after 1989, the rejection of the Constitution consequently constitutes in an analysis of Padis, a “référendum rétrospectif sur l’élargissement européen” and what is more also a “référendum anticipé sur l’entrée de la Turquie dans l’Union.”²⁸ Thus the protest registered by the voters also implies a rejection of enlargement processes at large. Another editorial from 2005 – with the revealing title ‘Pour une autolimitation du projet européen’ – formulates the

²⁶ Éditorial, ‘International: la césure de 2005’, *Esprit*, 321 (2006), 3-5 (p. 3).

²⁷ Pierre Hassner, Bruno Tertrais, ‘Nouvelles puissances, nouvelles menaces’, *Esprit*, 322 (2006), 59-73.

²⁸ Marc Olivier Padis, ‘Une France sans vision de l’Europe?’, *Esprit*, 314 (2005), 6-13 (p. 7).

challenge as follows: “Si le traité constitutionnel est désormais caduc, l’enjeu qu’il représentait, lui, demeure d’actualité: il nous faut désormais penser l’autolimitation du projet européen.”²⁹

This call for a discussion of Europe’s self-limitations is no mean feat, for as we ascertained in the previous section, Europe in *Esprit’s* discourse becomes strongly identified with universalist concepts and values, and ideals of openness. The problem, therefore, is how and where to draw its borders. The political scientist Helene Sjursen has pointed to this dilemma in reference to the enlargement debates: “the moral appeal of the universalist dimension makes it difficult to draw a line where Enlargement should stop. Universalist, moral principles [...] give no guidance in terms of drawing borders.”³⁰

The question for *Esprit* is how to respond to the challenge of defining borders without compromising Europe’s theoretical openness, and without completely diluting Europe’s claims to universalism. The journal achieves this by discussing current and future enlargements from a more narrowly defined political view that bypasses the “value” criterion, whilst maintaining the idea of a core Europe.

This “core” Europe, is the one created in 2004 with the enlargement of the ten Eastern European countries which represent the “true” Europe. Every subsequent enlargement, including Turkey, must be treated as a strategy for more political clout and/or enhanced security. These enlargements have no subsequent influence on the “real” Europe, which will remain unchanged. This stance is developed in a text by Christian Lequesne, which deals with French worries over the drawing of European boundaries.³¹ Lequesne concludes that France must realise that European enlargement is the only option in a post-Cold War world. If Europe does not seize the chance of bringing countries like Turkey and the Ukraine into its political sphere of influence, these countries will look to the US instead. Although future enlargement will slow the pace of internal

²⁹ Éditorial, ‘Pour une autolimitation du projet européen’, *Esprit*, 318 (2005), 3-4 (p. 4).

³⁰ Helene Sjursen, ‘Enlargement in Perspective: The EU’s Quest for Identity’, *RECON Online Working Paper*, 2007/15

<<http://reconproject.eu/projectweb/portalproject/RECONWorkingPapers.html>> [accessed 12 February 2008].

³¹ Christian Lequesne, ‘Sur les craintes françaises d’une Europe espace’, *Esprit*, 322 (2006), 28-35.

reform, it is in Europe's interest to build up its links with countries with which it shares joint interests. Europe needs to be "ouvert aux demandes d'adhésion d'une périphérie qui se démocratise et avec laquelle on a intérêt à bâtir en commun" (p. 35). Lequesne's position also underlies an article on the topic Ukraine as a possible candidate country for EU membership.³² The main thrust of the article contends that it would be in Europe's interest to develop closer ties with the Ukraine because it would increase Europe's leverage in Russian affairs, rather than revolving around issues of common values or shared cultural affinities.

Michel Foucher, a professor of political geography, expands on these ideas in a detailed and long investigation into the concept of borders and frontiers.³³ He acknowledges that representations of "européanité" include aspects such as "influence des cartes mentales, poids des solidarités historiques et des voisinages familiers [...]" (p. 87). Yet he points out that with the accession of the ten member countries of 2004, circumstances have changed. "Depuis 2004 l'Union ne s'étend plus aux acteurs d'un long passé directement commun mais à d'autres nations, plus ou moins consolidées, qui se trouvent, spatialement, en position de périphéries" (p. 91). Foucher introduces here the idea of the European peripheries, and new zones of European influences and neighbourhood agreements, which will determine Europe's future enlargement. He concludes that while the "cœur européen" (p. 91) is constituted by what was reunited with the "rupture libératrice et heureuse de 1989" (p. 91), Europe has to maintain its principal openness in order to structure its relations with the outside world, to act as an "exemple vertueux" for modern statehood and a "vecteur innovant de diffusion de la modernité" (p. 91).

Of course the three texts can be read as indications simply of a more sober and realistic discourse about Europe, after the French electorate has voted against what the Constitution was supposed to represent in *Esprit's* view. Even so, I would maintain that these texts also demonstrate the thin line which *Esprit* is walking between trying to come up with a satisfactory answer as to

³² Grygoriy Nemyria, 'L'Ukraine et l'Europe: l'histoire reprend', *Esprit*, 312 (2005), 52-64.

³³ Michel Foucher, 'L'Union politique européenne: un territoire, des frontières, des horizons', *Esprit*, 329 (2006), 86-115.

what Europe's borders are, while also maintaining the principal element of openness and "universality" which Europe is supposed to project: while Europe's "cœur" is clearly demarcated by shared history and commonalities, it must continue to extend towards other countries its enlightening and modernising influence.

5.1.7 Social Europe as the Common European Ethos

Thus far, *Esprit's* discourse has been concerned above all with questions of European enlargement, external borders and potential new applicants, with the US, and with Europe's role in the world. In this final section I would like to return to the Constitutional Treaty after the French No-Vote, which was delivered in a period of perceived French malaise and economic discontent. As I noted in the earlier section on the Constitution, most of the *Esprit* articles before the referendum had dismissed the debate about social concerns as a distraction. However, now *Esprit's* editors face up to the fact that "social concerns" are very real and tangible for the French voters. The notion of social Europe is by no means new or unprecedented in the debates about Europe (see the discussion of *NLR* 1989-1992 in the previous chapter). In this instance, *Esprit* elevates social concerns from the French national context towards the level of social Europe as a political programme with connotations of yet another moral and ethical rebirth for the whole of Europe. Again, *Esprit* stays true once more to the ideals voiced in the dossier on Patočka, which stressed the need for an internal model of *positive* identification, here in the guise of social Europe.

Unsurprisingly, several *Esprit* editorials discuss the result of the referendum in the issues of the second half of 2005 immediately after the "No-Vote". One such editorial states that the reason for the refusal lay in the discontent with the provisions for a "modèle social européen"³⁴ as proposed in the Constitutional treaty. Interestingly, *Esprit* from the outset never discusses the concept of a renegotiated social model as a matter of national concern, but insists that it can only be achieved within a European framework. The reason for this lays in a deep sense of insecurity over globalisation processes, or rather

³⁴ Editorial, 'Une Europe au pluriel', *Esprit*, 316 (2005), 4-5 (p. 5).

their deregulatory effects on the economy, working conditions and social provisions. Writers such as Mongin and Padis claim that France has been particularly hard hit by processes of economic deregulation, which have left its social model particularly exposed. By contrast, they allege that countries like the United Kingdom or the Scandinavian countries, with their more flexible economies and social models are better placed to absorb the shocks of globalisation. France, on the other hand, is in a particularly weakened position to steer these economic processes which are seemingly beyond its control to its advantage. Therefore they insist that Europe needs to renegotiate a “just” social model as a corrective to the imbalances and injustices incurred through globalisation.³⁵ This, in short, provides the premise upon which *Esprit* subsequently declares that, in the wake of the referendum, “le social donne un bon paradigme pour discuter de l’Europe” (‘Pour une autolimitation’, p. 4).

Consequently, *Esprit* makes a serious attempt to fold the French discontent over social injustice into a European matter. This is undertaken in several ways; most thoroughly perhaps in a text by Bruno Palier, a French political scientist who sketches a picture of the different European social systems, before spelling out the need for a refoundation of social provisions which would take into account current economic realities.³⁶ At its core, the text poses the question whether it is possible to maintain a social democracy based on a social compromise rather than the complete victory of neo-liberal tendencies. However, along the way, it sketches out in detail the different social models of Eastern and Western Europe and aims to formulate coherent and systematic recommendations for politically viable social reforms, which take into account the experiences of all these countries.

The eminent Franco-Czech historian and political scientist Jacques Rupnik points out in the article ‘La crise de l’Union européenne vue d’Europe centrale’ that the idea of a new social model must encompass East and West in

³⁵ See in Olivier Mongin, ‘De la Constitution européenne à la place Saint-Pierre. Métamorphoses et déroutage du langage’, *Esprit*, 314 (2005), 179-181; Marc Olivier Padis, ‘La France insulaire’, *Esprit*, 316 (2005), 47-53.

³⁶ Bruno Palier, ‘Refonder la protection sociale: les expériences européennes’, *Esprit*, 324 (2006), 53-78.

order to implement truly transeuropean policies.³⁷ Despite perceived cleavages between Eastern and Western social models, the discrepancies are in fact not that great and can and must be rethought on a transeuropean level: “[l]a redéfinition et la réforme douloureuse des “modèles” sociaux sont aujourd’hui une ambition transeuropéenne” (p. 133). Padis also notes that, ideally, Europe should become “un lieu de redistribution” (‘La France insulaire’, p. 51) yet admits that this will be difficult to achieve, given how strongly “égoïsmes nationaux” (p. 51) still prevail.

This understanding of social Europe not only as a political programme, but based on a strong ethos of social solidarity, is contained in a text by *Esprit’s* Europe editor Paul Thibaud, with which I would like to conclude the discussion about *Esprit*.³⁸ His article presents a treatment of the legacy of the Polish Solidarity movement, which it commends as the embodiment of a successful model of social solidarity. Again, one can observe *Esprit’s* enthusiasm for Poland which I referred to in Chapter Four, which in this instance is based on the notion of solidarity based on the Catholic bond and on the communitarian impulse which Emmanuel Mounier – as noted on the introduction – continuously tried to advocate as a guiding philosophy during his editorship of *Esprit*.

The article brings full circle some of the issues which *Esprit* so ardently pursued during 1989-92 and 2003-06: Eastern and Western Europe reunited and the possibility even of a European renewal inspired by the shining example of the “people’s revolution” in 1989, which is repackaged here as the possibility of a social renewal for Europe.

Thibaud sees Solidarnosc as the model not so much for a new political movement, but as the embodiment of a social Europe deserving of the name. “Solidarnosc”, Thibaud points out, combines the positive ideals not only of “une certaine tradition catholique” and the much cherished “utopie de la société civile”, but also “l’idée ancienne d’un socialisme non matérialiste, se caractérisant par des valeurs sociales et non par une organisation de l’économie” (p. 158). All these components provide an ideal to which the whole

³⁷ Jacques Rupnik, ‘La crise de l’Union européenne vue d’Europe centrale’, *Esprit*, 326 (2006), 121-137.

³⁸ Paul Thibaud, ‘Solidarnosc: la solidarité et les malentendus’, *Esprit*, 318 (2005), 157-162.

of Europe should aspire. Sadly, of course, such a “richesse culturelle et spirituelle” (p. 160) is currently lacking. Due to a lack of interest and general apathy in the West towards Eastern Europe, these values were never inscribed into the post-1989 European narrative (pp. 160-161). Yet, Thibaud points out, at their core they entail the vision of a social and democratic society united by a sense of solidarity, towards which Europe should work and which would reassert once again its sense of a “vocation universelle”. Thibaud concludes: “[i]l me semble qu’au projet d’une Europe qui ne serait pas une simple expression géographique, mais une perspective sur le monde, une vision du monde, l’éthique de Solidarité pourrait contribuer, y trouvant une nouvelle chance de s’incarner” (p. 162).

This section has endeavoured to outline how *Esprit’s* discourse about Europe developed from 1989-1992. Firstly, there is an overall stress on the need to define and discuss Europe’s values, necessitated by various external challenges Europe is exposed to. Interestingly, *Esprit* here reasserts European cosmopolitan values and Enlightenment ideals as always already “universal values”. However, while one could interpret this as a sign of a renewed, more outward-looking Europe, I have argued here that the rediscovery of these allegedly “universal” values is to some extent a strategy to reassert European relevance in the aftermath of the Iraq invasion, in the wake of the recognition that European values are indistinguishable from American ones.

Secondly, there is a self-conscious attempt to establish questions of borders and heritage without an appointed Other. Here, I identified *Esprit’s* dossier on the philosopher Jan Patočka as crucial to understanding its reasoning on these issues, which defined its position not least on the question of Turkey and the encounter between Islam and Europe. The European ability to accommodate the unknown and to act as a universalizing influence – even if this requires a readjustment of the traditional European heritage – was highlighted. While this ideal can probably only be understood as an intellectual ambition, it at least represents an older, established scheme of identity formation because it aims to dissolve the dichotomies of Self and Other.

Esprit sometimes has to tread a fine line between defining borders and maintaining the ideal of openness, especially in the wake of the French No-Vote which also entailed a protest against European enlargement. *Esprit* achieves this by insisting on a definable core Europe, the one reunited in 1989, and by presenting further possible enlargements as a tool simply to enhance political influence.

Finally, the journal strives to formulate a positive internal self-image for Europe. After the failed Constitutional treaty, which was presented in *Esprit* as the culmination of the European success story since 1989, it subsequently elevates the theme of a just and communitarian social Europe as a foundation for such a positive self-identification. As in 1989-90, it uses an example from Eastern Europe (the Solidarity movement) to proclaim the rebirth of a European society that not only implements adequate social provisions for its citizens, but is based on ethical ideals of “solidarity”.

Yet while the dimension of Eastern Europe, especially the caesura of 1989, is still central to *Esprit*'s discourse, some themes are notably absent. Most striking is probably the absence of Europe as an exporter of *democratic* values, which was predominant in *Esprit* during 1989-1992. By way of explanation one might suggest that the idea of “exporting” democracy has become an almost toxic issue for the political Left in the wake of the disastrous American attempts to democratize Iraq. For the political Right, as we will see in the case of *Merkur*, this discourse remains however very salient. The idea of a European civil society, which was such a strong factor in *Esprit* earlier, has also faded from view. Finally, the common rejection of nationalistic tendencies, which has proved such a potent common denominator between the journals during 1990-92 has receded and hardly enters the discussion – not least because *Esprit* rather aims to define Europe positively, rather than by “what it is not”. The following sections will aim to shed more light on which of these concerns and frameworks are similarly evident, or absent, in the discussions of *NLR* and *Merkur*.

5.2 NLR

Whereas *Esprit* devotes a great deal of attention to defining European values and identity, *NLR*'s concern with Europe pertains chiefly to the question of Europe's role in relation to the US. Chapter Three has already shown that *NLR* publishes fewer articles on Europe during this timeframe than previously, since it is principally concerned with the US-led Iraq invasion. In addition, the critique of economic neo-liberalism, in Europe and elsewhere, remains as relevant to *NLR* as ever. The criticism of American military, political, and economic power is central to *NLR*'s discourse of the time. The word "criticism" here is somewhat of an understatement, though, since the rhetoric which *NLR* adopts reaches a fever-pitch, especially in 2003-04. Just the titles of two articles reveal the depth of antipathy which the journal holds towards the policies of the Bush administration. One article, which looks at American foreign policy is entitled 'American Lebensraum', another on the American Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Baghdad's Green Zone bears the title 'Vichy on the Tigris'.³⁹ Comparing the actions of the US to the Nazi ideology of *Lebensraum* and the CPA to the puppet regime of Vichy during the Second World War are certainly questionable, but are part of *NLR*'s aim to provide a dissenting voice against what it sees as a wide-spread complacency in the West over the war. Over the course of the four years studied here, *NLR* continues to chronicle and comment on the Iraq invasion and the subsequent descent into protracted violence (especially in 2005) with articles such as 'Hegemony Unravelling' and 'The Abyss in Iraq'.⁴⁰ This indictment of the US, as we shall see throughout this chapter, is accompanied, however, by an equally strong criticism of Europe's inaction over the Iraq invasion.

Due to the much smaller number of articles on Europe in *NLR*, it seems more apt to begin with the themes which the journal ignores or only tangentially covers during this time. Firstly, no article deals with the proposed Constitutional

³⁹ Peter Gowan, 'American Lebensraum', *NLR*, 30 (2004), 155-164; Susan Watkins, 'Vichy on the Tigris', *NLR*, 28 (2004), 5-19.

⁴⁰ Giovanni Arrighi, 'Hegemony Unravelling-1', *NLR*, 32 (2005) 23-82; Patrick Cockburn, 'The Abyss in Iraq', *NLR*, 36 (2005), 35-68.

Treaty prior to the crisis precipitated by the No-Vote. Neither is the topic of European enlargement, so crucial to *Esprit's* discussion, ever addressed in depth in *NLR*. This holds true for the May 2004 admission of the ten new member states as well as for prospective further enlargements, including the admission of Turkey. Finally, the broadly defined topic of "Europe and Islam" is conspicuous by its absence and merits only one article in relation to the French debate over the wearing of the hijab in schools.⁴¹

I begin by discussing the reasons why *NLR* is not interested in discussing these topics, and explain also the different meanings which European "identity" and "values" – key concepts for *Esprit* – have in *NLR's* understanding of Europe. I shall then go to point out the existing overlaps in the discussions of the journals, where they exist. Crucially, there is convergence over the crisis of Europe's inaction in the wake of the Iraq invasion, which results in a more sceptical questioning of Europe's identity. Furthermore, the French No-Vote provokes in *NLR* a renewed interest in France, because it interprets this verdict as a victory for the Left and for the fight for a social Europe. The No-Vote shifts this issue to the centre of *NLR's* concern, which is consonant with *Esprit's* analysis.

5.2.1 Enlargement and the Constitutional Treaty: Securing Economic Markets

In *NLR*, the question of the Constitution is more or less ignored, as it has been decided from the outset that it is yet another neo-liberal tool to ensure that prevailing big business interests are being further entrenched in the European market. Whereas for *Esprit* the Constitution symbolises the success story since 1989, Peter Gowan alleges in his article 'Pax Europæa' that it codifies "afresh the whole post-Cold War evolution of the EU, via Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice: the drive towards monetary union, the use of EU law to push through the free-market agenda."⁴² This free-market agenda, according to *NLR*, is pushed by the undemocratic and unaccountable "Brussels" elite which does not itself adhere to the democratic standards it demands from its own member states and

⁴¹ Emmanuel Terray, 'Headscarf Hysteria', *NLR*, 25 (2004), 118-28.

⁴² Peter Gowan, 'Pax Europæa', *NLR*, 34 (2005), 134-145 (p. 139).

which consequently does not represent the will of the people. Gowan further remarks that it fails to include any concessions towards a more “representative democracy”. Rather, European elites are trying to preserve their grip on the EU which has for many years been run by an “undemocratic elite oligarchy, run by the mandarins of member states and big business for neoliberal goals” (p. 141).

These two main contentions are of course general criticisms routinely levelled against the EU by *NLR* and have little to add to the discussion of the Constitution itself – in fact, the arguments here seem almost interchangeable with the arguments that *NLR* advanced against the Maastricht Treaty back in 1992. Everything that emanates from the “EU machinery” is deemed inherently undemocratic because it is allegedly imposed from the top down. Consequently, any further meaningful engagement or discussion concerning the potential relevance of the Constitution is dismissed outright.⁴³

By the same token, *NLR* does not have anything substantial to say on the topic of enlargement, which again, according to the journal, just guarantees business-friendly policies for Western companies in these countries. For example, Susan Watkins, *NLR*'s editor-in-chief, points out that enlargement is simply a means “of retooling the central European economies as open capitalist markets”.⁴⁴ Yet if *NLR* complains, in the words of one commentator, that “[t]oday there is zero discussion of Enlargement – absolutely zero – because that is what makes life easy for transnational companies and financial markets”,⁴⁵ one must also point out that *NLR* undertakes very little to redress this perceived lack of discussion. The journal insists that the European Union does no more than pursue a “mercantile” policy (‘Pax Europæa’, p. 139) towards Eastern European countries. What is completely absent in *NLR*'s pages is some form of discussion of how the new EU members perceive their new status or any analysis of how these countries might potentially change the political and cultural landscape of Europe.

⁴³ Granted, *NLR* did publish as early as 2001 a translated text by Jürgen Habermas, entitled ‘Why Europe needs a Constitution’, *NLR*, 11 (2001), 5-26, but evidently did not feel the need to step in on the debate at this later time when the Constitutional Convent (2002-2003) and the Intergovernmental Conference (2003-2004) were negotiating the Constitutional Treaty.

⁴⁴ Susan Watkins, ‘Continental Tremors’, *NLR*, 33 (2005), 5-23 (p. 10).

⁴⁵ Bernard Cassen, ‘On the Attack’, *NLR*, 19 (2003), 41-62 (p. 58).

Even the case of Turkey's potential membership, a contentious issue in Europe and relatively widely publicized at the time, is mentioned in only one article. 'The Turkish Bell Jar' provides a portrait of the political situation of the country and also addresses the question of potential EU membership.⁴⁶ The article mainly relates the protracted negotiations and infighting within Turkey's political elites over an agreed position on EU membership, and the author makes the point that the prospect of EU membership would help to force Turkey's ruling elites to democratize the country. Keyder's article makes clear, however, that questions which concerned *Esprit* - how the country's membership will affect the issue of European self-understanding with regard to cultural and religious differences – are not relevant for this journal's discussion at all. The article mentions in passing that the view that "Turkey was not European enough, or too Islamic, culturally speaking" is a view purported mainly "by Austrian and German Christian Democrats" (p. 80). Evidently, these questions did not only preoccupy centre-right politicians, but also the French and – as we shall see in relation to *Merkur* – the German intelligentsia.

It is difficult to plot a more exact position on the issue, since *NLR* does not provide any further distinct British or European perspective on Turkey, or a more nuanced discussion of the ways in which Turkey's entry would affect the current European status quo. What this text shows, however, is the degree to which questions of cultural or religious differences are seen as irrelevant and of no real consequence to the discussion for *NLR*. The example of Turkey provides a case in point of how "Europe" as a historical and cultural concept, so prominent in the French and German discourse, is entirely absent from *NLR*'s understanding. The journal applies here completely different "criteria of relevance" from *Esprit*, which places the emphasis on exploring Europe's values in the context of the post-1989 European landscape. These are suggested, proclaimed and negotiated as part of the discussions on the Constitutional Treaty and on the question of European enlargement, but not in *NLR*. The journal abstains from discussing any such matters but has, so far, followed its familiar crusade against the EU based on preestablished arguments which

⁴⁶ Çağlar Keyder, 'The Turkish Bell Jar', *NLR*, 28 (2004), 65-84.

completely exclude the “value” question. Therefore one can certainly not speak about any common criteria of reference or overlap of debate between the journals thus far.

5.2.2 The Critique of European Values and Identity

NLR's rigid ideological views on the European Union, it has been already argued in the previous chapter, often limit and constrict arguments to a certain predetermined agenda. Here, I would like to show in greater detail the different mindsets behind this lack of common ground on the aforementioned topics, in order to explain why *NLR* remains averse to the use of “values” as an element in its discussions. Two articles offer comments on *NLR*'s understanding of European values and European identity respectively.

Gowan in ‘Pax Europæ’ alleges that European values amount to no more than a “tool” of official EU diplomacy, summed up under the initials “HRDGG”, which stand for “Human Rights, Democracy, and Good Governance” (p. 138). Yet the fact remains “that the EU operates as a strongly mercantilist caucus and its directorates are renowned for their ruthless assertion of West European business interests in their economic diplomacy” (p. 139). Thus, “[s]ince the start of the 1990s, the EU has rather successfully masked this mercantilist reality with its HRDGG diplomacy” (p. 139). In other words, European values, Gowan maintains, are just a smokescreen, intended to divert attention from the EU’s “real” economic agenda, which it promotes ruthlessly. Evidently, *NLR*'s assessment could hardly be further removed from *Esprit*'s which asserts that European values are the outcome of a shared European history and culture.

Equally, *NLR* keeps a critical distance from the concept of “European identity”. An article by a German academic, Lutz Niethammer, provides a critical overview of the use of “identity politics”, which have resulted in “formulaic constructions of collective identity” as a “symptomatic signature of the present”.⁴⁷ The article takes issue with all forms of “collective identity”, including

⁴⁷ Lutz Niethammer, ‘The Infancy of Tarzan’, *NLR*, 19 (2003), 79-93 (p. 82). Niethammer has published extensively on the topic of identity, most recently in *Kollektive Identität: Heimliche Quellen einer unheimlichen Konjunktur* (Reinbek, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2000) and specifically on European Identity in: *The Question of European Identity: a cultural historical approach*, ed. by

European identity, and aims to explain the manifold ways in which communities and societies “adopt” a collective identity for disparate political purposes. On the issue of such a European identity, Niethammer mentions that it has served the function of “domesticating” and “neutering” European national cultures, which up until the Second World War were locked into antagonistic encounters. The idea of a European cultural identity, however, has “reduced the nationalist claims of their various cultural identities to the level of a peaceable conversation, within an overarching federal order of ballot and market” (p. 90). While he does acknowledge that a newly invented European identity has served to pacify the European continent, he finds that it has resulted in “neutered cultural identities without sovereignty, lashed into the iron cages of modernization; a colourful drapery of local traditions for good feeling; a quiet playground for once conflictual cultures” (p. 90).

In Niethammer’s view, European identity is part of an overarching ideology that has shaped a benign, inoffensive and harmless, but ultimately also irrelevant sense of “substitute” identification for the different national identities. This assessment is a far cry from *Esprit’s* appraisal, according to which a positively defined sense of European identity will serve to foster a more progressive encounter with the Other. Niethammer, though, is overtly critical of the notion that identity is currently being theorized in a form “that does not exclude difference” (p. 88). He specifically mentions Jacques Derrida as the main instigator of formulating European identity as something which aims at “incorporation – rather than exclusion – of difference” (p. 89).⁴⁸ This “loving adoption of the Other” as Niethammer scornfully remarks, however, amounts to no more than “[t]he new fairy tales of our philosophers” (p. 91).

These two mutually exclusive views about the role and relevance of European values and identity are directly contrasted in the discourse of these journals. The differences between *Esprit* and *NLR*, I argue, amount to more than simply divergent political viewpoints on European events. Rather, they

Lutz Niethammer, Paul Michael Lützeler and Luisa Passerini, EUI Working Paper, HEC, 1 (1998) <<http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/handle/1814/32>> [accessed 06 May 2006].

⁴⁸ Niethammer mentions specifically Derrida’s monograph *The Other Heading: Reflections on today’s Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), which I also referred to in Chapter Two.

derive from fundamentally different understandings of the role and relevance of European values and identity for the discussion of European issues.

5.2.3 After Iraq: Europe in a Shambles

Although *NLR* largely ignores European values as a criterion of relevance in its discussion, the climate of uncertainty and crisis after the American-led Iraq invasion does precipitate a self-critical enquiry into Europe's role in the world and the question of what European values amount to.

Some of the key allegations and criticisms which *NLR* adduces against the European response to the US invasion can be summarized from Tariq Ali's article 'Re-colonizing Iraq'.⁴⁹ He paints the picture of a completely feeble Europe at pains to please the American empire whilst tearing itself apart, and compares the inability of European countries to thwart the Iraq invasion to the failure of European Social Democratic parties to prevent the outbreak of the First World War. Then as much as now, these protests amounted to no more than "worthy sentiments" (p. 6) which dissolved into thin air. The alleged split between the European countries was, in Ali's estimation, intentionally hyped up in the media rather than a real rift. He notes sarcastically how the story was reported by a gullible media.

The Franco-German initiatives aroused tremendous excitement and consternation among diplomatic commentators. Here, surely, was an unprecedented rift in the Atlantic Alliance. What was to become of European unity, of NATO, of the 'international community' itself if such a disastrous split persisted. Could the very concept of the West survive? (p. 11).

The hyped-up fear about the survival of the West was, however, always baseless. There was no real danger of such a split, since the countries involved - France and Germany - soon faltered and toed the line once the invasion began. Therefore it comes as no surprise that "[t]he vast bulk of official opinion in Europe, and a substantial chunk in the US, is desperate to begin the post-war healing process." (p. 19). The alleged "healing" only amounts to a continuation of the lies told over the Iraq invasion, and imply a false sense of compromise

⁴⁹ Tariq Ali, 'Re-colonizing Iraq', *NLR*, 21 (2003), 5-21.

between Europe and the US. In reality, “healing” only serves the purpose of obtaining “retrospective cover for the invasion” (p. 19). Ali ends his article with advocating a complete rejection of any form of cooperation with the United States.

These strong statements reveal the depth of the crisis for the European community. The alleged differences and rifts between Europe and the United States, which supposedly “endangered” the unity of the West, as Ali scoffs, were no more than the feeble and unprincipled posturing of countries such as France and Germany for their own national audiences. All in all, Europe has exposed itself as spineless and unable to exert a real counterforce against the US but has instead become part of the “United States of the West”; an expression used as the cover title for another article in *NLR* from January 2003,⁵⁰ to which I would now like to turn.

The teaser in the table of contents for this article, authored by Régis Debray⁵¹ and translated from the French for *NLR*, reads: “[w]hy does a malcontent Europe not simply sue for union with the global hegemon, discarding its wisps of independence to exchange proud membership of the American Empire for today’s sullen servility?” (p. 4). The article is a witty spoof letter, written by an imaginary French diplomat who has assumed American citizenship and who writes back to his “European friends”. The fictional diplomat satirically suggests forming a union between the US and Europe so that, he says in addressing the Europeans, “your voice will be heard” (p. 38). After all, in the current cumbersome and inconvenient system in which Europe is nominally independent from the United States, its role in the world appears to be confused: “What role will Europe settle for in America’s march across Asia –

⁵⁰ By ‘cover title’ I mean the title of the article on the cover of the issue, which differs here from the title in the journal. Here the ‘United States of the West’ is replaced with the less polemical title, ‘Letter from America’, *NLR*, 19 (2003), 29-40.

⁵¹ Régis Debray is a political activist, adviser and writer with an adventurous and sometimes improbable political career. Active on the French Left of the 60s, he went to Latin America, where he joined Che Guevara’s guerrilla group. He also spent four years in a Bolivian jail for his “resistance activities”. Back in France, he served as special adviser to Mitterand on foreign affairs during the 1980s. In yet another turnaround to his political career, he has most recently sat on the commission under President Chirac on the issue of banning the wearing of the hijab in French schools, which it contentiously advocated. See Ian Birchall, ‘Debray’s Memoirs: Tears of a Clown’, *International Socialism: A Quarterly of Socialist Theory*, 116 (2007) <<http://www.isj.org.uk/index.php?id=375&issue=116>> [accessed 12 December 2008].

staffing a first-aid post on the Afghan frontier? Patrolling the Gulf in a paddle boat? Providing after-sales service for the Middle East?” (p. 30). More preferable and convenient for everyone involved would be a swift and painless formal union of Europe and the United States.

As well as pointing out the fact that Europe is politically completely dependent on the US, the letter goes on to sardonically comment on the inanity of European culture and lack of distinct European values. He quips:

is there a single value proclaimed in European speeches that America has not more successfully put into practice? Peace? Both world wars came out of Europe. Democracy? Over here, the community elects even the sheriff and the judge (p. 38).

As for differences between the cultural tastes, American mainstream culture has subsumed European tastes anyhow. Thus, all things considered, Europe’s identity appears inchoate and lacks self-confidence, while America is certain what it stands for. This is evident for Debray in the American dollar bills which “proclaim America’s eternal faith in God and in itself: a combat currency, splendidly messianic, with its roll-call of heroes, eagles, arrows, olive branch and the All-Seeing Eye”. In comparison, the hollowness of the Euro bills display the “emptiness of the supermarket state” (p. 39), which are “[n]otes from no-man’s land that show featureless bridges and windows opening on the void. No portraits, no landscapes, no maxims – have the Europeans no achievements, no history?” (p. 39), he asks in mock exasperation.

Culture, economics, politics – all these aspects are in fact part of a value system that is essentially American. Therefore, Debray demands that instructions are given to “our international-law specialists to draw up a conversion plan, transforming a region of common values into one of shared sovereignty.” To this effect, all that would be necessary would be “three extra initials on the passport, some flags to run, bilingual messages to be played on internal flights – the necessary adjustments would hardly be noticed at all. Your signature here, please, at the bottom of the page” (p. 39).

Debray’s hyperbole aside, the idea that Europe and America should formalise their union to form the “United States of the West” provides a drastic form of satire to describe the state Europe finds itself in as *NLR* sees it. Not only

has Europe squandered its integrity by allowing the war to happen, as Ali argues, but it is completely dependent to and has become upstaged by the US. Despite the evident differences in style and tone of the analysis, both *Esprit* and *NLR* arrive at the conclusion that Europe is so closely associated with American values that they have become interchangeable and must be more accurately defined as broadly “Western” – or, as *NLR* would probably say – neo-liberal values.

Yet while it is clearly possible for the two journals to agree that Europe lacks an identity, analysis diverges again on the question of how Europe might sharpen its profile. For while *Esprit* consequently aims to reassert Europe’s role in the world as a harbinger of enlightened, cosmopolitan liberalism, *NLR* rejects any such notions as intellectual delusions. The ideas are dismissed out of hand since the “reality” of Europe’s role in the world simply does not conform to the grandiose aspirations which *Esprit* formulates. Gowan admonishes that there is not the slightest indication to suggest that European “politics of cosmopolitan liberalism” (*Pax Europæa*, p. 135) will be able to make any dent in the minds of Washington policymakers, nor does he see any evidence that Europe has the political will-power or resources to back up this “fantasy of European global dominance” (p. 137). In any case, he keeps reminding the reader, “Europe as based upon – indeed the embodiment of - liberal norms” masks the fact that these norms are in fact “a thicket of positive laws for particularistic capitalist interests” (p. 136).

Along the same lines, Susan Watkins acerbically argues that Europe has time and again since 1989 displayed its inability to live up to its self-appointed norms. For Watkins, the debacle over Yugoslavia in the mid 1990s was the first of many episodes in which Europe failed to put its ideals into action and proof, if necessary, that “the post-Cold war era has seen it [the EU] locked into a subordinate role within the US hegemonic system” (*Continental Tremors*, p. 20).

Once more *NLR* withdraws into an initially combative, but then ultimately defeatist tone which fails to come up with any alternatives to Europe’s role in the wake of the Iraq disaster. Whereas the lack of distinctive European values

as a counterbalance to the US is stressed in the strongest terms and while it dismisses the notion of *Esprit's* "universal Europe" - which is only logically consistent within *NLR's* reasoning - there is no immediate suggestion as to how Europe might step out of America's shadow. However, after the May 2005 rejection of the Constitutional Treaty the model of a social Europe rises to the surface again.

5.2.4 People's Power: Rejecting the Constitutional Treaty

The French No-Vote in May 2005 energises *NLR's* treatment of European issues because it finally proves *NLR's* agenda right. While any discussion of the Constitutional Treaty prior to the referendum has been ignored on the basis that it is just another neo-liberal ruse thought up by the elites, *NLR* reports on the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by the French voters with a certain amount of glee. Again, the ensuing arguments do not necessarily engage with the Constitution itself, but follow a pattern already evident during 1989-92: the idea that "people's power" will democratize and breathe new life into the undemocratic and out-of-touch EU. Whereas in 1989 this role fell to the populace of the Eastern European countries, this time the good people of France have given a spirited display of democracy in action.

Rather narrowly, the rejection of the Constitution is celebrated as the rightful revolt of people power against the elites. Bernard Cassen, the director general of the *Le monde diplomatique* and one of the founders of the ATTAC movement, writes a guest article in the aftermath of the No-Vote, the title of which gets straight to the point: 'ATTAC against the Treaty'.⁵² In his eyes, the "historic character" (p. 32) of the No-Vote is revealed in the fact that the "citizens of Europe are no longer willing to accept their destinies being decided by EU political mechanisms over which they have no real purchase" (p. 32).

The French critic Jean Baudrillard comments in the same issue that the outcome was a No to the "Say Yes to Yes campaign"⁵³ and thus constitutes a true citizens' uprising against the "benevolent despotism" of the EU project, in which the public is reduced to retrospectively affirming the policies of "the

⁵² Bernard Cassen, 'ATTAC against the Treaty', *NLR*, 31 (2005), 27-36.

⁵³ Jean Baudrillard, 'Holy Europe', *NLR*, 33 (2005), 24-27 (p. 25).

infallible, universal Holy Europe” (p. 24), which have been already decided beforehand.

More than this, the No-Vote is also interpreted as a sign of protest against the pervasive neoliberal encroachment in Europe. Watkins observes in an analysis of the No-Vote: “Popular rejection of the EU treaty raises the possibility that the general political narcosis induced by Brussels may now be failing” (‘Continental Tremors’, p. 21). Although under no illusion that the No-Vote will herald a sea change in politics, Watkins states that the “summer lightning of 2005” (p. 21) represents a step towards a more social Europe. As I noted already in Chapter Three, *NLR* runs markedly more articles during 2005 and 2006 on France than on any other European country, indicating its renewed interest in the wake of the No-Vote as a launching pad for the renewed possibility of a social Europe.⁵⁴ Again, this agenda is of course not novel to the journal but was evident already in 1989-92, when the possibility for Europe’s renewal was tied to an alliance between Eastern and Western European forces.

5.2.5 Social Europe as the American Countermodel

Now as then, social Europe represents in *NLR* the only permissible model which has resulted out of Europe’s historical development. Kees van der Pijl for example alleges in his article ‘Lockean Europe’⁵⁵ that continental postwar Europe has firmly developed around an alleged consensus of social cohesion and class compromise, which has shaped and defined these countries’ political and historical development. Britain can be characterized according to van der Pijl as belonging to the “Lockean heartland”, which represents the fullest expression of Anglo-Saxon capitalism, and which has evolved differently from continental European traditions. These different socio-economic developments are the main underlying reason for Britain’s tenuous relationship with the rest of Europe and are unlikely to be remedied in the future. On the contrary, in his

⁵⁴ From articles about the French political scene in Sebastian Budgen, ‘Liberal Francophobia’, *NLR*, 38 (2006), 150-160, to comments on the French banlieue riots by Jean Baudrillard, ‘Pyres of Autumn’, *NLR*, 37 (2006), 5-8, and discussions of the French intellectual scene in Gregory Elliott, ‘Parisian Impostures’, *NLR*, 41 (2006), 139-147, France does merit far more interest than any other European country.

⁵⁵ Kees van der Pijl, ‘Lockean Europe’, *NLR*, 37 (2006), 9-37.

view the “prominence of the EU issue in British politics is diminishing” (p. 20), not least because the rejection of the Constitutional treaty shows that the appetite for “pervasive liberalization” in Europe is slowly diminishing. In van der Pijl’s view, the “true” Europe connotes “continental” Europe but tellingly excludes the United Kingdom.

Van der Pijl also provides his own explanation as to why the Constitution so spectacularly misfired. In his view, it has to do with the misguided aim of encoding a system of “full-fledged neoliberalism” (p. 32) which was “ill-fitting” to the Continental European model and would only generate “anomalies” in the political and social system. The injudicious aim to “compete with the American model wholesale” (p. 37) has resulted in the attempt to impose an “alien” (p. 37) system on the European countries and has plunged continental Europe into a crisis.

Thus the continental European social system is considered as the defining European trait, and which, according to Robin Blackburn, also presents Europe’s real *raison d’être*. In the article ‘Capital and Social Europe’,⁵⁶ which is a detailed analysis of how a system of European wealth distribution would work in practice, Blackburn notes that “[f]rom the beginning the founders of the European Community intended it to be more than a free-trade agreement” (p. 103). Not for nothing, he claims, was the European Community “founded, in part, to avoid the social catastrophes of the pre-war (and postwar) periods (p. 103). Blackburn then argues that it is exactly these values to which Europe should now return, because a common social policy would go a long way towards binding Europeans together. Above all else, it would provide a renewed sense of purpose in the aftermath of the European debacle over the Iraq invasion.

Washington’s bellicosity is itself prompted by the desire to distract US citizens from grave social problems and ballooning inequality at home. Europe should aspire to a quite different model, both for its own people and in its relations with the rest of the world. Developing some welfare ties at a continental level, binding together old and new members, would help to build the civic confidence which might underpin a more generous

⁵⁶ Robin Blackburn, ‘Capital and Social Europe’, *NLR*, 34 (2005), 87-114.

approach to overseas development, and a sense of common citizenship that could support an independent and progressive foreign policy (p. 134).

Here is the case for social Europe laid out in its clearest form. Firstly, a just and social welfare system would equip Europe with a convincing countermodel to the American superpower. Secondly, social Europe would unite Europeans with common ties of citizenship that would encompass “old” and “new” Europe. The inclusion of such a reference to the new member states here is notable only because the new member states have been more or less ignored in *NLR*’s coverage during these years. Of course, *NLR*’s language is not tinged with the same rhetoric as *Esprit*’s and it certainly does not hold up the example of the Polish Solidarity movement as a model for the entire Europe. Unsurprisingly, Blackburn avoids any mention of how social Europe will in turn lead to a more distinct “European identity”, but instead refers to “common ties” and the more tangible “common citizenship” between Europeans. In essence, though, *Esprit* and *NLR* propagate a similar vision, in which the keyword “social Europe” encapsulates the defining ethos of what Europe should stand for.

The following key points on *NLR* can be summed up as follows. Firstly, we established that *NLR* does not much change or develop its arguments on European issues. By and large, the same repackaged arguments against a Europe which has sold out to the neoliberal promise against an undemocratic and elitist Europe persist. Eastern Europe has completely faded from view, and none of the articles engage with, for example, the changed constellations of the enlarged Europe after 2004. Of course, Europe does not occupy the same relevance as in *Esprit* in any case, and the US-led invasion of Iraq also unsurprisingly eclipses these other events, but, even so, there is a distinct lack of engagement on these topics evident here. Moreover, where Europe is discussed, at least in the initial stages, the rift between *Esprit* and *NLR* could not be greater with regard to the fundamental concepts of European values and European identity, which are employed to very different purposes in the journals, and which ultimately account for the different “criteria of relevance”.

Only the response to a perceived crisis elicits common criteria of relevance, insofar as the question of what Europe values stand for rises to the surface and is addressed by *NLR* at last. In the previous chapter, the looming fear over a return to nationalism in Europe resulted in a common diagnosis of what Europe does and does not stand for. Some ten years later, the European foreign policy crisis over the Iraq war leads to shared understanding in *Esprit* and *NLR* about the lack of a distinct European identity vis-à-vis the United States. For both journals, the US is the yardstick against which European values cannot be satisfactorily demarcated. Instead, Europe is by common agreement identical with Western values. Unlike *Esprit*, *NLR* does not feel compelled to advocate a more important place on the world stage, nor does it share its beliefs about core European “universal” values. However, *NLR* does return to its main message of a social Europe, through which it would return to its “core” values and represent a positive countermodel to the United States while promoting inner cohesion and “binding ties”.

In the final section, we turn to *Merkur* to investigate, what part, if any, social Europe plays in *Merkur*'s discourse, and how it assesses the relevance of Western values for Europe.

5.3 *Merkur*

As in the case of *NLR*, several of *Merkur*'s arguments in its discourse about Europe remain unchanged from the previous years. Most recognisable is perhaps the ongoing attempt to argue for the political sovereignty of the nation state. Therefore, the journal still retains the same sceptical attitude towards European political cooperation. Yet, in marked contrast to the earlier timeframe, the question of European values is discussed in *Merkur*, as in *Esprit* much more overtly than before. However, the question of what these European values consist in is answered quite differently than in the French journal and through very different discursive strategies. What is striking in *Merkur* is perhaps how surprisingly straightforward and unambiguous notions of European identity are put forward. In contrast to *Esprit* they are based much more on established

inclusion/exclusion mechanisms: black and white, with only the occasional shade of grey, is how *Merkur's* arguments might be characterized. Declarations about Europe's firm anchoring in a Western - or rather American - community of values, serve the clear purpose of asserting Europe as the cradle and defender of Western Enlightenment values against the dark Other of Islamic fundamentalism.

Having said that, *Merkur's* search for European values and identity does not take place solely in opposition to an Other but in certain instances also takes account of the changes which Europe has undergone since 1989. What *Merkur* hinted at in 1991 - namely that eastern enlargement would influence and alter Europe's self-conception in as yet uncharted ways - is explored in a fairly detailed and thorough fashion at this stage. However, this tolerance towards a modified self-perception of Europe quickly reaches its limits when it comes to defending Europe's Western orientation, which is, we shall see in the following, *Merkur's* overarching aim during this time.

Under discussion will be *Merkur's* treatment of the Constitutional Treaty, the question of Eastern Europe, Turkey and Europe, and of course Europe's role in the wake of the American-led Iraq invasion. Finally, I shall turn to the question of the perceived threat of Islamic fundamentalism, since it is of particular relevance to this journal. Missing from this section is an extended discussion of the No-Vote in France and subsequent exploration of the notion of a social Europe, since *Merkur* does not debate these themes. Unlike *Esprit* and *NLR*, which undertake a crucial argumentative turn towards a social Europe, *Merkur's* discourse over the four years follows a more straightforward path of building up a repertoire of European values and identity traits primarily in defence of a conservatively defined Western 'civilization'.

5.3.1 The Constitutional Treaty: Defending the Nation State Model

In *Merkur's* discussion of the proposed Constitutional treaty no substantially new arguments are put forward either for or against the treaty. Judging by the small number of articles devoted to the topic, it is evident that it does not rank amongst the journal's main concerns either. Like *NLR*, *Merkur* uses the "lack of

democracy” argument as the main framework to discuss, or rather to dismiss the Constitution, in contrast to *Esprit*, where the historical and symbolic meanings of the Constitution take precedence. For *Merkur*, the Constitution becomes a symbol of a rash and irresponsible move towards a postnational order, thereby feeding into some of *Merkur*’s well-known prejudices and ambivalence towards European political integration.

For example, in the article, ‘Kontinentalverschmelzung? Die europäische Frage und die Zukunft der EU’,⁵⁷ Rudolf Burger explains the proposed Constitution mainly as an economic instrument to ensure that European economic integration, which has stalled since the implementation of Maastricht, will receive a new impetus. He is content to note that it will render the European Union more “handlungsfähig” again (p. 188). However, the Treaty amounts to political *rationalisation* rather than *democratisation* because the latter is impossible to attain within the European Union because it would destabilize the workings of this political formation: “[v]on einer Demokratisierung wird dabei keine Rede sein können, sie wäre bestandsgefährdend” (p. 188). Burger even claims that there exists something like an inverse relation between the level of democracy and the level of political integration in the EU, because according to a further unreferenced quote attributed to Ralf Dahrendorf, the general rule is: “[j]e mehr EU, desto weniger Demokratie” (p. 191). Ultimately, the sole guarantor of democracy remains the nation state, for “ohne Nation, keine Demokratie” (p. 191). Thus, it is at best a tool to further inscribe “ökonomische Rationalität und gesellschaftliche Rationalisierung” (p. 193). In short, Burger insists on restricting the declared aim of the Constitution to merely enhancing technocratic cooperation of sovereign nation states.

Another article on the same topic, originally written for the American journal *Policy Review*, raises similar doubts about the Constitution on the grounds that it represents an attempt to weaken further the role of the nation state in the era of globalisation.⁵⁸ The article discusses the EU as the first example “einer postmodernen internationalen politischen Formation” (p. 282),

⁵⁷ Rudolf Burger, ‘Kontinentalverschmelzung? Die europäische Frage und die Zukunft der EU’, *Merkur*, 647 (2003), 187-200.

⁵⁸ Marc F. Plattner, ‘Souveränität und Demokratie’, *Merkur*, 660 (2004), 281-294.

but voices scepticism as to whether the Constitution is an adequate means of implementing a *democratic* postnational order. Like Burger, Plattner is sceptical about a functioning democracy on a European level and alleges that any democratically legitimated state is preferable to “irgendeinem transnationalen Gebilde” (p. 293).

Merkur frames the discussion as a choice between a deficient, undemocratic postnational order and a fully fledged democracy based on the model of the sovereign state. However, a further look at other texts leads us to believe that another reason for retaining the nation state, other than the ostensibly disinterested and noble appeal to maintain democratic governing structures is really at issue here. Consider, for example, the text by historian Heinrich Winkler, written after the French No-Vote in 2005.⁵⁹ He first reiterates the familiar argument that the No-Vote should serve as a reminder to refocus the attention on the nation state and to stop investing in a “postnationale Illusion” (p. 42). However, Winkler then turns his critique against the German political Left, which he judges to be primarily responsible for trying to imbed Germany and other European nation states into such a postnational constellation.⁶⁰ He claims that Germany’s political Left has, in the light of the country’s disastrous nation state legacy in the twentieth century, fostered over many years the misguided belief that the postnational is a “safer” option than the nation state state model.

Die Deutschen hatten ihren ersten Nationalstaat, das von Bismarck gegründete Deutsche Reich, in den Jahren 1933 bis 1945 ruiniert. Viele von ihnen [...] auch namhafte sozialdemokratische und grüne Mitglieder der ‘postumen Adenauerschen Linken’, folgerten aus dieser Erfahrung, die Deutschen seien in besonderem Maß berufen, den übrigen Europäern bei der Überwindung ihrer Nationalstaaten voranzugehen (p. 42).

⁵⁹ Heinrich August Winkler, ‘Weltmacht durch Überdehnung? Ein Plädoyer für europäischen Realismus’, *Merkur*, 681 (2006), 36-43.

⁶⁰ There is no time or space to go into the internal German debates taking place in the journal during that time, but *Merkur* does adopt an increasingly combative tone against the German Left on numerous counts: the legacy of the Frankfurt School, the failings of the 1968 movement, as well as polemics specifically against Jürgen Habermas on account of his critique of the war. See in articles by Mariam Lau, ‘Kerneuropa bleibt sich treu. Streifzug durch den Antiliberalismus’, *Merkur*, 653-654 (2003), 779-789; Ralf Dahrendorf, ‘Versuchungen der Unfreiheit. Die Intellektuellen in Zeiten der Prüfung’, *Merkur*, 681 (2006), 1-14; Volker Gerhardt, ‘Uneinig gegen den Terror’, *Merkur*, 667 (2004), 969-982.

The 'postnational illusion' was able to take hold in Europe mainly because of these foolish ideals. The EU should be understood as a sum of "Nationalstaaten und Deutschland ist einer unter ihnen" (p. 43). On balance, one can conclude therefore that *Merkur's* discussion about the Constitution does not really revolve around Europe but serves mainly to further *Merkur's* own agenda of working towards the return to the (German) nation state.⁶¹

Even though *Merkur* rejects the Constitution, the French No-Vote in 2005 does not arouse the sense of jubilation or triumphalism so evident in *NLR*. *Merkur* merely comments that the No-Vote is unsurprising considering that the Constitution represented an undemocratic measure in the first place. Other than that, the French No-Vote has none of the impact which was evident in *Esprit* and *NLR*. Neither does it produce a call for a rethink or reorientation of the European project towards a more social Europe. *Merkur* rejects any additional social-ameliorative policies as an impossible burden on the state, and does not discuss the evident French discontent nor does the journal provide a critique of the idea of social Europe. We can infer here that this kind of a basis for a new European identity appears to have appeal only to the political Left, and those ideological left/right cleavages in this instance override and preclude the possibility of a shared debate on the notion of social Europe in all three journals.

Instead, *Merkur* uses the opportunity for a side-swipe against the French Left, which rejected the Constitution for all the wrong reasons. One article notes: "[a]ntiamerikanisch bis in die Knochen und befangen im eigenen Größenwahn, Europa als Gegenmacht zu den USA aufbauen zu wollen, hat das Land der EU-Verfassung dennoch ein wütendes Nein entgegengeschleudert."⁶² This quote foreshadows one of the most pertinent points discussed below and relates to *Merkur's* agenda of wanting to inscribe the European identity as a staunchly Western one, whilst disagreeing with attempts, such as we have seen in *Esprit*, to inscribe a specifically European

⁶¹ The attempts of the German political Right after 1990 to argue for a more assertive or German state is supported by points made by Jan-Werner Müller, 'From National Identity to National Interest: The Rise (and Fall) of Germany's New Right', in *German Ideologies since 1945 Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic*, ed. by Jan Werner Müller (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 185-206.

⁶² Ulrike Ackermann, 'Französische Zustände', *Merkur*, 683 (2006), 260-264 (p. 262).

identity in opposition to the US. However, there is one point on which *Merkur* and *Esprit's* frameworks overlap: the plea for a more historically aware Europe in order to culturally and intellectually unite Eastern and Western Europe after 1989.

5.3.2 Enlargement: New Europe or Western Europe Reaffirmed?

Despite *Merkur's* reservations about the EU as a unified political actor, the journal proves to be very forthcoming about reinscribing post-1989 Europe as a community of shared values. The enlargement of 2004 is presented no longer in *Merkur* as a renewed burden on the hard-stretched Western European countries due to the East's allegedly tribal allegiances and half-authoritarian affinities, as before. Instead, the accession countries are considered equal members which have altered Europe's identity and self-perception, even though these changes have not been recognized by the majority of Europeans. *Merkur*, like *Esprit*, considers 1989 as a key European event and goes so far as to call for the recognition of 1989 as a new European foundation myth.

Merkur's doyen Dahrendorf is probably the most vocal proponent of this view and his thoughts are summarized in a review article of one of his numerous books, entitled '1989 in Perspektive: Ralf Dahrendorfs Antiutopismus' by Ilko-Sascha Kowalczyk.⁶³ Not only does 1989 represent the "Wiederbeginn der Geschichte" (p. 66) and "die erfolgreichste Revolution der Moderne" (p. 66), but, even more, it heralds the constitutive event of present-day Europe, even if this knowledge is not yet fixed in a common European consciousness.

'1989' war ein europäisches Jahr, weil es Europa ermöglichte. Diese Binsenweisheit wird noch lange kein Allgemeingut sein. '1989' rangiert noch längst nicht dort im historischen Bewußtsein [...], wo dieses epochenmachende Jahr [...] hingehört (p. 69).

Based upon these reflections Kowalczyk concludes: "Dahrendorf sieht in '1989' nicht nur eine globale Zäsur, er glaubt auch, daß sie als Gründungsmythos für das neue Europa taugt" (p. 67). In order for this new foundation myth to enter

⁶³ Ilko-Sascha Kowalczyk, '1989 in Perspektive: Ralfs Dahrendorfs Antiutopismus', *Merkur*, 669 (2005), 65-69. The article reviews Dahrendorf's book, *Der Wiederbeginn der Geschichte. Vom Fall der Mauer zum Krieg in Irak* (Munich: Beck, 2004).

the European consciousness: “1989’ muß, neben anderen Ereignissen, in einem europäischen Erinnerungskanon verankert werden” (p. 69).

Karl Schlögel, an eminent writer on Eastern European history and culture advances a similar argument in two *Merkur* articles.⁶⁴ Schlögel makes the point that the enlargement process is the culmination of Europe’s reunification, “das Comeback eines Kontinents nach einem Jahrhundert der Selbstüberhebung, der Selbstzerstörung, der Provinzialisierung” (‘Das Jahrhundertprotokoll’, p. 557). As part of this reunification process Europe is going to have to reinvent itself; “ein neues Bild von sich selber machen müssen” (p. 568). In order to capture the image of this newly emerging Europe, Schlögel proposes, in a different article published one year later, the formation of a “Museum der Transformationsperiode” (‘Sichtbarkeit der Zeit’, p. 911), which would commemorate and retrace the shifts that Europe has experienced since 1989. Although Schlögel is convinced that Europe is already changing - “der Dogmatismus des alteingesessenen, wohlstandigen und allzu selbstsicheren Europa ist dabei, sich aufzulösen” (p. 916) - he finds it necessary to render these changes apparent and to commemorate them by building a museum dedicated to these events.

These thoughts are reiterated by Christoph von Marschall,⁶⁵ an editor of the Berlin-based newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel*, and by Adam Krzeminski, a Polish journalist who comments frequently in German newspapers on German-Polish relations and European issues.⁶⁶ Both authors point somewhat warily to the lack of a common understanding of 1989 that transcends Eastern and Western Europe and speak of the need for elevating 1989 as a new European foundation myth. For example, von Marshall points out in, that 1989 presents one of the “Sternstunden der Menschheit” (‘Der wilde Osten’, p. 612) – alluding

⁶⁴ Karl Schlögel, ‘Das Jahrhundertprotokoll. Harry Graf Kesslers Tagebuch 1880-1937’, *Merkur*, 663 (2004), 557-569 and ‘Sichtbarkeit der Zeit. Skizze für ein Museum der Transformationsperiode’, *Merkur*, 677-678 (2005), 911-917.

⁶⁵ Christoph von Marschall, ‘Der wilde Osten’, *Merkur*, 663 (2004), 610-615; ‘Politikkolumne: Friedensdividende’, *Merkur*, 670 (2005), 148-153.

⁶⁶ Adam Krzeminski, ‘Hauptsache nach Europa. Polnische Modernisierungsschübe’, *Merkur*, 645 (2003), 36-46; ‘Was macht der trojanische Esel Amerikas im Irak?’, *Merkur*, 655 (2003), 1067-1072; ‘Die europäische Außenpolitik entsteht im Osten’, *Merkur*, 671 (2005), 256-262. Krzeminski has also published, amongst other topics, on the European public sphere: ‘From Closed Circuits to Communicating Tubes’, *Signandsight*

<<http://www.signandsight.com/features/1400.html>> [accessed 18 July 2007].

here the Austrian author Stefan Zweig's book title - and that the enlargement finally represents the political overcoming of Europe's catastrophe. Yet he warns that Europe is still divided by a wall of intellectual "non-perception" – "Nichtwahrnehmung" (p. 610). This is turn can only be remedied, says Marshall, if both Eastern and Western Europe are prepared to engage in a dialogue about their understanding of European history (pp. 614-15). In the same vein, Krzeminski asserts that current Western ignorance towards the Eastern European history can only be countered through "Nachhilfeunterricht in ostmitteleuropäischer Geschichte [...] der nicht nur alte Denkschemata, sondern auch die weißen Flecken schierer Unkenntnis zu überwinden hilft" ('Die europäische Außenpolitik', p. 262).

This insistence on a more historical understanding of Europe mirrors closely the arguments put forward in *Esprit*. Read on their own, the texts point, I believe, to a real shift in *Merkur* towards an attempt to place the Eastern European countries into a common European framework. We shall see in the next section, however, that *Merkur* makes such grandiose proclamations because, in the final instance, Eastern European countries are considered as having internalized and reaffirmed fundamentally *Western* values in Europe, which to *Merkur* are pivotal, rather than having altered or challenged these values. In order to explain *Merkur's* reasoning, it is necessary to point to the two key factors which for *Merkur* are proof of these countries' impeccable "Western" credentials. The first is their commitment to Western economic liberalism, the second concerns these countries' stance in the US-led Iraq invasion, and becomes especially relevant in 2003

Firstly, we have already noted in the previous chapter that, in keeping with *Merkur's* right-wing stance, it has an unshakeable trust in the link between developing capitalism and developing democratic societies. An example of *Merkur's* advocacy of the free-market agenda is evident in a dossier published in 2003, entitled "Kapitalismus oder Barbarei", an inversion of the title of the journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, published by the now-defunct ultra-left French

activist group of the same name.⁶⁷ In one of the articles in this dossier, 'Patient lebt: Kapitalistischer Systemwandel in Mittel-und Südosteuropa',⁶⁸ the author Matthias Rüb finds that on balance the Eastern European countries have vindicated the Western model. He acknowledges that the transition period has been shaky and turbulent at times and that the continuing economic hardships in these countries cannot be ignored. Yet he is satisfied to see that the trust of the citizens remains strong. "Es ist, als hätten die Menschen im Wunderjahr 1989 ein ontologisches Vertrauen in Kapitalismus und Demokratie gefaßt und ließen in Engelsgeduld nicht mehr davon ab" (p. 840). In the eyes of *Merkur*, this 'commitment' to a free-market democracy proves these countries' allegiance to the tried and tested Western system.

Secondly, *Merkur*, as we have noted above was one of the few intellectual publications in Europe to support the American-led invasion. It therefore commended those Eastern European countries whose governments - though not necessarily their citizens - proved to be more supportive of the US than, for example, France and Germany, which *Merkur* singles out for attack. In the eyes of *Merkur's* commentators, this goes to confirm that Eastern European countries such as Poland have found their place in a "Western"-orientated Europe and have in fact strengthened these principles. In Dahrendorf's words, they have become even more "Western" than Western Europe: "Europa war schon immer westlich, aber das neue Europa derer, die der Europäischen Union erst spät beigetreten sind, zeigt sich bewußter westlich, als jene es sind, die von Anfang an dabei waren".⁶⁹

The aforementioned Heinrich Winkler makes a similar assertion as to where the Eastern European countries belong:

⁶⁷ This reference is provided in the untitled editorial by Karl Heinz Bohrer from the special issue 'Kapitalismus oder Barbarei', *Merkur*, 653-654 (2003), 745-746. For more information on the origins of the journal and the political group behind it which operated between 1949 and 1965, see: Gilles Dauvé, Jean Barrot, 'From the German Left to *Socialisme ou Barbarie*', *La Banquise*, 2 (1983) <<http://www.geocities.com/~johngray/rome06.htm>> [accessed 22 May 08].

⁶⁸ Matthias Rüb, 'Patient lebt: Kapitalistischer Systemwandel in Mittel - und Südosteuropa', *Merkur*, 653-654 (2003), 832-840.

⁶⁹ Ralf Dahrendorf, 'Europa und der Westen: Alte und neue Identitäten', *Merkur*, 655 (2003), 1015-1025 (p. 1020).

Die acht ostmitteleuropäischen Staaten, die bis zur Epochenwende von 1989/91 kommunistisch regiert wurden und seit dem 1. Mai 2004 Mitglieder der EU sind, gehören ausnahmslos zum historischen Westen. Die Spaltung Europas im Jahre 1945, für die der Name Jalta steht, war eine Teilung gegen die Geschichte. Deswegen hat keines der neuen Mitglieder der EU ein grundsätzliches Problem mit dem Bekenntnis zur politischen Kultur des Westens ('Weltmacht durch Überdehnung', p. 37-38).

Both authors are unequivocal as to where they locate Eastern Europe, namely in the West, which is evidently considered a more salient framework than a merely European one. I would argue that *Merkur's* discourse is slightly inconsistent in the way in which it conceives of the enlargement and of the role and relevance that the Eastern European countries occupy. Although the journal is without doubt serious about the impact of 1989 on present-day Europe's self-perception and in its calls for a common European framework of remembrance, *Merkur* at the same time appropriates these countries as part of an exclusively *Western* tradition of values. Hence the notion of a new European identity has to give way in the final instance to locating Eastern Europe in the West. Unlike in *Esprit*, all the talk about Eastern Europe's starring role in a post-1989 European identity ultimately serves to forge and reaffirm a *Western* identity for Europe.

5.3.3 Turkey: Retreating Inwards

While Eastern Europe can be assuredly placed in a European, or rather Western community of values, *Merkur* is confronted with a slightly trickier scenario regarding the question of Turkey. At one end of the spectrum are those voices which indeed maintain that Turkey is culturally incompatible with European values, as pointed out by Çağlar Keyder in his *NLR* article. But other voices in *Merkur* allege that Turkey's entry into the European Union might be beneficial and would prevent Europe from becoming a "post-Christian" club, just as *Esprit* fears.

In relation to the question of Turkey, it appears that *Merkur* hesitates uneasily between two clashing visions of Europe. On the one hand it advocates the idea of the European Union as a solely economic association, of which

Turkey should become a member. On the other hand, the journal cannot help invoking Europe as a civilizational and cultural achievement which precludes Turkey from joining. Rudolf Burger's aforementioned article 'Kontinentalverschmelzung' is one such example of aiming (and failing) to reconcile two inherently incompatible views about what Europe should represent. He first insists that the EU should only be understood as the sum of the technocratic cooperation of the nation states and as a strictly economic association. Yet, Burger goes on to claim that the EU will remain "grundsätzlich offen für neue, *kulturnahe* Mitglieder" (p. 199, my emphasis). The assertion here is somewhat baffling, for either the EU represents only an economical and political alliance – as *NLR* would agree – or it represents a community open to those with common values and cultural affinities. To insist that the EU is a solely technocratic, economically orientated alliance, and then to qualify this by saying that it is open only to countries which are "kulturnahe", is logically incongruous.

Burger then goes on to classify Turkey as "kryptoislamisch" (p. 190), thereby falling foul of the "zivilisatorische Mindeststandards" (p. 189), which potential new member states have to fulfil. What these minimum standards amount to is spelled out in full by Heinrich Winkler. Any country wishing to enter the European Union must fulfil a

vorbehaltlose Öffnung gegenüber der politischen Kultur des Westens. In dieser Formel steckt auch eine Antwort auf die Frage nach den politischen Grenzen Europas und damit nach den Grenzen der Erweiterbarkeit der Europäischen Union. Nationen, die sich diese Kultur nicht aneignen wollen, erteilen damit der Europäischen Union als Wertegemeinschaft eine Absage und können ihr nicht beitreten ('Weltmacht durch Überdehnung', p. 37).

Again, the "culture of the West", is held up as the benchmark for assessing a country's membership of the European Union. According to Winkler - as the previous section has established - the Eastern European countries have already proven their mettle. However, Turkey has in his view only undergone a "Teilverwestlichung" (p. 38). Despite the country's modernization processes, it has yet to prove that it is able to uphold Western traditions. Winkler does not reject Turkey's entry out of hand, but he remains doubtful whether the country can ever become Western enough.

Similar concerns are raised in Wolfgang Prezewieslik's article "Ist die Türkei reif für die EU?",⁷⁰ probably the most detailed account in *Merkur* on this topic. Without resorting to any overtly anti-Turkish propaganda along the lines of Burger's characterization of Turkey as a cryptoislamic state, Prezewieslik maintains that Turkey's incorporation into the EU would only be feasible if the country initiates political reforms and puts a halt to any resurgence of political Islam within its borders.

Yet, altogether different assessments of the Turkey/Europe question can be found in *Merkur*. For example, rather than asserting that Turkey does not live up to the requisite Western values for EU entry, Sabine Wolf turns this argument on its head.⁷¹ She notes that it might be indeed time for the EU to adapt and change because "das derzeitige Europa [...] kann es sich nicht erlauben, an einem 'europäischen Erbe' festzuhalten, in dem Rechtsstaat und Menschenwürde auf wundersame Weise als exklusiv christliche Werte erscheinen" (p. 179). This echoes *Esprit's* warning that without Turkey, Europe will descend into a "club postchrétien" and ultimately lose its relevance. Rather than proudly evoking the unshakeable Western traditions and values, Wolf asks whether European values might benefit from an opening up towards a non-Christian memberstate. After all, she notes, it also took a process of adaptation for the Eastern European countries to become accepted into the Union, why not again in Turkey's case? In a similar text of the same issue Rasmus Althaus mentions that Turkey and Europe have in fact had a long and complex relationship of a continuous cultural "Annäherung und Abgrenzung" which is proof of a common "Bezugssystem"⁷² of which they are part. Therefore, Althaus contends that Turkey and Europe are not in fact as culturally distinct as they are often presented.

One is left, then, with a variety of mutually exclusive viewpoints. While Wolf and Althaus emphasise the possibility of a European opening-up and incorporation of new values, Burger and Winkler insist that Western values -

⁷⁰ Wolfgang Prezewieslik, 'Ist die Türkei reif für die EU?', *Merkur*, 669 (2005), 14-27.

⁷¹ Sabine Wolf, 'Warum die Türkei Mitglied der EU werden sollte', *Merkur*, 682 (2006), 176-179.

⁷² Rasmus Althaus, 'Warum die Türkei Mitglied der EU werden könnte', *Merkur*, 682 (2006), 180-183 (p. 182).

from which Turkey is excluded - are indispensable and non-negotiable. In either case, for *Merkur*, the question of Turkey is ultimately one of cultural and religious values: of either opening up, extending and absorbing new values, along the lines of what *Esprit* proposes, or conserving and fencing off already established values.

Overall, the treatment of Turkey is not entirely one-sided. On balance, I would argue, however, that the desire to strengthen and reaffirm “Western” values is for *Merkur* more relevant than declarations of openness and notions of cross-cultural fertilization. Partly, this claim is based in the background of the authors which were mentioned here: Wolff’s and Althaus’s texts are entries for an essay competition for young writers under the age of 28 in 2006.⁷³ Winkler and Burger represent, however, the established core of *Merkur*’s authors and are, I would argue, more representative of the journal’s views than the one-off contributions by the younger writers. Moreover, the views expressed by Burger and Winkler are reiterated and rephrased in subsequent discussions about Europe, while those of the younger writers appear to be isolated cases of a pro-Turkey stance. The fact that *Merkur* publishes these contributions can be possibly seen as a pro-forma acknowledgement of different views on this thorny issue, rather than an affirmation of Turkey’s belonging in the European Union.

5.3.4 Defining the European Identity: Looking Westwards

As noted before, *Merkur* proves to be a vocal defender of the US decision to invade Iraq in March 2003. The ensuing discussion about Europe’s failure to stage a concerted response to the invasion triggers, as in *Esprit* and *NLR*, a great deal of soul-searching about Europe’s identity and sense of purpose. Much like the other journals, *Merkur* concludes that European values are in fact synonymous with Western values. However, while this gave rise to ridicule in *NLR*, or to attempts to reinterpret European values as inherently universal values in *Esprit*, it provides a welcome opportunity for *Merkur* to envisage Europe not only as a close partner and reliable ally of US policies, but also as a

⁷³ See Introduction to *Merkur*, 682 (2006), p. 3.

strong co-defender of shared Western values. Effectively, *Merkur* pays court to what Norman Davies has defined as the “American variant of Western civilization”,⁷⁴ which developed after the Second World War, and which entailed “following the leadership of the US”, and accepting its ideas “about democracy and capitalism” (p. 24). Even though this model is arguably outdated and less relevant than in the immediate postwar context of Europe, *Merkur* enthusiastically advocates it at this stage.

Given that the journal had to argue from a rather embattled and solitary position in the European media landscape by weighing in favour of the invasion, it is not surprising that most of the articles must first discountenance the various views opposed to the war before putting forward their own case. I shall therefore begin with an overview of the critique levelled against these voices and then explain how declarations of solidarity with the US are laid out.

As *Merkur* sees it, Europe is in the dangerous process of forging a European identity in opposition to the US, given the numerous instances of overt anti-Americanism which the journal detects in European political and media discourse. Dahrendorf notes with concern that Europe has made the “unselige Entdeckung eines neuen Feindes in Form der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika” (‘Europa und der Westen’, 1021). According to some commentators in *Merkur*, the emergence of the US as a new European “Other” has to do with psychological mechanisms of unacknowledged envy.

The chief advocate of this view is Russell Berman, an American professor of German Studies at Stanford University.⁷⁵ In his article, he ascribes to Europeans an “instinktive Verbohrtheit” (p. 571) as well as an infantile attitude (p. 574) towards the US, which is guided by “Wahnbilder” and based on ill-informed myths and conspiracy theories (p. 572). In his view, anti-Americanism is “Ausdruck eines sozial-psychologischen Krankheitsbildes, das auf eine kollektive transnationale Identitätsbildung zurückzuführen ist” (p. 580). Berman sees its source in an unacknowledged envy towards the US, which, as a sovereign nation state, can maintain a level of independence which the

⁷⁴ Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (Pimlico: New York, 1997), p. 24.

⁷⁵ Russell Berman, ‘Demokratischer Krieg, repressiver Frieden. Über den real existierenden Antiamerikanismus’, *Merkur*, 651 (2003), 570-583.

countries of the European Union - tied up in mutual obligations and dependencies - have forfeited. As a result of this loss of national identity “verdammten die Europäer das Nationale bei den Amerikanern als archaisch, betrachten es aber gleichzeitig mit wehmütiger Eifersucht” (p. 581). One can easily see how this claim fits well with *Merkur’s* constant concern over the loss of the nation state, but it is unclear on what evidence Berman bases his diagnosis of a collective European secret desire for the return of the nation state.

Berman is not alone in resorting to such unfounded psychological explanations. In the view of the German journalist Richard Herzinger, anti-Americanism serves as a psychological mechanism that enables Europeans to vent their anger against character traits which they share but do not coincide with the neat image they have of themselves.⁷⁶ The US operates as a

Projektionsfläche, um Eigenschaften die es an sich selbst nicht wahrhaben will, aus dem eigenen Bewußtsein abzuspalten. So gilt Amerika als Hort des Kapitalismus, der Raffgier, des Rassismus, der religiösen Bigotterie und der entfesselten Gewalt nach innen wie nach außen (p. 955).

It is not my aim here to take issue with the veracity of these claims, but to point out that *Merkur* uses these views to discredit European anti-Americanism as a pathological condition. That said, not all of *Merkur’s* contributors agree with this argument. More moderate voices like those of Tony Judt, whilst conceding that the United States are fulfilling the role of a European Other, point out that anti-Americanism cannot simply be explained with reference to “irgendein atavistischer Antiamerikanismus oder Raketenneid”.⁷⁷ Rather, he points to the absence of a long-term American political strategy in the Arab world and the ensuing potential for destabilisation as the main cause of European anti-American sentiment.

For *NLR*, we have seen, the alleged split between Europe and the US amounts to mere “political posturing”. Those voices proclaiming the alleged rift in the Western alliance were viewed by Tariq Ali as ridiculous and preposterous.

⁷⁶ Richard Herzinger, ‘Das Ressentiment gegen den Westen’, *Merkur*, 665-666 (2004), 953-965.

⁷⁷ Tony Judt, ‘Europa gegen Amerika. Entsteht die neue Supermacht in der Alten Welt?’, *Merkur*, 673 (2005), 375-387 (p. 381).

Merkur, however, features precisely those writers who consider the unity of the West to be in real and present danger. The chief reason why *Merkur* is so adamant about the “unity of the West” has to do with Europe’s, and especially Germany’s, historical debt to the US. *Merkur* alleges that Germany displays signs of historical amnesia by forgetting the eternal gratitude it owes to America in return for the liberation of Western Europe after 1945 and continued benevolent American involvement up until German reunification. This becomes a recurrent argument in *Merkur* and is fundamental to explaining its pro-Americanism and absolute dedication to all things Western.

For example, Volker Gerhardt comments that, in voicing their opposition to the invasion, the Germans “vergaßen die Landung in der Normandie und die Luftbrücke nach Berlin, sie erinnerten sich nicht mehr daran, wem sie den Zusammenbruch des Kommunismus und die Einheit ihres Staates verdankten” (‘Uneinig gegen den Terror’, p. 980). Similarly, the renowned conservative historian Arnulf Baring chides Germans for their naïve and foolish opposition to the war, while disremembering the sense of gratitude and solidarity to their strongest ally since 1945.⁷⁸ After all, he continues, the historical ties between Europe and the US have also provided the former with its sense of identity: “[w]as auch immer die Fehler und Schwächen des europäisch-atlantischen Bündnissystems gewesen sein mögen, es schuf eine psychische Realität, ein neues Lebensgefühl: die Westverankerung” (p. 188). With an even more resounding declaration of Europe’s commitment to the West, Dahrendorf offers the following statement, which hardly needs any explanatory commentary.

Ich jedenfalls bleibe ein Mensch des Westens, bevor ich Europäer bin, und während manche meiner amerikanischen Freunde zuerst Amerikaner sein mögen, kann doch keine Definition dieser Identität übersehen, daß die Werte, die ihr zugrunde liegen, westlich sind (‘Europa und der Westen’, p. 1015).

He continues to spell out that the postwar history of the European Union can only be understood as a continuous history of Western values: freedom, democracy and the open society. All these components add up to a “Definition

⁷⁸ Arnulf Baring, ‘Unser Fundament bleiben die USA: Über den Dilettantismus rot-grüner Außenpolitik’, *Merkur*, 671 (2005), 187-194.

des Westens” (p. 1017) through which Europe is in turn defined: “für die aufgeklärte Welt bleibt die liberale Ordnung des Westens Quelle der Identität” (p. 1024). Hence also Winkler’s definition of European identity: “Wenn wir von europäischer Identität sprechen, meinen wir, ob wir uns dessen bewußt sind oder nicht, die Identität des europäischen Okzidents” (‘Weltmacht durch Überdehnung?’, p. 36).

To sum up, *Merkur* defines the West as the *sine qua non* of the European condition. Therefore any attempt to break with this past or to reinvent Europe in opposition to the US is an ill-fated enterprise, which will only lead to a further weakening of Europe. Christoph Bertram notes: “Der Versuch sich gegen Amerika zu verbünden, wird Europa spalten, nicht einigen.”⁷⁹ Europeans should thus refrain from trying to position themselves as a “better” alternative to the US. Rather, Europeans would be better off trying to *complement* America, Münkler writes in ‘Die Selbstbehauptung Europas’.⁸⁰

It is worth pointing out that *Merkur*’s views are not just fleeting comments, uttered when the Iraq invasion was unfolding, or in its immediate aftermath. The journal stays true to these beliefs even in 2006, rephrasing and defending them vigorously in the article ‘Vom Aufstieg und Niedergang des Europäismus’.⁸¹ The author, Ulrich Speck, lays down a fiercely worded attack against foolish attempts to brandish a distinctly European, rather than a more general Western, identity for Europe which he calls ‘Europeanism’ or “Europäismus”. In Speck’s view, Europeanism amounts to a false ideology used by the Left after 9/11 to posit Europe as a postnational, civilized, and more humane alternative to America that has overcome the nationalist and hegemonic aspirations of the US as an “aggressiver Machtstaat” (p. 244). Once more, *Merkur*’s obsession with the nation state vs the “postnational” European Union is evident.

Der Europäismus bezieht seine Energie aus dem Selbstverständnis, eine höhere Stufe der Zivilisation erreicht zu haben – den Schritt zum postnationalen Regieren gegangen zu sein und damit die kriegerische Vergangenheit überwunden zu haben (p. 244).

⁷⁹ Christoph Bertram, ‘Stärke und Schwäche. Eine Antwort auf Robert Kagan’, *Merkur*, 647 (2003), 200-207 (p. 206).

⁸⁰ Herfried Münkler, ‘Die Selbstbehauptung Europas’, *Merkur*, 649 (2003), 373-383.

⁸¹ Ulrich Speck, ‘Geschichtskolumne: Vom Aufstieg und Niedergang des Europäismus’, *Merkur*, 683 (2006), 243-247.

Worse, Speck continues, the proponents of this ideology argue from the basis that Europe today is the result of a process of self-civilization (*Selbstzivilisierung*) that took place after the Second World War. They are blind to the fact that Europe owes its achievements solely to the US. An unprejudiced examination of European postwar history would lead to the following inevitable conclusion: “Die große Erzählung von der Selbstzivilisierung Europas fällt in sich zusammen. Die westeuropäische Zivilisierung wird erkennbar als bedingt durch eine transatlantische Beziehungsgeschichte” (p. 246).

To recapitulate, *Merkur* rejects the idea that a distinct European identity can be furnished above and beyond a Western identity. Rather, the commitment to the “West” is the basis of *Merkur’s* moral and political compass for Europe throughout the four years discussed here; it is not merely a matter of temporarily siding with the US on the issue of the war. As we have seen, the West was the crucial framework also in regard to the question of Eastern European countries, and over Turkey’s admittance to the European Union.

Crucially, one can conclude from these points that *Merkur* and *Esprit* pursue completely opposing lines of argumentation with regard to what European identity should entail. After all, *Esprit* does attempt to formulate European identity as a “better”, more peaceful and cosmopolitan alternative in order to counter the American hegemony, while *Merkur* postulates that European identity has always been, and should remain, part of a generally Western framework. These diametrically opposed views are again based on ideological cleavages between the journals, which leave little room for a discursive engagement between the two. Paradoxically, although *NLR* and *Merkur* share hardly any common political ground, the British journal agrees with *Merkur* that European values simply do not exist. However, *NLR* arrives at this conclusion by a fatalistic assessment of the US’s unrivalled power and of European inability to claim any values in its own name, whereas *Merkur* argues that Europe is historically indebted towards the US.

5.3.5 Western Identity against the Islamic Other

In this final section I will argue that *Merkur's* strident and somewhat repetitive claims about Europe's place in the West serve in the final instance to position it against the overall threat of Islamic fundamentalism. By this I mean that European-cum-Western identity serves as a positive foil to the negative Other of Islamic fundamentalism in Europe. While the topic scarcely features in *NLR*, and in *Esprit* is discussed more as a philosophical problem concerning the incorporation of Islamic values into the European fold, it is for *Merkur* at the forefront of the challenges that Europe has to face. It provides relevant insights into how *Merkur* stakes out certain ideas of a Western civilization as a bulwark against the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. The sense of being under attack takes its cue of course from the events of 9/11, in which the gauntlet was allegedly first thrown down to the West. In this new world-order, so the argument goes, Europe has to position itself much more clearly and take a stand on the values which it must defend. Unsurprisingly, these are once more primarily Western values, as Dahrendorf explains in the abovementioned article 'Europa und der Westen'.

In Europa geht es darum, westliche Werte und mit ihnen die Verfassung der Freiheit innerhalb seiner eigenen, glücklicherweise immer weiter gezogenen Grenzen aufrechtzuerhalten und überdies solche Werte in anderen Teilen der Welt zu unterstützen (p. 1023).

With this in mind, *Merkur* undertakes to sketch a picture of "Europe" as an infallibly high-cultured civilization, evoking the classical historical sources of Greek and Roman antiquity, referred to also in Chapter Two, as the defining European identity traits. Consider in the following, how Europe is defined as the cradle of such an infallible culture in four texts from *Merkur* between 2004 and 2006.⁸² I will not be discussing in detail the various claims made in these texts, but merely adumbrate them in order to show how the idea of a European civilizational and cultural supremacy is established.

⁸² Reinhard Brandt, 'Die Selbstaufhebung der europäischen Kultur', *Merkur*, 664 (2004), 670-682; Jürgen Mittelstrass, 'Europa erfinden. Über die europäische Idee, die europäische Kultur und die Geisteswissenschaften', *Merkur*, 669 (2005), 28-38; Christina Weiss, "'Wo wir uns finden": Orte der Kulturnation', *Merkur*, 683 (2006), 275-281; Wolf Dieter Enkelmann, 'Europa – nichts als ein Versprechen', *Merkur*, 687 (2006), 1103-1112.

Reinhard Brandt asserts that European culture is marked by a “gemeinsamer Kulturbestand”, which takes its roots from the Homeric epics of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (p. 674) together with the New and Old Testament as “prägende Komponente der christlich-europäischen Kultur” (p. 680). In addition, inherently universal values such as the “Kantische Rechtsgemeinschaft” and the (p. 672) “Rechtsideen der Freiheit und der Menschenrechte” (p. 674) originated in Europe.

Jürgen Mittelstrass’s article argues on a similar note that Europe stands for Kantian universal values, chiefly of course the ideals of argumentative reason, tolerance and “Selbstbestimmung” (p. 32). This “Vernunftkultur” is at the core of a European culture, “die das Theoretische entdeckt hat und sich im Theoretischen, im Denken und durch das Denken, Ausdruck verschafft” (p. 34). Culture, thus conceived, represents Europe’s prime achievement: “Europas Stern ist seine Kultur – nicht als museales oder touristisches Ereignis, sondern in Form der geläuterten Ideen und Werte” (p. 36).

Christina Weiss’s article “Wo wir uns finden”: Orte der Kulturation’ claims that Europe’s intellectual and spiritual unity (“kulturelle und geistige Einheit”), which flourished until the First World War, has sadly been destroyed. Now the aim must be to return to such a European state of mind, “[d]en geistigen Begriff Europas gilt es nun zurückzuerobern” (p. 277). In short, Europe must retrieve the ideal of a “kulturellen und wertegeprägten Tradition, die sich gründet auf der Antike, auf Aufklärung und Humanismus“ (p. 277), in order to restore Europe’s lost glory.

Lastly, Wolf Dieter Enkelmann begins his article with the following claim: “Die globale Verstaatlichung hat von Europa ihren Ausgang genommen. Sie manifestiert die Weltmacht einer europäischen Idee und den Erfolg eines okzidentalen Einspruches“ (p. 1103). The universal claim of the European idea can be traced back, according to Enkelmann, to the history of expansions, conquests and the development of a high culture in direct descent from Plato and Aristotle.

All four texts sketch out an ideal of a European culture derived from traditions of classical antiquity and crowned by Kantian reason and humanism.

Based on these convictions, many of *Merkur's* articles draw a sharp division between European and Islamic values. At its most extreme end, *Merkur's* writers locate Islamic thought as the negative antipode of European Enlightenment values. One such example is the article by American historian Walter Lacqueur 'Europa im 21. Jahrhundert'.⁸³ Lacqueur is concerned with the influx of immigrants of Muslim descent into Europe, for whom the core values of European humanism have no relevance. A synthesis of cultures is therefore highly unlikely. The gap is even wider between the ideologues of radical Islamist thought and the totems of European Enlightenment: "den geistigen Mentoren des radikalen Islamismus auf der einen Seite, Kant und Rousseau und der europäischen Aufklärung auf der anderen" (p. 661). Invoking the legacy of the Enlightenment is of course a familiar strategy pursued in the journals. We have already established how Enlightenment values became relevant in the response to the menace of nationalism by the journals during 1989-1992. *Esprit*, too, employed the Enlightenment legacy as the basis for claims about Europe's inherent universality. In this instance, they serve to throw the distinctions between culture and civilization versus intolerance and barbarism, freedom versus unfreedom into even sharper relief.

A similar argument to the one made by Lacqueur is used in Dahrendorf's article 'Versuchungen der Unfreiheit'. Whereas he wrote previously in relatively neutral tones about the defence of Western values, his diagnosis has now become fiercer. Paraphrasing the famous opening line of Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, he writes: "Ein Gespenst geht um in Europa, das Gespenst des Islamismus" (p. 11). Dahrendorf considers different responses towards the question of Islamic and European values, ranging from the possibility of an understanding between cultures to the belief that European and Islamic values are simply irreconcilable. After discussing both options, Dahrendorf comes down on the side of Huntington's much-debated theory of a 'clash of civilizations'.⁸⁴ He concurs with Huntington, who is of the opinion that Islam has failed to undergo the process of "Verwestlichung" (p. 11). Dahrendorf

⁸³ Walter Lacqueur, 'Europa im 21. Jahrhundert', *Merkur*, 676 (2005), 653-666.

⁸⁴ See Huntington's famous book of the same title, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

concludes that Islamic fundamentalism as it exists since 9/11 represents the new Counter-Enlightenment: “Sie [Islamic fundamentalists] wenden sich gegen die Aufklärung, konstituieren also so etwas wie eine Gegenaufklärung” (p. 13).

Similarly defiant interventions include those of Ulrike Ackermann who speaks out in defence of Western Enlightenment values against those who seek to destroy them. Her article ‘Die Feinde der offenen Gesellschaft’ – alluding to Karl Popper’s booktitle *The Open Society and its Enemies* – claims that the ideology of radical Islam has declared war on Western society as a whole, with its liberalism, secularism, democracy, freedom and cosmopolitanism.⁸⁵ Thus Islam provides a direct challenge to the “Errungenschaften unserer Zivilisation, die über Jahrhunderte hart erkämpft werden mussten” (p. 454). In another article published a year later, Ackermann makes the following recommendation.⁸⁶ In the light of the challenges and threats facing Europe, it is necessary to initiate a form of “Selbstbesinnung darüber, was Freiheit uns bedeutet, gleichsam ein Bekenntnis des Westens zu sich selbst” (p. 1161).

On balance, it appears to me that Ackermann’s call for self-reflection and a declaration of the West’s ‘belief in itself’ is precisely what *Merkur* has been conducting over the four years in question. Based upon the themes discussed here, one can conclude that the journal’s overarching aim is to reassert a strictly Western identity through processes of inclusion and exclusion. Rather than rethinking or possibly opening up European identity in the light of numerous challenges, *Merkur* prefers to resort to a self-congratulatory form of the “Bekenntnis des Westens zu sich selbst”. As we have seen, this has entailed staking out its “territory” as opposed to conceding or renegotiating on any of its aspects. The “West” is the main benchmark in the discussion of Eastern Europe and Turkey. Despite its noisy proclamations of Eastern Europe’s role in transforming the European status quo, in the final instance *Merkur* only commends these countries because they reaffirm Western values, while Turkey is categorized as a “partly” Western country. European identity, *Merkur* insists, must be understood as a principally Western identity, buttressed by lofty-

⁸⁵ Ulrike Ackermann, ‘Die Feinde der offenen Gesellschaft’, *Merkur*, 673 (2005), 451-455.

⁸⁶ Ulrike Ackermann, ‘Die schönen Versuchungen der Freiheit’, *Merkur*, 687 (2006), 1157-1162.

minded ideals of a European civilization against the insidious threat of Islamic fundamentalism.

5.4 Conclusion

One development that could be observed from this analysis might be described as follows: the debate about European identity and the search for European “values” is conducted at least in *Esprit* and *Merkur* in a more overt manner than during 1989-92. The topic is addressed more openly and self-consciously; the question of a European identity does not merely underlie or indirectly inform the articles, but is formulated explicitly and considered of strategic importance, especially in *Esprit*. Yet, it is also apparent that *NLR* does not share the view that the “value” question is a potent vector in its debates about Europe.

Enlightenment values remain a relevant part of the self-identification which the journals rely on to define European values. In addition, however, different forms of European identity models move to the forefront of the journals and are propagated and sketched out more overtly than previously. One can point especially to the conservative model of a primarily Christian Europe defined by its “Western” credentials, versus a model of social Europe, that is arguably more open in outlook and more accommodating towards religious and cultural Otherness. In this sense, the gap between an inward-looking and a more outwards orientated Europe appears to have become in fact more entrenched.

In respect of the discursive strategies of identity formation during 2003-06, we have noted that *Merkur* and *NLR* employ largely similar arguments as before. The former relies heavily on inclusion/exclusion mechanisms, the latter on strategic appropriation of certain values as “European”. Only in *Esprit*, the attempt is made to at least move beyond the binaries of Self and Other.

Finally, the question of the extent to which these more overt declarations about identity, and the solidifying of certain identity models, translate into a more integrated public sphere between the journals in which criteria of reference overlap delivers a mixed picture. For example the debate about the

Constitution certainly produces no common ground on its relevance. Some partial and temporary overlaps between the journals are, however, apparent. Consensus exists, for example, between *Merkur* and *Esprit* about the events of 1989 as a new European foundation myth and the beginning of the “true” Europe. Then again, in *NLR*, however, there is no recognition how these events have altered or impeded a “post-1989” European identity. Similarly, *NLR*’s position on Turkey can be more aptly described as an absence of engagement, while Turkey presents for *Esprit* and *Merkur* a ‘test case’ which goes to the heart of what European identity stands for. Again, in this instance *NLR* applies fundamentally different criteria of relevance in its debate about Europe.

And yet, the discussion about Europe’s role in the aftermath of the American-led invasion of Iraq proves to be the most potent example of a crisis-induced common response in all of the journals. Even *NLR*, otherwise entirely unconvinced that Europe should be discussed as a matter of values, feels compelled to respond, and arrives, like *Esprit* and *Merkur* at the conclusion that European values are lacking, or could be more aptly described as Western values. As with the case of nationalism outlined in the previous chapter, this crisis galvanizes the need to describe and define what European values should or could stand for – and importantly not only in those journals which subscribe to the notion in any case, such as *Esprit* and *Merkur*, but also those such who as *NLR* which, generally speaking, refuse to treat Europe as a matter of common values.

On balance, one can conclude that in comparison to 1989-92, some more instances of partial overlaps and common criteria of reference as indicators of a transnational public sphere exist and that ideas about European identity are expressed more openly, in the form of more defined models. Yet again, a common response that encompasses all the journals is most obvious in response to a perceived crisis, when the national and intellectual prejudices and the strategic positioning that the journals adopt in relation to Europe can be - momentarily at least - overridden, and the space for a common forum of debate opened up.

Conclusion

1. Rationale of Thesis

This thesis has endeavoured to assess how the process of European identity formation is construed and configured in cultural journals and to what extent the model of a European public sphere is relevant to this process. The year 1989 was chosen as a starting date for the analysis because of the obvious political ramifications for the newly emerging European landscape which the events of this year entailed. In addition, the discussion about a potential or existing European identity has become increasingly prevalent since then in academic circles, journalism and media discourse and in political rhetoric. Cultural journals provided, I pointed out, a window onto the process of Europe's conceptual configuration, since they combine running commentary of current events endowed with a longer-term perspective and more in-depth analysis than most media. The journals also offered a source of tension, it was argued, between the "national" heritage of the respective cultures and the cosmopolitan aspirations or principled openness of the cultural journals to debates, arguments and exchange. Their role in the writing of a European identity was explored by investigating the ways in which the journals discuss, narrate and give meaning to this identity, and by uncovering the discursive mechanisms which the journals employ when doing so. Crucially, this analysis has identified external factors other than the mechanisms of a public sphere as salient for the construction of European identity.

To begin with, Habermas's original model of a public sphere was established as the framework for the analysis. Cultural journals, it was argued, played a role in the emergence of the "original" eighteenth-century public sphere and today form an admittedly small but relevant part in the contemporary public sphere. The model of a public sphere highlights the political and social relevance of the processes of criticism, debate and argumentative exchange in which journals

ideally engage. Habermas assigned to the public sphere an essential function through which citizens can make their voices and opinions heard, and through which they come to recognize democratic governance as *legitimate*. The public sphere was established as an “ideal type”, which lays down standards for an argumentative, dialogic exchange based on reason and critical analysis. As such, it presented a normative rather than a descriptive model.

Following this, I sketched out the concept of the European public sphere developed by political and social scientists, which applied Habermas’s original concept to problems of European integration that are commonly described as the root causes of a persistent European malaise, and which have resurfaced with remarkable regularity in discussions about Europe. They pertain to a) the perceived lack of European political legitimacy and b) the alleged weak, underdeveloped sense of a binding European identity which, if “strengthened”, might instil a sense of allegiance and loyalty.

I subsequently argued that this link between the European public sphere and its potential for identity formation rests on one partial tenet of academic orthodoxy, namely that in contemporary societies which find themselves in a state of “reflexive modernity (to use Anthony Giddens’s term), identities are essentially the result of debate and agreement. In the understanding of social scientists European identity is seen to be shaped and reshaped through textual construction and discursive debates; its expression is the outcome of a process of self-ascription and self-identification. It comes as no surprise, then, that the European public sphere is a desirable and relevant locus of identity construction, because the mechanisms of the public sphere seemingly ensure that identities are expressed in a deliberative form and with potential for subsequent self-critique and rewriting. In this view, identities are no longer subject to potentially unchecked declarations of allegiances or preferences but the result of a common debate and agreement. European identity is said to unfold through a deepening and thickening of communicative exchanges, which in turn lead to a more sharply defined and unified sense of identity. To find out whether this view of processes of identity formation adequately captures what is taking place has been at the heart of this enquiry.

The relevant criteria for observing an EPS for the purpose of this thesis were based on points made by Thomas Risse. He emphasised the essentially dynamic, fluid nature of this sphere of interlocution and exchange, and noted that an EPS could be observed in the changing levels of communication flow between national public spheres, rather than as an existing, readily observable entity. Further, Risse has highlighted the existence of shared values and criteria of relevance as a crucial indicator of a public sphere: within a public sphere, the participants need not necessarily agree or come to the same conclusion about different issues, but they should agree which criteria of relevance are important in debating certain issues. The debate about Turkey's accession to the European Union (which I discussed in Chapter V) provides a good example of this criterion. According to Risse's definition, the journals would not have had to agree whether Turkey should or should not become an EU candidate country, but should have agreed whether the question of religion is a relevant issue in debating Turkey's accession (which was not the case amongst the journals in question here). The absence or presence of common criteria of reference and common interpretive frameworks was defined as the guiding focus for the analysis of the journals.

Further, it was established in Chapter Two that attempts to define a European identity have depended on the basis of historical, intellectual and religious sources and influences on which intellectuals and writers have drawn to varying degrees. Crucially, it was noted that models and definitions of Europe have been used and construed for many different ideological, political and intellectual purposes, which the journal discussion has also attempted to explicate.

2. Identity Formation in the Cultural Journals

The quantitative overview aimed to identify trends about the way in which the journals frame their discussions about Europe over the years in question, and to what extent they feature texts written by foreign authors. *Esprit* emerged as the

most “Europeanized” of the journals. By contrast, *NLR* can be described as by far the most “internationalized” in outlook, and *Merkur* the most nationally orientated of the journals. I established that the number of articles explicitly evoking a European framework rose in all journals. However, this higher level of attention and awareness of European issues did not translate into a systematic pattern of higher levels of discursive exchange in the form of a higher level of foreign contributions or more commissioned foreign authors, which would imply a further opening towards other European viewpoints. Instead, the journals followed their own attention cycles, in which certain issues led to a surge in reporting about Europe, but they did not evince a consistent, incremental engagement with European issues. The subsequent qualitative analysis further supported the idea that an increase in articles directly evoking a European framework did not automatically translate into increased levels of exchange or evidence of a convergence of European identity narratives.

Identity formation was taking place in the journals in much more complex and variegated ways than through the classical dialectic interplay of Self and Other, or through inclusion/exclusion patterns, by which a non-self group is posited as the (undesirable) “Other” in order to internally strengthen and reify the sense of one’s own identity. While this mechanism is no doubt prevalent in the journals – most notably in *Merkur’s* discussion of Islamic versus European values – other mechanisms were also visible. Indeed, the idea of a “renewal” was vital for the rewriting and reshaping of European identity in the wake of 1989. Here, one could observe instances of “mirroring”, i.e. declarations of sameness which led to inclusion. In the later period of discussion, strategies of extending and effectively universalizing European values were evident in *Esprit*. It might be added, however, that *Esprit* was the only journal to display a real qualitative shift in its treatment of European identity in 2003-2006 towards transcending its own position and reaching out towards the “unknown”, thereby striving to circumvent the established patterns of inclusion/exclusion which continued to prevail in *Merkur*.

Thus, European identity was expressed through very different strategies, including an opening towards and inclusion of the Other, as well as methods of fencing off and excluding. Importantly, these declarations and proclamations about European identity were not fixed, but were advanced at certain strategic points and reversed on other occasions. *NLR* was such an example; in various instances it described the historic tradition of a pan-European workers' solidarity as the basis for a future social Europe, only to deny the principle of a common European identity and of shared values in other texts at roughly the same time. In the other journals, instances of renewal, opening and modes of inclusion were superseded by attempts to re-establish boundaries: *Merkur* displayed these alternating modes of opening up at given points in its discourse about the inclusion of Eastern Europe, only to retreat and insist on a more exclusive vision of a purely "Western" European identity. This was not unlike *Esprit*, which after a period of declaring Europe's universality and principled openness, returned to tentatively posing the question of Europe's "autolimitation".

The key point one can deduce from this is that none of the journals "developed" European identity in any straightforward, linear motion; nor was there evidence of a "logic of societal convergence or integration."¹ In other words no observable progressive or even teleological pattern was seen to emerge. Rather, European identity unfolded in the journals in circular, sometimes even "conflictual back-and-forth movements".²

Nonetheless, it was also possible to observe instances of common argumentative frameworks and understandings of Europe in the journals - even if they were largely shifting and transient - and despite the fact they did not usually transcend the effects of existing ideological and political cleavages. During 1989-1992, a shared concept of Europe as a harbinger of democratic, liberal, "postnational" values was in evidence, and in the later period, the imperative for rewriting and reassessing recent European history in order to

¹ Gerard Delanty, Chris Rumford, *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 46.

² Wilfried Spohn, 'National Identities and Collective Memory in an Enlarged Europe', in *Collective Memory and European Identity: the Effects of Integration and Enlargement*, ed. by Klaus Eder and Wilfried Spohn (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 1-14 (p. 13).

include and incorporate the Eastern European countries was addressed by the journals as well. At this stage, European identity was addressed jointly in *Esprit* and *Merkur* as a question of common cultural and historical values. Both journals shared to a certain extent an awareness of 1989 as a defining, or indeed founding, moment of contemporary Europe, although this line of discussion was replaced in *Esprit* by the quest for a social Europe and sidelined in *Merkur* for the purpose of tying Europe into an exclusively transatlantic, Western identity. Furthermore it was possible to observe, at least amongst the two journals on the Left, *Esprit* and *NLR*, the call for a “social Europe”, as the common denominator and basis for a European identity.

This notion of social Europe was, I would argue, the most convincing attempt at instilling a positive, non-defensive European identity, built on inclusive and non-essentialist values of social solidarity. In these instances where the journals posited the year of 1989 as a binding foundation myth, or where they evoked European identity as defined by a shared ethos of social solidarity, one can observe this continual work of “weaving the fabric”, so to speak, of European identity narratives. In this regard, the journals play a role in formulating and exploring notions of European identity. Taken individually, the journals do engage to different degrees in a constant intellectual exercise of reflection and analysis through which models of European identity can unfold.

Yet it would be to force the analysis to say that these models necessarily integrate or converge over time. For this comparative perspective has revealed the challenges of writing a European identity that is free from the entanglements of national perspectives or of certain intellectual agendas and political biases, which were evident in all of the journals. One could indeed observe typically French tendencies towards “universalizing” one’s own position, alongside British reluctance to treat Europe as a matter of values in the first place. In *Merkur*’s case, the salience of ideological predispositions – exemplified in the refusal to discuss the European Constitution in any other terms than those of the “loss of the nation state” – oftentimes predetermined the outcome of debates.

This leads onto the final, most relevant point: the most potent mechanism for eliciting common European identity responses that reach beyond national

and ideological cleavages has been that of a perceived moment of crisis. The analysis has shown how throughout 1991-1992, the perceived threat of nationalism led to a unanimous response in the journals on the need for European Enlightenment ideals to counter the threat of a nationalist resurgence in Eastern Europe. In this instance, the journals held up – with different nuances and emphases – broadly defined Enlightenment values as the distinctive and enduring trait of European identity, at the moment when these very values were felt to be under threat. Again, throughout 2003-2004 the crisis provoked by the American-led Iraq invasion forged consensus amongst the journals that European identity was thus far inchoate and determined largely through American influences. It then induced the need to define and posit Europe much more strongly than a shared discourse about, say, the merits of European enlargement or the proposed Constitution in all the journals.

Esprit and *Merkur* referred to Enlightenment values as a positive and unfailingly positive model throughout, while *NLR* struck a more ambiguous and hesitant tone about the Enlightenment's tarnished legacy (which I briefly outlined in Chapter Two). However, it constituted the one reference point which the journals recognised as a shared and defining European value. These findings overlap with other recent studies on European identity formation, such as those of Helene Sjørnsen, who on the basis of analyses of official political discourses in selected European countries has made the point that, on balance, European identity is still largely defined by alleged "universal principles", rather than through any particular "religious, ethnic or linguistic commonalities."³ Thus, it is not only in the context of intellectual debates that Enlightenment values emerge as the sole European identity model with the capacity to bridge the left/right ideological divide and to reach above national inclinations and prejudices. To what extent these Enlightenment values can function as a resonant and relevant model of identification for Europeans, one that is distinct enough from "Western" values, would be a good starting point for another line of discussion.

³ Helene Sjørnsen, 'The European Union Between Values and Rights', in *Questioning EU Enlargement: Europe in Search of Identity*, ed. by Helene Sjørnsen (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 203-215 (p. 211).

3. The European Public Sphere Model Reconsidered

What, then, are the implications of these findings for the original hypothesis about identity construction within the framework of a European public sphere? It was stated above that the EPS model is based on the premise that in postmodern and self-reflexive European societies, a European identity will be shaped through processes of self-ascription and discursive exchanges. We have seen here that cultural journals do participate with varying levels of intensity, originality and nuance in this reflexive writing and rewriting of European identities. Discursive identity formation is indeed at work in the journals, and in some instances one could observe instances of (partial) common argumentative overlaps and analysis. However, this thesis has suggested that identity formation is taking place in much more haphazard ways than the European public sphere envisages: it comes about in circular and roundabout ways, rather than as a gradual deepening or increasing convergence.

Furthermore, if the sense of a common identity does come to the fore mostly as a *reaction* to a perceived crisis, this opens up the question about the extent to which one can speak of identities as being entirely “shaped and reshaped through communicative processes”,⁴ and thus essentially a matter of volition. If external factors have a strong effect on generating a sense of identity even in the ostensibly intellectual and, by implication, self-critical and self-reflexive context of cultural journals, this seems to suggest that European identity emerges at least partly as an unintended outcome of these crises, rather than as the intended outcome of shared debates.

On the basis of these findings it appears to me relevant to ask, therefore, whether the model of the European public sphere has not been “normatively overstretched”;⁵ in other words, whether the premise that a European Public

⁴ Helene Sjørnsen, ‘Enlargement and the Nature of the EU Polity’, in *Questioning EU Enlargement* (see Sjørnsen, above), pp. 1-16 (p. 14).

⁵ From the title of Hans Jörg Trenz’s article, ‘In Search of the European Public Sphere: Between Normative Overstretch and Empirical Disenchantment’, *Recon Online Working Paper*, 2008/07

Sphere will lead to identity formation has not created heightened expectations about what such a public sphere can actually fulfil. While it is inevitable that the realities of any public sphere discourse will fall below the “ideal standards”, I would contend that in this case the expectations of what such a sphere can achieve were based on a particular view about how identities are shaped, which only give a partial account of how identity formation takes place. Taken on their own, the journals have provided evidence of their continual writing and rewriting of European identity. Viewed from a comparative perspective, however, the thesis has shown that national and ideological perspectives have proven salient vectors in the writing of European identity. In several instances, we have seen, the journals extend pre-existing cultural identities instead of negotiating a new transnational space. These tendencies were usually only surmounted in times of crisis, rather than through a deepening of discursive exchanges. There is a case to be made, therefore, that European identity is not the intended outcome of a discursive construction alone, but more likely to crystallize in moments of perceived crises.

To conclude, I would argue that in principle the original model of the public sphere remains a desirable model because it lays down standards of an ideally open field of exchange which bestows social and political relevance on the processes of debating and exchanging arguments and viewpoints. Future research into the European public sphere ought, however, to be more mindful of the numerous complex factors that shape identity formation, which in turn might lead to a more careful assessment about what role the EPS could and should meaningfully fulfil. The EPS might perhaps be better understood as a relevant and desirable accompanying condition, but not necessarily the primary agent of change, or indeed convergence, of European identities. This discussion has highlighted the complex and polyvalent factors that are involved in shaping and configuring European identities over time. With this in mind, further research into this field of enquiry ought to tread more lightly around the dynamic and

<http://www.reconproject.eu/main.php/RECON_wp_0807.pdf?fileitem=16662548> [accessed 8 May 08].

shifting problem of European identity formation. For this present exercise has indicated that any principled attempt to circumscribe or predict how identities will develop is likely to be thwarted by external events.

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