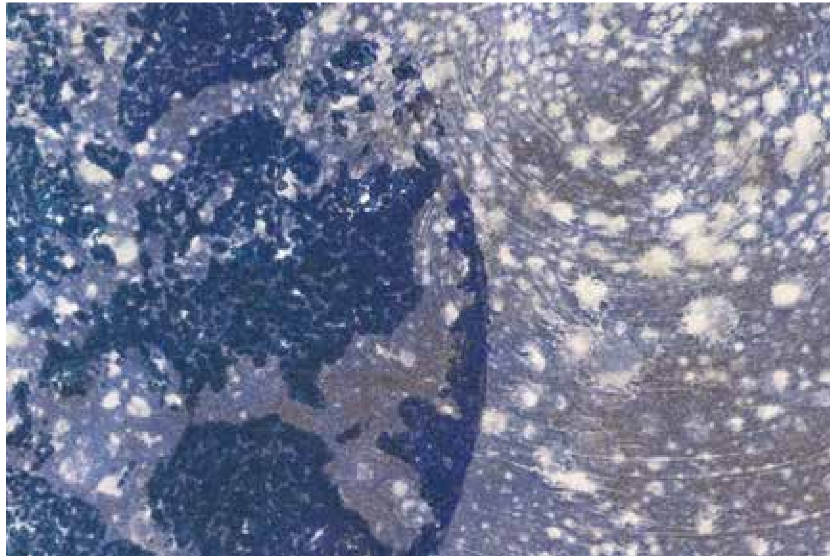

Civic and Ethnic Nationalism in European Union Identity Creation

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Abstract

When in 1984 the European Council decided to appoint a committee to study which measures it could adopt in order to establish a 'people's Europe', the European Economic Community entered a stage in its history which essentially began a process of national identity-building. Up until that point, the European project had mainly revolved around economic and institutional integration, without adopting vital aspects of what constitutes, in Benedict Anderson's words, an 'imagined community'. The recommendations from the Committee on a People's Europe were clear; to establish symbols and initiatives which common people could identify with and participate in. During the two decades following the report, the European Union would come to fly its own flag, play its own anthem, provide four freedoms, and establish a common currency – many of them, if not all, innovations introduced in the pursuit of a common European identity.

This report examines several EU identity creation initiatives, with the aim of understanding which concepts of nationalism they were founded on or intended to promote. As such, the report deals extensively with the concept of nationalism and identity, and splits the concept into two distinct categories: civic and ethnic nationalism. In doing so, the report dissects the Union's documents and prior academic research to study some of the most prominent signifiers of the European Union to date.

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The writing of this report has been one of my life's most challenging undertakings. Imaginary blood, sweat, and tears have been spilt on the altar of European identity creation research, but as my mind almost exclusively wears rose-coloured glasses, I'm certain I will – in time – remember this period in my life fondly. I owe an immense amount of gratitude to my scholarly supervisor Kim Christian Priemel, who has offered invaluable advice and insight, reviewing my drafts in record time and in great depth, and helped make this report more multifaceted than I could've ever imagined. I also wish to thank advisor John Erik Fossum, who helped put the report back on track by inspiring the focus on nationalism, and ARENA Centre for European Studies for providing a great study environment.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Jean Monnet, one of the founding fathers of the European Union, stated in 1950: 'Europe has never existed […] Europe has to be genuinely created […]'.[1] In the decade that followed, European states would take their first steps toward unification when only a decade before, total war had led the continent of Aristotle and Leonardo da Vinci, Anna Komnene and Miguel de Cervantes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Marie Curie, to the brink of ruin. But economic and institutional integration would soon bind old rivals and newfound allies closer together, and in the course of the latter half of Europe's bloodiest century, a Community became a Union.[2]

As the memory of war faded and the immediate reasons for common solutions appeared to dwindle, it became clear to European officials that the European project required a more profound foundation on which to

[1] Jean Monnet, 'Discussion Paper by Jean Monnet (3 May 1950),' May 3, 1950, vi, https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/e8707ce5-dd60-437e-982a-0df9226e648d/publishable_en.pdf.

[2] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994); Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (London: Pimlico, 2007); Harold James, *Europe Reborn: A History, 1914-2000*, First published 2003 (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2014).

build.[3] Plagued by 'eurosclerosis' in the 1970's – a period characterised by both economic and European integrational stagnation – Commission President Jacques Delors later remarked; 'you cannot fall in love with a single market'.[4] Delors was referring to the support for a European Community based mostly on economic integration, and the lack of identification with the European project among the peoples of the Member States. In this regard, the European Council meeting at Fontainebleau on 25-26 June 1984 became influential.[5] It set up the creation of the Committee for a People's Europe, often referred to as the Adonnino Committee after its Italian chairman, Pietro Adonnino. The committee's aim was to study and provide recommendations for how the Community could strengthen and promote its identity and image to both Europeans and the rest of the world. The committee proposed the adoption of several symbols and initiatives which would later become integral signifiers of the European Union. Among them were the flag, the anthem, and intra-European mobility programmes.[6]

The creation of symbols of identity inevitably prompts the question: what kind of identity is being promoted and/or constructed in the process? The process of European institutional integration has in many instances entailed moving from intergovernmentalism to supranationalism, and with the desire of the European Council to create a 'People's Europe', the EU

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[3] Kurt Biedenkopf, Krzystof Michalski, and Bronislaw Geremek, 'The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe: Reflection Group - Concluding Remarks' (Brussels: European Commission, 2004), 5–8.

[4] Jacques Delors, 'Statement on the Broad Lines of Commission Policy (Strasbourg, 17 January 1989),' January 17, 1989, 3, https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2003/8/22/b9c06b95-db97-4774-a700-e8aea5172233/publishable_en.pdf.

[5] Alasdair Blair, *The European Union Since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2011); Philip Ruttley, 'The Long Road to Unity: The Contribution of Law to the Process of European Integration Since 1945,' in *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[6] 'European Council Meeting at Fontainebleau: Conclusions of the Presidency,' June 26, 1984, 8–9, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/20673/1984_june_-_fontainebleau__eng_.pdf; Adonnino Committee, 'Report by the Committee on a People's Europe Submitted to the Milan European Council (Milan, 28 and 29 June 1985),' CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, December 18, 2013, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/report_by_the_committee_on_a_people_s_europe_submitted_to_the_milan_european_council_milan_28_and_29_june_1985-en-b6f17ee2-da21-4013-9573-c2b159f86ff5.html.

began a process reminiscent of national identity-building. To garner support for the European project, it not only took advantage of traditional signifiers of national identity, such as stately symbols, but also initiated modern programmes aimed at bringing the peoples of Europe closer together in order to make them aware of their commonalities.[7] This was how a European 'imagined community' – in Benedict Anderson's oft-quoted phrase[8] – was supposed to emerge. Nationality however, is built on several foundations and conveyed in numerous ways, which impact a society's political and cultural landscape. This report therefore attempts to highlight and uncover what types of nationalism the European Union's identity signifiers are founded on.

To understand what type of nationalism the European Union and its predecessors have attempted to foster, the primary research question of this report is: *Which signifiers and initiatives has the European Union promoted in order to foster a European identity, and what type of nationalism is promoted through these means of communication?*[9] To answer this question, the report takes advantage of numerous official EU documents and reports, including the Treaties, where one may find both official declarations of motivations as well as data on the effects of the initiatives in question.

The report deals with the topic of European integration history and the concept and history of nationalism, and it has therefore been necessary to review the literature in these fields. One of the main foundations for this report has been Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Anderson defined the nation as 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited

[7] 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union' (EUR-Lex), 326/15-326/16, accessed June 2, 2020, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF.

[8] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.*, Revised ed. (London: Verso, 2006).

[9] Not to be confused with Talcott Parson's and Niklas Luhmann's theories on 'symbolically generalized means of communication'. Daniel Chernilo, 'The Theorization of Social Co-Ordinations in Differentiated Cocieties: The Theory of Generalized Symbolic Media in Parsons, Luhmann and Habermas,' *The British Journal of Sociology* 53, no. 3 (September 2002): 431–49.

and sovereign'.[10] The community is imagined because no member of a nation will ever meet all the members of that nation, yet they will still think of each other as belonging to the same community. It is limited because even the largest nations have boundaries bordering other nations, and it is sovereign because nations strive to be free, of which the symbol is the sovereign and independent nation-state. Finally, Anderson defined it as a community because a nation is a horizontal comradeship, regardless of the inequalities which may exist within. However, imagined communities might be limited, but they are not exclusive per se: they can be joined through naturalisation and through speaking the same language, which in part differentiates nationalism from racism, which may be seen as a by-product of colonialism and aristocracy (upper classes).[11] Anderson argued against the two terms' conflation, stating that nations inspire love and self-sacrifice: '[t]he cultural products of nationalism – poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts – show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles […] how truly rare it is to find *analogous* nationalist products expressing fear and loathing'. Furthermore, he argued that while nationalism thinks in terms of national destinies, racism deals in 'eternal contaminations, transmitted from the origins of time through and endless sequence of loathsome copulations: outside history'.[12]

Furthermore, Eric Hobsbawm's theory of 'invented traditions' is relevant to the report because the European Union's identity signifiers are, just like that of older nations, often just that: invented. Hobsbawm differentiated between 'old' and 'new' traditions, stating that the former 'were specific and strongly binding social practices', while the latter 'tended to be quite unspecific and vague as to the nature of the values, rights and obligations of the group membership they inculcate'. In this sense, emotional and symbolical signifiers are important to national membership, and they must therefore be universal enough to appeal to the nation.[13] In these

[10] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

[11] Anderson, 7, 141–54.

[12] Anderson, 149.

[13] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Canto ed., Canto (Cambridge: University Press, 1983), 10–11.

'new' traditions then, we can place all of the signifiers of European identity examined in this report.

Additionally, Michael Billig's theory of 'banal nationalism' has inspired sections of the report. Banal nationalism refers to everyday signifiers of the nation that have effectively been normalised to the point where they do not stand out to the passersby. Billig adds to this concept two differing variations of national signifiers, namely the 'waved and unwaved flag', where it is the latter which takes on the definition of 'banal'. Billig argued that, '[t]he reproduction of nation-states depends upon a dialectic of collective remembering and forgetting, and of imagination and unimaginative repetition. The unwaved flag, which is so forgettable, is at least as important as the memorable moments of flag waving'.[14] The report relates this concept to many of the EU's most important symbols, such as the 'proliferation' of the European flag and emblem.

Anderson's, Hobsbawm's, and Billig's conceptions of the nation and nationalism as essentially imagined and constructed have been used and built upon substantially by academics since, also as it relates to the creation of a European identity. Sociologist Gerard Delanty argues that Europe is an idea, 'a cultural construct [which] cannot be regarded as a self-evident entity: it is an idea as much as reality'. It is the product of invention and reinvention determined by new collective identities 'constituted as a cultural frame of reference for the formation of identities and new geopolitical realities'. Delanty notes however that a European identity is more abstract than the national identity, seeing it as a collective or social representation encompassing within it a variety of cultural forms.[15] Homi K. Babha expanded on Anderson's definition and argued that the imagining of the nation is influenced by changing forms of narration, where the nation, through Janus-faced discourse, is able to simultaneously look to its heritage and to its ideal future to compose as powerful an image as possible.[16] Murray Pratt argued that the language used by the EU in the preamble to the draft constitution (which shares sentiments and expressions

[14] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE, 1995), 8–10.

[15] Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1995), 1–4.

[16] Homi K. Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 3.

with the latest version of the Treaty on European Union) is similar to both Anderson's and Babha's definitions of a nation and an imagined community, as it rhetorically looks back to a 'constructed past' (because it allegedly draws on the 'cultural, religious and humanist inheritance' of Europe).[17] The report draws on these interpretations of the nation as an imagined community which can be constructed, imagined and reimagined, and, at least theoretically, allowing individuals to 'separate' themselves from an exclusive sense of nationhood, and reunite under a supranational nation, as argued by Attila Demeter.[18]

Second, much of the report is dedicated to the concepts of civic and ethnic nationalism, and more specifically, which of these selected symbols and initiatives the EU promote. An overview of these and how the report defines these concepts are therefore in order.

Friedrich Meinecke made in 1908 the significant distinction between the *Staatsnation* and the *Kulturnation* in Germany, roughly translated to a state-defined and a culture-defined nation. While the former is derived from political and constitutional ties, the latter is based on shared and accepted cultural, religious, and linguistic traditions.[19] These definitions of the two distinct cultural phenomena resemble later, similar concepts. Hans Kohn differentiated between two forms of nationalism, the nationalism of 'the East' and of 'the West'. Eastern nationalism was largely founded on national myths related to an ideal fatherland, while Western nationalism was supposedly built on political and economic grounds, linked to individual liberty and rational cosmopolitanism.[20] This definition is similar to Clifford Geertz's formulation, only he calls the pair 'primordial' and 'political' 'givens'. Here, the primordial givens constituted bloodlines, culture, heritage, language, and religion, and the political giv-

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[17] Murray Pratt, 'Imagining Union: European Cultural Identity in the Pre-Federal Future Perfect,' *PORTAL Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies* 2, no. 2 (August 10, 2005): 7.

[18] Attila Demeter, 'The European Nation?,' *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai - Studia Europaea* 58, no. 2 (2013): 114.

[19] Arndt Kremer, 'Transitions of a Myth? The Idea of a Language-Defined Kulturnation in Germany,' *New German Review: A Journal of Germanic Studies* 27, no. 1 (2016): 55.

[20] Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1944).

ens are related to state-building, civic autonomy, and national independence.[21] Anthony Smith later distinguished between a 'civic' and an 'ethnic' nationalism. The former is based on a 'legal-political community, legal-political equality of the members, and common civic culture and ideology', while the latter is grounded in a 'fictive super-family' based on ancestry, national myths, history, customs, and linguistic traditions. Indeed, these may also be combined and various factors of both the civic and ethnic can exist at the same time.[22] Smith also defined nationalism as an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity of a human population, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'.[23]

In this report, the terms 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalism will be used when, respectively, distinguishing between national identity or means of national identity creation which are meant to foster an understanding of the nation based on either political institutions, democracy, economy, and common rights and pluralist values, or conversely, an identity based on cultural heritage and traditions, religion, and ethnicity. These definitions are based on Anthony Smith's as seen above. The term 'nationalism' in itself is given a neutral value – free of other ideologies – as it only relates to the process of fostering a national identity or the creation of a nation, unless preceded by any of the two aforementioned terms which specify what type of nationalism the text is referring to.

These concepts relate to European identity creation through the use of the signifiers discussed in the report, and indeed several approaches to European identity creation relate to the above-mentioned theories on the nation and nationalism. Sebastian Popa and Delia Dumitrescu argue that the

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[21] Clifford Geertz, 'The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States,' in *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (New York: Free Press, 1963), 109.

[22] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, Penguin Politics and Current Affairs (London: Penguin, 1991), 11–13.

[23] Anthony D. Smith, 'The Nation: Real or Imagined?,' in *People, Nation and State*, ed. Edward Mortimer (London: I. B. Taurus, 1999), 37.

construction of symbols for the European Union is one of the central focuses of the European project,[24] because it is how, according to Michael Bruter, the EU communicates its values, and reveals its desire to present Europe as a natural human community.[25] At the same time, Thomas Hylland Eriksen argues that for flags as a national symbol, values themselves are not enough; it needs to be interpretable, akin to an empty vessel which a diverse population can relate to.[26] J. Leib and G. R. Webster argue that national flags are symbolic containers that '"condense" a range of meanings and emotions pertaining to a group's perceived historical experience, real or imagined cultural homogeneity, and efforts to define a similarity of outlook for the future'.[27] Even though the two interpretations of flags might differ, they are both important because they relate to the idea of 'unity in diversity' stressed by the European Union through several channels like official explanations for their symbols and through the Treaties.[28]

Monica Sassatelli holds that currency acts not only as a means of exchange, but also as a way to define a social group,[29] which, as Jacques Hymans argues, is shown through the motifs of coins and bills, where the 'legitimiser' (heads of state, etc.) has differed throughout history and with cultural changes.[30] This helps to explain why Barry Eichengreen and Jeffrey

[24] Sebastian Adrian Popa and Delia Dumitrescu, 'National but European? Visual Manifestations of Europe in National Parties' Euromanifestos since 1979,' *Party Politics* 23, no. 5 (2017): 526–537.

[25] Michael Bruter, 'Winning Hearts and Minds for Europe: The Impact of News and Symbols on Civic and Cultural European Identity,' *Comparative Political Studies* 36, no. 10 (December 1, 2003): 1148–79.

[26] Thomas Hylland Eriksen, 'Some Questions About Flags,' *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and America*, 2007, 1–13.

[27] J. Leib and G. R. Webster, 'Rebel with(out) a Cause? The Contested Meanings of the Confederate Battle Flag in the American South,' in *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and North America*, ed. T. H. Eriksen and R. Jenkins (London: Routledge, 2007), 31.

[28] 'The EU Motto,' European Union, June 16, 2016, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/motto_en; 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union.'

[29] Monica Sassatelli, ''Europe in Your Pocket': Narratives of Identity in Euro Iconography,' *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 25, no. 3 (July 2017): 354–66.

[30] Jacques E. C. Hymans, 'The Changing Color of Money: European Currency Iconography and Collective Identity,' *European Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 1 (2004): 5–31.

Frieden determined the European single currency to be in large part a result of political rather than economic decision-making, especially as they failed to find sufficient proof of economic benefits associated with the implementation of a common currency in Europe.[31] Indeed, the Adonnino Committee stressed in its report to the European Council that, '[t]here is clearly a need, for both practical and symbolic reasons, for a flag and an emblem to be used […] where the existence of the Community needs to be brought to public attention'.[32] Although this statement referred to the flag specifically, its main argument was the need for recognisable European Union symbols, of which the euro is a part.[33] The European anthem is also important in this regard as anthems, according to Oliver Lauenstein et al., are political texts 'mnemonic of national identity' and 'texts used to describe and activate a particular conception of nationhood'.[34] In this regard, as Pål Kolstø's argument that national symbols may divide as much as they unite,[35] can help explain why the EU anthem lacks lyrics.

As to the EU's programmes, Kiran Klaus Patel states that, 'many of [its] cultural programmes endeavour to foster, facilitate, create or re-awaken a sense of European belonging or identity'[36], which is in line with the EU's stated motivations for the programmes included in this report. Here, Chris Shore has argued that the EU's cultural policies are not meant to foster diversity, but a kind of unity which undermines the hegemony of the na-

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[31] Barry Eichengreen and Jeffry A. Frieden, *The Political Economy of European Monetary Unification* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), 5.

[32] Adonnino Committee, 'Report by the Committee on a People's Europe Submitted to the Milan European Council (Milan, 28 and 29 June 1985),' 25.

[33] Bruter, 'Winning Hearts and Minds for Europe,' 152.

[34] Oliver Lauenstein et al., '"Oh Motherland I Pledge to Thee …": A Study into Nationalism, Gender and the Representation of an Imagined Family within National Anthems,' *Nations and Nationalism* 21, no. 2 (2015): 316.

[35] Pål Kolstø, 'National Symbols as Signs of Unity and Division,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29, no. 4 (2006): 676.

[36] Kiran Klaus Patel, 'Introduction,' in *The Cultural Politics of Europe: European Capitals of Culture and European Union Since the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 2013).

tion-state, which also might come at the cost of excluding non-Europeans.[37] Contrary to this point, several academics have argued that a European identity resembles cosmopolitanism, a more flexible identity where the individual is able to think of themselves as belonging to several communities as once, which is in line with the aims outlined in the EU Treaties of fostering a common community built on cultural diversity. Indeed, Alan Milward argued the direct opposite of Shore; that the process of European integration has been the nation-state's saviour, and played an integral role in the European nation-state's post-war construction.[38]

This report examines European identity creation as promoted by the European Union's institutions through specific signifiers. As such, the geographic scope of the report will mostly be limited to the territory of the EU member states, although regions outside the Union will occasionally be included. The process of European integration since the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 may arguably be described as one long process of nation-building when examining the integration process through Stein Rokkan's nation-building theory which is split into four phases, beginning with political, economic, and institutional unification at the elite level.[39] However, this report will exclusively cover identity creation initiatives adopted after 1985, i.e. after the conclusion of the report from the Committee for a People's Europe (but not limited to it, as is the case with ECOC and the euro). This is because several of the symbols adopted as a consequence of this report were aimed at fostering and promoting a European identity.[40] Therefore, the symbols and programmes which

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[37] Chris Shore, ''In Uno Plures'? EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe,' *Cultural Analysis 5* 5 (2006): 7–26.

[38] Florian Pichler, 'How Real Is Cosmopolitanism in Europe?,' *Sociology* 42, no. 6 (December 1, 2008): 1107–26; Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande, 'Cosmopolitanism: Europe's Way Out of Crisis,' *European Journal of Social Theory* 10, no. 1 (February 1, 2007): 67–85; Gerard Delanty and Chris Rumford, *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization* (London: Routledge, 2005); Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation State* (London: Routledge, 1999).

[39] Stein Rokkan, 'Nation-Building: A Review of Models and Approaches,' *Current Sociology* 19, no. 3 (December 1, 1971): 31.

[40] Adonnino Committee, 'Report by the Committee on a People's Europe Submitted to the Milan European Council (Milan, 28 and 29 June 1985).'

will be examined in this report are as follows: the European flag; the European anthem; the European motto; the euro; the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) programme; and the Erasmus student exchange programme.

The primary sources used in this report are based on official EU documents. The consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union are essential to this report as they state the motivations for EU policies, and general Union ideals. Crucial is also the Adonnino Committee report which recommended several of the signifiers examined in this report. Furthermore, Eurobarometer surveys have been used to monitor historical changes in EU citizens' identification with aspects of the European project, such as the Union itself or the currency. Furthermore, various miscellaneous EU documents or reports, such as the reports on the ECOC events, have also been examined. All of these documents have been found online, many of them on the vast EUR-Lex website which houses virtually all EU legal documents, run by the Publications Office of the European Union. Additionally, the online archives of the University of Luxembourg which goes under the name Digital Research in European Studies (CVCE), has provided important primary sources. Finally, the European Commission's website has also provided several definitions and access to brochures and other documents used throughout the text.

This report is separated into two main sections, each based on a means of communication. 'Means of communication' refers to symbols or initiatives which have been adopted with the aim of promoting a specific identity. The first contains what I define as 'symbolic' means of communication, namely the flag, anthem, and currency. These are chosen because they are commonly recognised by if not all, then most citizens residing in a state. They are defined as symbolic because they are direct symbolic representations of the nation and often created by the elite.[41] The second part discusses 'practical' means of communication. These are focused on programmes, and for the purposes of this report, on the European Capitals of

[41] Pierre Bourdieu argues that the dominant class portrays particular interests as universal interests. Peter van Ham compares how states or organizations portray themselves to branding to seem attractive. Peter van Ham, 'The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation,' *Foreign Affairs* 80, no. 5 (2001): 2–6; Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1992).

Culture and the Erasmus programmes. These programmes were chosen because they are often regarded by the European Union and its leaders as their most successful programmes which offer a 'European dimension'. Although they display links to previous, similar programmes like 'town twinning' in the first half of the 20th century, the programmes are regarded as practical because they offer experiences for the members of the nation through civic participation.

Additionally, the different means of communication are, when appropriate, compared with one another in order to both highlight their differences in terms of motivation and practice.

Chapter 2

A people's flag

When thinking about history's states, an untold number of concepts or items may appear in our minds. Perhaps you picture a map, with detailed borders and nearby or far-away rivalling actors. Maybe a song starts playing in your head, with accompanying lyrics meant to evoke emotions specifically tailored to that nation. But arguably the most important of such concepts, is the very symbol of these states: their flags. In their natural form, they are little more than coloured pieces of fabric. Yet into them, like a priest sanctifying water before a baptism, or a favourite childhood toy recently discovered, we infuse immense symbolic value. So much so in fact, that most countries have either laws or guidelines restricting their use. Holy water is no longer just water when tapped on a baby's forehead, and the long-forgotten toy has nostalgic value, keeping the working adult from perhaps ever throwing it out or giving it away. And the flag, no longer simple fabric stitched together in a factory, becomes the symbolic embodiment of the state.

Historically, we can look to the study of heraldry in order to explain the importance of symbols for organised actors. S. T Aveling, in his 19th century work inspired by archaeologist Charles Boutell, wrote that '[f]rom the earliest history of the world, Symbols, Emblems, and Devices have been used. When the world had not the use of letters, these were necessarily

employed to convey ideas and express the meaning of things'.[42] Examples given for such symbols from the earlier periods are the eagle of Rome or the ox in Egypt, but the true heraldic tradition is understood to have begun during the Middle Ages towards the end of the twelfth century.[43] Maurice Keen comments that heraldry and coat of arms were often used to make distinctions between the aristocracy and the commoners.[44] Boutell himself wished for the grand return of heraldry to his age, but updated for his 19th century time, and for such symbols to lead into the future.[45]

Of course, modern use of national symbols like the flag differs somewhat from traditional heraldry. Whereas in the heraldic tradition, where knights could be bestowed a coat of arms or symbols upon them, often painted on their shield to signify honour or the respect of a noble house,[46] the modern flag and their symbols have come to acquire a whole new range of meanings and symbolism. The latter concerns the field of vexillology, the study of flags, symbolic objects which, up until the 19th century, did not carry the same meaning as they would after.[47] Traditionally, 'national' flags were used as symbols of state authority, with their modern use – such as being flown by individual citizens – being a phenomenon starting only in the early 20th century.[48] Jean Gottman's concept of 'iconography' adds to this that flags are but one symbol in a larger system of national iconography[49] which allows for the political creation of states, writing that 'regionalism has some iconography as its foundation'.[50] J. Leib and G. R. Webster argue that national flags are symbolic containers

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[42] S. T Aveling and Charles Boutell, *Heraldry; Ancient and Modern, Including Boutellś Heraldry*, Second Edition (London: Frederick Warne and Co., 1891), 1.

[43] Aveling and Boutell, 2.

[44] Maurice Hugh Keen, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages, 1348-1500*, Penguin Social History of Britain (London: Penguin, 1990).

[45] Charles Boutell, *English Heraldry* (London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, 1867).

[46] Aveling and Boutell, *Heraldry; Ancient and Modern, Including Boutellś Heraldry*.

[47] E. Shalev, ''A Republic Amidst the Stars': Political Astronomy and the Intellectual Origins of the Stars and Stripes,' *Journal of the Early Republic* 31, no. 1 (2011): 55.

[48] Johan Fornäs, *Signifying Europe* (Bristol: Intellect, 2012), 116.

[49] Jean Gottmann, 'The Political Partitioning of Our World: An Attempt at Analysis,' *World Politics* 4, no. 4 (1952): 516.

[50] Jean Gottmann, 'Geography and International Relations,' *World Politics* 3, no. 2 (1951): 163.

that '"condense" a range of meanings and emotions pertaining to a group's perceived historical experience, real or imagined cultural homogeneity, and efforts to define a similarity of outlook for the future'.[51]

What this chapter will focus on is indeed the modern use and interpretation of flags and their symbolic value, which first and foremost deals with the nation, as opposed to individuals or families. Barlow Cumberland wrote in 1909 of the British flag, the Union Jack, that, '[its] colours and groupings of its parts are connected with our government and history', and that with more knowledge of the flag's past, 'the flag itself might speak [to people] in a way it had not done before'.[52] Suffice to say, by the early 20th century, the national flag had become an important tool of nation-building.

2.1 Nationalism and patriotism

Nationalism and patriotism are two terms often used interchangeably and which are difficult to define exactly, but since they are used frequently in this report, it is important to be aware of their distinctions. Stephen Backhouse describes nationalisms as 'powerful ideologies that harness ideals of personal identity, history, race, and language, putting them to work in order to promote, at best, good citizenship and flourishing of a named people group, and, at worst, violent repression and extinction of other people-groups'[53]. In his chapter 'Nationalism and Patriotism', Backhouse outlines some of the most influential thinkers on the subject, some of which will be discussed below.[54]

Backhouse theorises that the discourse on nationalism and patriotism tends to fall into three different categories or schools of thought. In the first category, commentators do not make substantial distinctions between

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[51] Leib and Webster, 'Rebel with(out) a Cause? The Contested Meanings of the Confederate Battle Flag in the American South,' 31.

[52] Barlow Cumberland, *History of the Union Jack and Flags of the Empire*, Third Edition (Toronto: William Briggs, 1909).

[53] Stephen Backhouse, 'Nationalism and Patriotism,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Theology and Modern European Thought*, ed. George Pattison, Graham Ward, and Nicholas Adams (Oxford University Press, 2013), 42.

[54] Backhouse, 42–45.

the two, nor do they see important dissimilarities between nations and states. In the second, scholars separate the two and consider patriotism virtuous while lamenting the vices of nationalism. In the third, scholars '[acknowledge] the attempt to differentiate between patriotism and nationalism but [conclude] that patriotism is not sufficiently distinct from nationalism to offer it a viable alternative'. This means that patriotism in reality functions in the same way as nationalism, 'and derives its power from the same sources'. Backhouse makes it clear that the distinction between the first and the third school of thought is that while the first simply assumes the similarity between the two, the third school of thought reaches the conclusion that they are the same.[55]

Michael Billig argues that nationalism is comprised of two categories. First, the aspects of society which establish a sense of community or shared experience, including religion, generational wisdom, race and ethnicity. Second, it adds narratives instructing members of the nation on how to lead their lives, and which biases and prejudices are acceptable.[56] Anthony Smith defines nationalism as 'an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity of a human population, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential "nation"'. In more specific societal terms, he adds that the nation is a 'named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and memories, a mass, public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members'.[57] Anthony Smith therefore combines an ethnic and a civic approach to nationalism, or as Clifford Geertz formulates it: the primordial and the political.

The primordial combines the values of bloodlines, culture, and heritage, so-called 'givens' (foundations) of language, kith and kin, and religion. establishing a foundation for the political. The political encompasses na-

[55] Backhouse, 44–45.

[56] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

[57] Smith, 'The Nation: Real or Imagined?,' 37.

tionalism's yearn for state-building, civic autonomy, and national independence. Geertz adds that in modern societies, it has become increasingly deplored to base one's society on the primordial givens only:

> To an increasing degree national unity is maintained not by calls to blood and land but by a vague, intermittent, and routine allegiance to a civil state, supplemented to a greater or lesser extent by governmental use of police powers and ideological exhortation.[58]

Where nationalism is seen as dangerous in the second school of thought, patriotism is deemed a virtue. Andrew Vincent describes patriotism as something akin to nationalism without its harmful sides, 'a particular loyalty compatible with universal reasonable values'.[59] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who lost his life to Nazi nationalism, was a proponent of Christian patriotism, which is contrasted to a base nationalism. This patriotism is grounded in the love for God's reality and creation, and a sense of affiliation with others who share one's reality through cultural heritage.[60] Elie Kedourie argues that contrary to nationalism, patriotism does not rely 'on a particular anthropology, […] a particular doctrine of the state or of the individual's relation to it', but rather explains patriotism as 'affection for one's country or one's group, loyalty to its institutions, and zeal for its defence'.[61] Jürgen Habermas is a proponent of constitutional or civic patriotism, patriotism founded on passion and loyalty for the political institutions and constitution of the state. Compared to nationalism, Habermas sees civic patriotism as political loyalty compared to the obsession with cultural ethnicity in nationalism.[62] As Backhouse remarks, 'Whereas nationalism is love of nation, it is hoped that patriotism, truly, is love of country'.[63]

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[58] Geertz, 'The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States,' 109.

[59] Andrew Vincent, *Nationalism and Particularity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 111.

[60] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (London: SCM, 1955).

[61] Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London: Hutchinson, 1960), 73–74.

[62] Jürgen Habermas, 'Citizenship and National Identity. Some Reflections on the Future of Europe.,' *Praxis International* April, no. 12 (1992): 1–19.

[63] Backhouse, 'Nationalism and Patriotism,' 45.

For the purposes of this report, due to the fact that the topic does not deal with far-right versus liberal political movements per se, terms like 'nationalism' or 'nationalistic' will be used strictly in the sense of referring to 'the nation', the construction of a nation, or the sense of belonging to a nation, i.e. nationhood, unless stated otherwise.

2.2 Flags and the nation

Europe, a continent with a rich history of family houses, baronies, counties, duchies, kingdoms and empires, has no shortage of examples of symbols used to conjure feelings of loyalty or belonging to a certain piece of territory or person. In the modern era, flags have been used to rally nations for war around nationalistic themes, and to unite populations after harrowing events. Such is the ideal power of a flag, but as will be explored, a flag on its own means little.

Traditionally, the European Union – and its earlier incarnations – has struggled somewhat with connecting with its citizens, symbolised in part by a relatively low voter turnout for European Parliament elections.[64] One could question whether this is due to the Union's top-down approach to integration as opposed to an organic rise in the sense of European nationhood. As with any project which demands popular participation, achieving legitimacy in the eyes of the people is important. Therefore, in its quest for an ever-closer union, European officials decided that a flag was necessary to raise awareness of European cooperation and to create a sense of community among Europeans. But in a Europe of nations, flags have historically divided the continent more than they have united it.

Flags have and are still used as symbols of national identity to which members of nations can identify and rally around. From a more modern perspective, the Union Jack can be interpreted as having represented, first and foremost, a British Empire with a white, Christian ruling class, and white citizens born in the British Isles or to white, British parents. Indeed,

[64] 'EU: Election Turnout 1979-2019,' Statista, June 2019, https://www.statista.com/statistics/300427/eu-parlament-turnout-for-the-european-elections/.

the English flag, known also as the flag of St George, reminds us of Christianity and even the Crusades with its red cross on a white background.[65] Some British nationalists and the English Defence League wave these flags in an attempt to take ownership of them. Contrary to the flag of St George, however, the Union Jack underwent several changes in order to incorporate the addition of new territories into the United Kingdom, so that instead of operating with three different national flags, England, Scotland, and Ireland would be united under the same flag.[66]

In a way, we could consider this an early example of attempting to create Britons out of Englishmen, Scots, and Irishmen – in another scenario, the United Kingdom might as well have been named the Union of Britain. Barlow Cumberland saw the flag not only as:

> [A] declaration and an evidence of British nationality', but that by his time, it had become the union symbol of 'four hundred [million] of fellow-patriots […] each dearly loving their own native land and devoted to its welfare, but united in loyal brotherhood with their fellow, yet far-distant, Britons under One King, One Flag, One Empire.[67]

Then what of a flag for Europe? Anthony Smith made the distinction between the civic and the ethnic nation in his work *National Identity*.[68] The former is largely based on a 'legal-political community, legal-political equality of the members, and common civic culture and ideology […]', and the latter on a 'fictive super-family'[69] based on ancestry. Following Smith's theory of the nation, one can assert that much of the work conducted by the European Union, in a top-down fashion, can be attributed to civic nation-building: the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Common Market, and policies which integrate varying stately areas of the member states of Europe into the Union, such as the banking or customs unions.

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[65] Hilary Pilkington, *Loud and Proud: Passion and Politics in the English Defence League* (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 2016), 126.

[66] Cumberland, *History of the Union Jack and Flags of the Empire*, 32, 264.

[67] Cumberland, 271–72.

[68] Smith, *National Identity*, 9–15.

[69] Smith, 12.

Flags, on the other hand, are symbolic objects. They do not in themselves ensure the free passage of people and capital, nor do they safeguard rights and freedoms. They can, however, activate certain emotions and feelings, something an intricate legislative document might have a harder time doing. Robert Schatz and Howard Lavine found that national symbols '[serve] psychological needs related to the acquisition and expression of positive social identity'.[70] In other words, as Sebastian Popa and Delia Dumitrescu explain: 'People who report positive feelings about the flag also report stronger feelings of national identity and the beliefs in the superiority of the nation'.[71] The same people also have a higher chance of ascribing positive characteristics to the entire nation in question, in addition to 'exhibit biased perceptions of the nation's attributes'.[72]

Due to flags' historical importance and use, coupled with research finding that flags indeed evoke positive feelings towards one's nation, I argue that flags, as used traditionally, are symbolic means of communication used to foster support for an ethnic nationalism in Anthony Smith's sense of the word, meaning the 'fictive super family' based on ancestry. Flags are instruments of nation-building insofar as they are used to create not only a sense of belonging or loyalty to the entity flying the colours, but a sense of nationhood or community amongst the people living within the territory where the flag is flying, in addition to effectively creating a sense of 'us' versus 'other' groups. In this chapter I argue that the European flag, while being a symbol of ethnic nationalism, is designed to instead foster a civic nationalism.

Whatever the European Union's 'other' is, is debatable. One could argue this role belonged to the USSR or modern-day Russia as its authoritarian counterpart, or even the United States, as a more capitalistic competitor to Europe's more socialist oriented welfare systems. There exists a convincing case, however, for arguing that Europe's own past acts as its very own 'other', exemplified by none other than its flag, which if nothing else has

[70] Robert T. Schatz and Howard Lavine, 'Waving the Flag: National Symbolism, Social Identity, and Political Engagement,' *Political Psychology* 28, no. 3 (2007): 346.

[71] Popa and Dumitrescu, 'National but European?,' 527.

[72] Popa and Dumitrescu, 527.

become the very symbol of a European 'us', as will be shown throughout the chapter.

2.3 The flag of Europe

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the flag of the European Union, is that it does not exist – at least not officially. Originally meant to officially adopt the flag under the failed Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe in 2004, the renamed Lisbon Treaty of 2007 'does not create state-like Union symbols like a flag or an anthem'.[73] Instead, the flag is an official 'emblem'[74] of the European Union, and in 2008, the European Parliament voted to adopt the flag as its own. Furthermore, after French President Emmanuel Macron signed Declaration 52 on the symbols of the European Union in 2017, 17 EU member states have declared that '[…] the flag […] will for them continue as [a symbol] to express the sense of community for the people in the European Union and their allegiance to it'.[75]

The lack of an 'official' flag means little in practice. The twelve golden stars on a blue background constitute the de facto flag of the European Union, used both in different variations by all EU institutions and on most or all EU buildings. It often figures next to the flags of the member states on government buildings or during international press conferences, and even on car registration plates and official documents. It has for all intents and purposes become synonymous with the European Union, despite originally being the flag of another continental organisation: The Council of Europe (CE). Originally in use from December 1955, the flag of the Council of Europe was encouraged by the Council to be adopted by the newly

[73] 'The Treaty of Lisbon | Fact Sheets on the European Union | European Parliament,' europarl.europa.eu, November 2019, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/5/the-treaty-of-lisbon.

[74] 'The European Flag,' europa.eu, June 16, 2016, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/flag_en.

[75] 'Final Act (2007/C 306/02)' (Official Journal of the European Union, December 17, 2007), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:0231:0271: EN:PDF.

formed European institutions. In 1985, the flag was officially adopted by the European Community.[76]

In fact, the European Union owes much to the Council of Europe, including its anthem and the annual celebration of Europe Day on May 9th and 5th respectively. Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe was, among other aspects, meant to secure peace and cooperation in Europe. It would do so through the 'common heritage' of its states, as well as foster 'closer unity' between them.[77] To a modern reader, this could easily be mistaken for a possible mission statement for the European Union, which is not unfounded considering the fact that both organisations were founded with the aims of ensuring peace and stability on the continent after the Second World War. Cooperation between the Council and the Community began shortly after the establishment of the latter in the 1950s. Their close bond is partially symbolised by the simple fact that no country has ever joined the EU without first having been a member of the CE and their cooperation within the legal field. Indeed, the organisations are so close to the point where one Secretary General of the Council, Walter Schwimmer, offered to help Croatia with its reforms in order to fully join the EU.[78]

With the aim of unity between the peoples of Europe, the Council began in 1950 to consider a report by its Secretariat-General which advocated for the creation of a flag. Its purpose was '[to] make the peoples of Europe

[76] 'The European Flag.'

[77] A. H. Robertson, *The Council of Europe: Its Structure, Functions and Achievements*, 2nd ed., vol. no. 32, The Library of World Affairs (London: Stevens & Sons, 1961), 13.

[78] Stefanie Schmah, 'The Council of Europe within the System of International Organisations,' in *The Council of Europe: Its Law and Policies*, eds. Marten Breuer and Stefanie Schmah (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 891, 893; 'Did You Know?' The Council of Europe, accessed February 13, 2020, https://www.coe.int/en/web/about-us/did-you-know; Steven Greer, Janneke Gerards, and Rose Slowe, *Human Rights in the Council of Europe and the European Union: Achievements, Trends and Challenges*, 29, xv; Walter Schwimmer, 'The Role of the Council of Europe in the One Europe: The Relationship With the Enlarged European Union,' *Croatian International Relations Review* 9, no. 30/31 (2003): 11.

more directly aware of their unity'.[79] Similarly, the committee report to the European Council meeting in Milan in June of 1985 (the EU institution, not the Council of Europe) called for the '[strengthening] of the Community's image and identity':[80]

> There is clearly a need, for both practical and symbolic reasons, for a flag and an emblem to be used at national and international events, exhibitions and other occasions where the existence of the Community needs to be brought to public attention.[81]

This report was put together by the highly influential committee for 'A People's Europe', also known as the Adonnino Committee, named after its chairman Pietro Adonnino.[82] After some deliberation and debate on what this flag should look like, the Council decided to adopt the original European flag already in use by the CE, without modifications.[83]

The official heraldic description of the flag alone is unlikely to unite anyone but poets; 'On an azure field a circle of 12 golden mullets, their points not touching'.[84] What this imagery is meant to represent in practice is an entirely different matter. According to the European Commission itself, the circle of the 12 golden stars in perfect alignment 'represents solidarity and harmony between the peoples of Europe', in addition to symbolising 'perfection, completeness and unity'. It even states that '[t]he European

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[79] Council of Europe, 'Memorandum from the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe on the European Flag (Strasbourg, 16 July 1951),' CVCE.EU, December 3, 2012, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/memorandum_from_the_secretariat_general_of_the_council_of_europe_on_the_european_flag_strasbourg_16_july_1951-en-081673a8-1849-4930-a774-e23d0fbad413.html.

[80] Adonnino Committee, 'Report by the Committee on a People's Europe Submitted to the Milan European Council (Milan, 28 and 29 June 1985),' 25.

[81] Adonnino Committee, 25.

[82] Étienne Deschamps, 'A People's Europe,' Text, CVCE, July 8, 2016, https://www.cvce.eu/en/collections/unit-content/-/unit/02bb76df-d066-4c08-a58a-d4686a3e68ff/95a065c6-38e9-45da-8bbe-66f958a8b005.

[83] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 119.

[84] Council of Europe and European Commission, 'Publications Office – Interinstitutional Style Guide – Annex A1 – Graphics Guide to the European Emblem,' publications.europa.eu, accessed February 13, 2020, http://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-5000100.htm.

flag is not only the symbol of the European Union, but also of Europe's unity and identity in a wider sense'.[85] This 'wider sense' is particularly interesting because it suggests that the European flag represents all Europeans, even those living outside of the EU. A more critical approach to this statement could view the flag as a symbol being superimposed on those not necessarily agreeing with its interpreted meanings. Whether the fact that the flag was first used by the Council of Europe, which virtually every European state is part of (except for Belarus and Kosovo)[86] changes anything, is unknown. Additionally, the inclusion of 'identity' is telling. This makes it clear that the flag is given immense symbolic value; it not only represents the institutions flying its colours, but it is also meant to visualise a relatively fragmented community consisting of hundreds of millions of people.

2.4 Interpretations

The aspects of the European flag, be it the use of gold, the blue background, the number twelve, and the stars and the way they are shaped and positioned, leave much room for interpretation. The official version is that the circle and the stars represent ideals such as unity and solidarity, and the colour blue was deemed by its designers to be the colour of Europe.[87] Indeed, various European flags contain blue, but several flags of major European states do not, including Germany, Italy, and Poland. Johan Fornäs adds that conventional classification inspired by racist thinking has linked the continents of the world to specific colours; Africa to black, Asia to yellow, America to red, and Australia to green. Instead of white, he explains that Europe has been linked to blue, 'perhaps indicating that the dominant "race" does not see itself in racial terms, but as universal man'.[88] The lack of red, a colour so popular among flags, might be due to its association with both America on one side, and Communism on the other during the Cold War. Indeed, colours like green, yellow, and white

[85] Council of Europe and European Commission.

[86] 'Our Member States,' The Council of Europe in brief, accessed March 25, 2020, https://www.coe.int/en/web/about-us/our-member-states.

[87] Michael J. Wintle, *The Image of Europe: Visualizing Europe in Cartography and Iconography Throughout the Ages*, vol. 44, Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography (Cambridge: University Press, 2009), 439.

[88] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 120.

were all closely linked with undesirable connotations: Islam, quarantine, and capitulation, respectively.[89] Furthermore, blue came to represent both the Virgin Mary and royalty during the medieval period, and is often associated with the West in the modern period.[90]

The stars, representing the unity of the peoples of Europe, are five-pointed, missing a sixth to avoid associations to Judaism. The sun cross, proposed by the Pan-European activist Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi, was not included partly due to Turkey's membership in the Council of Europe and the cross's Christian symbolism. The number twelve, itself a number with symbolic, mythological and religious value, can be linked to the apostles of Christ, the Roman law tables, knights of the Round Table, the zodiac signs, the hours of the day, and months in the year.[91] The number of stars is fixed, not linked to a varying number of member states – as the flag of the United States, for example – to 'signify perfection and harmony in a more general sense'.[92] This also stands in contrast to the flag of the EU's precursor organisation, the European Coal and Steal Community. This flag was comprised of six stars in 1958, originally representing each member state, until the number was fixed at twelve in 1986 following several enlargements.[93]

As much as the Council of Europe might have wanted to move away from traditional religious symbols – instead focusing on civic values inherent in the flag such as the unity of its peoples represented as stars – a 'myth' began to circle. According to Arsène Heitz, one of the flag's two designers, the European flag is based on a depiction of Virgin Mary as the biblical Woman of the Apocalypse[94] from 12:1 of the Book of Revelation: 'And

[89] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 120.

[90] Michel Pastoureau, *Blue: The History of a Color* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[91] Michael J. Wintle, *The Image of Europe*, 44:439–40.

[92] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 118.

[93] 'The ECSC Flag (1986–2002),' CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, August 12, 2011, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the_ecsc_flag_1986_2002-en-d3f3644b-131b-4ef9-9b8b-8b40072db1c8.html.

[94] Ivan Sache, Peter Diem, and Jan Oskar Engene, 'European Union: Myths on the Flag,' Flags of the World, February 17, 2007, https://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/eu!myt.html#deb.

there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars'. The Virgin Mary is also, again, traditionally represented by the colour blue.[95] The flag's other designer, Paul M. Levy, who acted as Press Officer for the Council of Europe at the time, argued that the flag had no explicit religious connotations whatsoever, interpreting the number of stars mainly as a 'figure of plenitude'.[96]

In short, the European flag is highly interpretable. It is clear that EU officials tend to favour the civic aspects of the flag, attributes related to perfection and unity through the circle of stars, while it is possible to see more traditional, religious sides as well. In this aspect, even if one chooses to see the Virgin Mary's crown of stars instead of unity between the peoples and states of Europe, the EU flag leans more towards being an emblem of modernity rather than history. The flag of the United Kingdom, for example, features three different crosses: those of St George, St Andrew, and St Patrick. The same goes for every Nordic country; they all feature crosses, symbolising the importance of Christianity to the history of their nations. In spite of the little room for interpretation in these cases, a Norwegian is probably less likely to think of – or identify with – Christianity when gazing upon its red, white, and blue colours today compared to a hundred years ago due to the increasing number of atheists in Norway.[97]

According to anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen, it is in fact a crucial aspect rather than a weakness of a flag to be interpretable. He highlights three key aspects of national flags: first, that a nation's shared identity is predicated on more than just its flag. Second, Hylland Eriksen emphasises the importance of interpretability, to the point where the flag must serve as a more or less empty vessel which can be filled with meaning by its observers. In a diverse nation, a flag which is seen to speak only to one segment of the population will surely be divisive. If, on the other hand, the country is small and homogenous, a flag lacking this aspect may still function as a unifying symbol, but will most likely exclude minorities.

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[95] Pastoureau, *Blue*.

[96] Sache, Diem, and Engene, 'European Union: Myths on the Flag.'

[97] '#ukenstall: kjønnsnøytral ekteskapslov,' Ipsos, June 8, 2018, https://www.ipsos.com/nb-no/ukenstall-kjonnsnoytral-ekteskapslov.

Third, the flag must remove all ambiguity about where people find themselves, charting the boundaries of the nation. You must be able to know which country you are in, and which side of the border you are on, based on the flag closest to you. This can be challenging in places where there are several or disputed loyalties. In parts of the southern United States, for example, the flag of the Confederacy still flies, and in Northern Ireland, loyalties vary depending on whether you identify with the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland.[98]

According to Hylland Eriksen's criteria for a good flag, the European flag might be hard to evaluate. Its strongest aspect might be the second criterion, as a more or less empty vessel. It uses both traditional and modern design language, with recognisable colours and stars that can be interpreted endlessly. Are we looking at a united community which still leaves room for openness and diversity signified by the spaces left between the stars, or does a circle in itself entail a closed clique reminiscent of a rich kid's table at a high school cafeteria, or perhaps a Fortress Europe? This last term is perhaps the most relevant as the EU attempts to remove their internal, while strengthening their outer, borders. In this sense, the word fortress is often used as a negative. Matthew Carr writes about the formation of a 'gated continent' in Europe, which includes extensive border programmes and EU partnerships with external countries like Morocco and Ukraine to curb the flow of immigration.[99] Additionally, the term 'Fortress Europe' in itself evokes memories of Nazi Germany's plan to erect an Atlantikwall or 'Atlanic Wall', also known as Festung Europa – Fortress Europe – to defend the continent from Allied invasions.[100] Refer-

[98] Hylland Eriksen, 'Some Questions About Flags,' 4–5.

[99] Matthew Carr, *Fortress Europe: Inside the War against Immigration*, Rev. ed. (London: Hurst, 2016), 38–43, 51, 64, 76.

[100] Serge Durflinger and Bill McAndrew, 'Fortress Europe: German Coastal Defences and the Canadian Role in Liberating the Channel Ports,' *Canadian War Museum* (blog), accessed March 27, 2020, https://www.warmuseum.ca/learn/dispatches/fortress-europe-german-coastal-defences-and-the-canadian-role-in-liberating-the-channel-ports/.

encing or comparing Nazi Germany with the European Union is not uncommon, a practice often exercised by some Eurosceptic politicians, as done by Boris Johnson during the Brexit campaign.[101]

The stars themselves are primed for interpretation. Do the stars symbolise a round table – a traditional symbol of government, and taken a step further into modernity and democracy? Or do they, like European coat of arms featuring eagles and lions as symbols of power and authority, depict a modern golden laurel wreath, most often used in classical Europe to represent the crown and symbol of Roman emperors and imperators? Or perhaps another crown, that of thorns on the head of Christ, or are they simply stars in the sky, representing Europe's uplifting into the heavens? Fornäs suggests a more unfavourable reading, that of the ring motif as seen in the works of Tolkien, an object or idea of immense power and desire, leading to ruin or some fatal curse. As mentioned by Fornäs however, no or little literature debate this interpretation,[102] and surely any designer with passion for the project would not intentionally create a symbol with obvious negative over or undertones, which was the case with the Ring of Power forged by the dark lord Sauron in Lord of the Rings.

It is interesting to note how the stars' positioning differ from those in the flag of the ECSC. There, the stars where placed on two horizontal rows, one row placed above the other. In the flag of Europe, the stars are placed in a circle, with no clear hierarchy, similar to the flag of the United Nations where the continents of the world gather in a circular form around a midpoint.[103] To the best of these circular flags' ability, no star or continent is placed atop or beneath another in the traditional sense of above and below. Furthermore, the stars in the flag of Europe are of the same shapes and sizes, laid out in a symmetrical round form, suggesting equality between them. This is in stark contrast to the flag of the People's Republic of China, which also utilises similar stars with five points, but where one big

[101] Rowena Mason, 'Tories Divided by Boris Johnson's EU-Hitler Comparison,' *The Guardian*, May 15, 2016, sec. Politics, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/16/tories-divided-by-boris-johnsons-eu-hitler-comparison.

[102] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 126.

[103] 'UN Logo and Flag,' United Nations, November 18, 2014, https://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/un-logo-and-flag/index.html.

star represents the Communist Party, and four other smaller stars symbolize the main social classes in a hierarchical relationship between the dominant ruler and the subjugated ruled (the working and peasant classes, the petty bourgeoise and the national bourgeoise).[104] If nothing else, these examples symbolize the many ways one might interpret the flag's design.

The flag clearly lacks heraldry or traditional uniquely European icons. Yet in order for the flag to function as a unifying symbol able to foster identity creation, it must resonate with its target audience whose flags and national symbols are often linked to their history and culture. We can for example see the influence of Christianity in the Nordic flags, and the heraldic lions on their coat of arms which date back centuries and are tied to their respective monarchies. The modern flag of Germany, a *tricolore* of black, red, and gold, takes its inspiration from liberal movements in the 19th century, but also displays the same three colours found on the coat of arms for the imperial eagle of the Holy Roman Empire, a mostly German-based medieval and early modern realm.[105]

Due to its lack of features which blatantly reference religious or cultural themes – and because EU rhetoric highlights its unifying and democratic values – the European flag becomes what we might deem a modern, civic take on a traditional, ethnic way of fostering national identity. Indeed, it becomes something of a hybrid, where the goal – a civic, diverse, yet European identity – justifies or even rests on the means: utilising traditional ways of creating identities, namely a flag. Furthermore, that the number of stars is fixed suggests that the flag is open to new members and peoples. The stars themselves avoid overt associations to major religions or ideologies as opposed to the cross or a crescent, both of which – at least in theory and at their time of creation – have clear pre-existing connotations.

To the first point, whether the national identity is based on more than just a flag, is a question the EU has traditionally struggled with. However, judging by the Standard Eurobarometer on European Citizenship from August 2019, 73 per cent feel they are citizens of the EU, ranging from a high of 93 per cent in Luxembourg to a low of 52 per cent in Bulgaria.

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104 Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 129.

105 'Flag of Germany | History, Meaning, WW1, & WW2,' Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed March 27, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/topic/flag-of-Germany.

Important civic achievements of the union, namely the citizenship and the freedom of movement, are seen as the main causes for the people surveyed feeling this way.[106] This question of identity has been examined through Eurobarometer surveys in several ways since 1991. Figures on attachment to Europe that year revealed that 47 per cent of responders felt 'fairly attached' or 'very attached' to Europe, while the feeling of being a citizen of Europe – whether exclusively or alongside one's national citizenship – has been a majority opinion since 2000.[107] Thus, it seems plausible that a European national identity is grounded in more than just the flag.

Lastly, on the third point related to ambiguity and boundaries, the European flag excels, perhaps more so than many other flags. It hangs from government buildings all over the Union and can be seen at border crossings and at airports. But more interestingly, it succeeds due to its unorthodox way of reaching outside its home territory. EU registered cars bring the flag with them wherever they go, organically extending the flag to non-members simply by the act of cross-border travelling involving private cars, or trade through trucks transporting goods. The same goes for the labelling of products, which in some shape or form utilise the stars of the European emblem, like the green EU organic logo placed on foodstuffs of a certain standard, and which are made and/or verified for use in the Single Market.[108] This emblem is also used outside of Europe, like in Norway, extending the reach of the EU emblem or similar symbols. Additionally, the UEFA Champion's League, which is neither an EU organisation nor operating solely within its borders, is symbolised by five-pointed stars connected in a circle to imitate a football, sharing a striking resemblance to the European flag itself. This last point is important, because the use of a similar design suggests that the European Union – or rather, a flag which is becoming synonymous with Europe – is seen to give legitimacy, or at

[106] 'Europeans Upbeat about the State of the European Union,' Text, European Commission, August 5, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_19_4969.

[107] '35 Years of Eurobarometer' (European Commission, 2008), 17–18, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/docs/35_years_en.pdf.

[108] 'The Organic Logo,' European Commission, accessed February 26, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/farming/organic-farming/organics-glance/organic-logo_en.

the very least a European 'feel' to a massive organisation located outside of the official EU system.

It would therefore seem that the European flag meets Hylland Eriksen's requirements of a good flag, at least partially. The flag rests on the foundation created by other EU initiatives and fundamental rights to give it legitimacy, and is therefore not the identity creator in itself, but rather a symbolic embodiment of the EU's other achievements and ambitions. It is something of an empty vessel, yet with clear design goal – at least officially – of fostering unity between Europeans. Lastly, it can be seen in the countries of the Member States, while also reaching outside its borders through other means. This final point is important, because due to the nature of the European Union – that it is neither a nation nor a state in the traditional sense of the words – it is of vital importance that Europeans are familiarised with its symbols to be able to recognise and identity with them. This is typically an area of the nation state, due to accepted forms of patriotism and nationalism, and the prevalence of local or national symbols in individual states.

2.5 The flag for everywhere and everything

Michael Billig conceptualised in 1995 the idea of a 'banal nationalism' in his book with the same name. In it, Billig makes the distinction between the 'waved and unwaved flag', and the importance of the latter. He argues that, '[t]he reproduction of nation-states depends upon a dialectic of collective remembering and forgetting, and of imagination and unimaginative repetition. The unwaved flag, which is so forgettable, is at least as important as the memorable moments of flag waving'. The 'unwaved flag' refers here partially to the everyday usage of a nation's flag, resulting in national symbols becoming banal, normalised, and familiar, as opposed to the active waving of a flag by individuals. In addition, 'flagging' is also used as 'reminding', as to remind someone of their nationhood. The idea is that people are exposed to so much banal flagging of nationhood that they do not even notice it when a flag is hanging from a public building, or when the nation is spoken of in the normal political discourse.[109]

[109] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 8–10.

In the United States, the Star-spangled Banner is virtually omni-present in both the media, entertainment industry and everyday life – waved or unwaved. We saw examples of the activation of the waved flag during the United Kingdom's Brexit referendum of 2016 and the Norwegian EU referendum in 1994. In both cases, the national flags became symbols of national resistance by Eurosceptics, and anti-EU activists in both countries attempted to burn the flag of Europe[110] – 'attempted', because in 2020, a Brexiteer allegedly failed to ignite the EU flag due to an updated set of EU flag safety regulations.[111]

The European flag however, presents perhaps one of the clearer examples of both the unwaved flag and of the fostering of a banal nationalism. Whether on car license plates or on euro bills, the flag is in plain sight. If hanging from an official building, printed on your European Health Card, or signalling you to enter a certain security area reserved for EU citizens at a European airport, the flag is there. The EU lacks a long history which can be exploited through entertainment – like in Hollywood where the American flag is heroically visible in many action or war movies – or other outlets like sporting events where the flag represents the nation's team. Banal and everyday means seem therefore to be the primary way the European Union extends its flag to its people.

This phenomenon is, for want of a better word, a 'nationalistic'[112] conditioning where an identity, or at least a familiarity, with the 'nation' is created slowly and over time, with the aim of fostering a sense of allegiance to it. And, as is being argued by the French historian Yves Hersant, national symbols are given a dual purpose of 'identification *of* and of identification *with*'[113] the nation in question. For example, we know that it is the

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[110] Line O. Eilevstjønn, 'Dagen Då Folket Delte Seg i To,' Nationen, November 28, 2019, https://ekstra.nationen.no/spesial/nei-til-eu/.

[111] Lizzie Dearden, 'Watch "British Nationalist" Hilariously Failing to Burn EU Flag after Anti-Immigration Rant,' The Independent, March 28, 2015, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/british-nazi-filmed-spectacularly-failing-to-burn-eu-flag-in-protest-against-forced-immigration-10141197.html.

[112] It must be remembered here that my use of the word 'nationalistic' refers strictly to the fostering of nationhood and the nation, and must not be confused with the nationalism of the periphery, i.e. of far-right political movements and the like.

[113] Yves Hersant, 'Rally Round the European Flag?,' *The Monist* 92, no. 2 (2009): 258.

European Union which is being represented by the flag with the twelve stars and the blue background, but Europeans are also meant to identify *with* the flag, to see themselves in it, and emotionally associate with its values. This is precisely why the banality of the unwaved flagging of nationhood is so important, because it lays the groundwork for the active waving of flags or the 'activation' *of* nationality and association *with* the nation.

2.6 To arouse emotion, or not to arouse emotion

Much has been said about the relevance or ambiguous state of a European identity associated with the European Union. Most scholars agree that the European Union is not a state, even though it has 'acquired state-like characteristics' and elements which 'undoubtedly point to the concept of a state'.[114] The European Union has attained:

> [E]lements of sovereignty, a legal personality, it has a territory (although multidimensional), it has citizens, a parliament which is directly elected, it has a common currency (albeit for only 17 member states), a common legal system directly applicable in its member states and symbols.[115]

Yet it can hardly be categorised as a nation-state in the traditional sense of the word. However, as Magali Gravier contends, the EU's approach to 'the nation' reflects much more that of a federation or an empire, where 'a successful identity policy is probably one that preserves and respects the local identities of populations while adding a common imperial identity on top of these identities'.[116]

Few Europeans would refrain from referring to themselves the label of 'European' in a geographical sense, but whether one identifies as an ideological or national European, is a different question entirely. What the flag means and represents is therefore highly relative in Europe, because it symbolises either a new form of nationhood, or an additional one. In an

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[114] Magali Gravier, 'Empire vs Federation: Which Path for Europe?,' *Journal of Political Power: Imperial Power and the Organization of Space in Europe and North America* 4, no. 3 (2011): 413.

[115] Gravier, 418.

[116] Gravier, 418.

interview with the French website *France Culture*, ten years after writing his critical article on the same topic, *Rally Round the European Flag*, Hersant commented that the European flag 'does not arouse emotion', and that 'it reflects a group of states that puts politics and trade before society and culture'.[117] This statement almost perfectly summarises the civic nationalism of the European Union, one which in many ways has prioritised trade, rights and freedoms over emotions and national feeling. An example of this is how the EU has facilitated the creation of the Single Market, the Schengen area and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. However, the importance and relevance of the European flag has changed, perhaps more so than ever, in the past decade. Highly relevant historical events to European identity in France, Ukraine, and Britain provide us with examples of how European Union symbols are increasingly being used to, first, create a sense of shared experience, and second, adopted by people taking to the streets in protest.

On June 6 2014, the 70th anniversary ceremony of D Day was held in Normandy. The ceremony was broadcasted around the world, with state leaders and delegates in attendance. An emotional, interpretive play was staged on the shores of Sword Beach, a main landing area during the invasion. The historical re-enactment, lasting approximately forty minutes, told the story of the Second World War through dancing and music. It ends with the golden stars gathering in a giant circle around the map of Europe, with the Ode to Joy as the soundtrack. Peace has replaced war, and, more importantly, a united Europe – bound together by a common destiny draped in blue and gold – has supplanted a divided, colourless continent.[118] This, a highly emotional event, is but one example of how the European flag is used to arouse feelings and a deeper understanding of the symbol, outside of the civic aspects of the European Union. At this event, the peoples of Europe go from many to one, long divided now

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[117] Charlotte Jousserand, 'Drapeau, Hymne, Monnaie et Bientôt Carte d'identité ? L'Union Européenne et Ses Symboles,' France Culture, April 11, 2019, https://www.franceculture.fr/histoire/drapeau-hymne-monnaie-et-bientot-carte-didentite-lunion-europeenne-et-ses-symboles.

[118] *D-Day International Ceremony: Obama, Putin, Elizabeth II, Hollande in Normandy (Recorded Live Feed)* (Sword Beach, Normandy: Euronews, 2014), 2:45:40, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yQ1BMa2IRI&list=LLZfn2oAjAP9jq9WR6LNlgDg&index=801&t=0s.

united, as one people – diverse, surely – but nonetheless embarking on the same journey.

Indeed, this period during the mid-2010s marks a turning point in modern EU history. In late 2013, Ukrainian citizens began protesting the government's closer ties to Russia at the cost of a stronger link to Europe. This massive protest movement turned revolution – with its epicentre at the Maidan Square in Ukraine's capital Kiev – was given the name Euromaidan, named after its affinity for the EU. The protests gathered millions of people all over the country, 'who were not only voicing their favourable opinion of European integration, but also demanding basic democratic rights'.[119] Eventually, several protesters were shot and killed by snipers, and state-led violence resulted in the deaths of at least 100 people, with another 1500 seriously wounded. The revolution was arguably a partial success in the end, due to the ousting of the Russian-backed regime and its resulting in closer ties to the EU. However, it also led to the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by (and a series of border wars with) Russia and its satellite states which continue as of early 2020. The Euromaidan Revolution showed that the European Union means more than just 'Eurocrats' and top-down politics. In fact, it marks a significant point in the EU's history. The Ukrainian Euromaidan Revolution provides the first example of people, standing up for democratic rights and freedoms, fighting and dying under the flag of the European Union.[120]

This event was significant for the EU, but perhaps more so for Ukraine itself, as the country has long had an ambivalent and difficult relationship with national identity. As Ilya Prizel explains, modern Ukraine has gone from being 'a perennial vassal of the Kremlin' to an independent state, going through several stages of identity formation to reach its current

[119] Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, 'Euromaidan: Time to Draw Conclusions,' *European View* 13, no. 1 (2014): 12.

[120] 'Ukraine Health Ministry: Kyiv Unrest Death Toll Reaches 100,' KyivPost, June 3, 2014, https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/ukraine-health-ministry-kyiv-unrest-death-toll-reaches-100-338563.html; Elizabeth Pond, 'War in Ukraine: Is This the Way It Ends?,' *Survival* 59, no. 6 (2017): 143–49; Lawrence Freedman, 'Ukraine and the Art of Exhaustion,' *Survival* 57, no. 5 (2015): 77–106. Saryusz-Wolski, 'Euromaidan,' 18.

point.[121] It is worth noting that, despite Ukraine's suffering under Stalin's collectivisation, the proselyting of the Russian language and the relocation of ethnic Russians into Ukraine, Robert J. Kaiser argues that the Russification of the country ultimately failed.[122] Nevertheless, as Rawi Abdelal observes, in the post-Soviet era, Ukrainians could not rally around a single national identity, divided as they were. Between the western Ukrainians, who saw Russia as their 'other', and the southern and eastern Ukrainians, whose national identity 'overlapped with several other identities, including regional, pan-Slavic, and even Soviet identities […]', Ukraine in the early 1990s had no clear path forward, as Ukrainians 'did not agree that being Ukrainian also meant being separate from Russia'.[123] The Maidan Revolution or the Euromaidan, where Ukrainian people from all over the country protested their pro-Russia government and favoured a Western turn, therefore becomes increasingly significant as it symbolises a move from the Ukrainian status quo, and if not full, then at least a partial and symbolic identification with Europe and the West as opposed to Russia and the East, for the first time in the post-Soviet era charting a clearer foreign and domestic policy course for the country. The usage of the European flag underscores this point further.

Another event which had a major impact on the course of EU's history is Brexit. On 23 June 2016, a majority of the British people voted to leave the EU, marking the beginning of the end for the United Kingdom's membership in the Union. The referendum result was a defeat for the EU indeed, yet in the ensuing tumult, the European flag once again showed itself to be a symbol of – if not all, then certainly a lot of people. Over three years later, in October 2019, after years of protests and demonstrations, around

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[121] Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine*, vol. 103, Cambridge Russian, Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies (Cambridge: University Press, 1998), 340.

[122] Robert J. Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[123] Rawi Abdelal, *National Purpose in the World Economy*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 104.

one million people marched in London for the chance of a second referendum on the UK leaving the EU.[124] A sea of European flags washed over the streets of the British capital, carried forward by Brits who wanted to remain in the European community they had been a part of for 47 years. They might not have agreed with every EU policy, nor wanted an ever-closer relationship. But the fact that they waved the gold and blue might indicate that the values of the EU, namely the protection of democracy, rights and freedoms, and cooperation in virtually every significant area from the medical to the food industries, resonate with people. So much so in fact, that they are willing to take to the streets and march for it, flag in hand. Perhaps Yves Hersant was wrong, after all. For to wave a flag and stand up for its message – whatever that message may be – the said flag must certainly be able to arouse emotion in its carrier, enough so that the person identifies with its colours.

The case of a British (and more specifically, English) European identity lends itself well to the term 'reluctant Europeans'.[125] Even though Winston Churchill and other leading British politicians in the post-war era promoted European integration, Michael T. Florinsky wrote in 1955 that: 'While paying lip-service to the lofty ideal of European unity, [Britain] has actually withheld collaboration when it was particularly needed and has obstructed progress towards European integration'.[126] Despite, in Luigi Barzini's words, joining the European Economic Community 'disastrously, too late, too expensively, at the wrong moment […] reluctantly and somewhat squeamishly'[127] in 1973, the British voted overwhelmingly to stay in the Community in the 1975 referendum on the Common Market, where 67.2 per cent voted to remain. At the same time, as Miles Hewstone explains, parts of both the Labour left and the Conservative right have always been against political integration with the rest of Europe, and 'later

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[124] Mark Townsend, 'March Organisers Hail "One of the Greatest Protest Marches in British History"', *The Guardian*, October 19, 2019, sec. Politics, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/oct/19/peoples-vote-march-hailed-as-one-of-greatest-protest-marches-in-british-history.

[125] Marco Cinnirella, 'Forever the Reluctant Europeans?,' *Psychologist* 14, no. 7 (July 2001): 344.

[126] Michael T. Florinsky, *Integrated Europe?* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 161.

[127] Luigi Barzini, *The Europeans* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 60.

changes of heart by prominent political figures have undoubtedly perplexed the electorate'.[128]

Looking at historical trends for the past 50 years, 74 per cent of Brits never thought of themselves as citizens of Europe in 1983 according to a Eurobarometer from that year.[129] By 2010, the survey question had been changed from 'Do you ever think of yourself as a citizen of Europe?' to 'You feel you are a citizen of the EU'. Now, 58 per cent answered negatively to the question, while 41 per cent answered either 'Yes, definitely' (13 per cent) or 'Yes, to some extent' (28 per cent). However, a Eurobarometer conducted in late 2019, only months before Britain left the Union, now showed that a majority of responders felt they were citizens of the EU. 53 per cent of the surveyed answered positively, versus 45 per cent who answered either 'No, not really' (28 per cent) and 'No, definitely not' (17 per cent). This is still much lower than the EU average, where 68 per cent of responders in the same survey answered positively.[130] According to the trajectory of change in identity, we nevertheless see a shift towards Britons identifying more and more with Europe, despite voting to leave the Union in a 51.9-48.1 vote.[131]

The irony in the above-mentioned examples, is that they both, took place in the EU's periphery. Ukraine, both a non-member on its eastern border and a close neighbour of Russia – and historically part of its sphere of influence – lies far away from the European heart of Brussels. On the opposite end, the UK, although not far away from the centre of Europe in a geographical sense, was neither a continental member state, nor ever a strong supporter of the principle of an ever-closer union. And despite this – if discounting the overarching fact of Brexit for but a moment – in zones of conflict and quarrel, is where the European flag has arguably been

[128] Miles Hewstone, *Understanding Attitudes to the European Community: A Social-Psychological Study in Four Member States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 7.

[129] 'Eurobarometer,' European Commission, June 1983, IV, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/eb/eb19/eb19_en.pdf.

[130] 'Public Opinion - European Commission,' accessed April 16, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeKy/50/groupKy/263.

[131] 'EU Referendum Results,' BBC News, accessed April 16, 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/politics/eu_referendum/results.

flown with the greatest fervour, and in support of the very values the EU itself claims to champion.

This is especially interesting when viewing each case through the lens of Billig's 'banal nationalism'. While it can be argued that banal nationalism is being practiced in the continental EU member states, and especially in the Eurozone where the currency itself features the EU emblem, the same cannot be said for the UK and Ukraine. The UK was neither a Eurozone nor a Schengen member, and therefore a non-participant in potentially massive European identity creation drivers. Additionally, the UK never signed Declaration 52 of the Lisbon Treaty on the symbols of the European Union which states that the most important EU symbols like the flag, anthem, motto, national day, and currency are 'symbols to express the sense of community of the people in the European Union and their allegiance to it'.[132] In other words, the UK never really allowed for a top-down propagation of a European identity in Britain, and a strong faction within its Conservative Party has actively campaigned against any form of a European nation since the 1980s.[133] Furthermore, with a media strongly in opposition to the EU, as reflected in the majority of the coverage of the Brexit referendum campaign, it is hardly surprising that a European identity failed to fully form when it was not even allowed to grow. A study conducted by the Reuters Institute at the University of Oxford found that 41 per cent of the reviewed media coverage – and six out of nine national newspapers – leading up to the Brexit referendum favoured the Leave campaign, while only 27 per cent could be categorised as favouring Remain.[134] Those six newspapers, tabloids including the Sun and the Daily Express, are both among the best-selling papers in the country and have long histories of Euroscepticism.[135]

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[132] 'Final Act (2007/C 306/02).'

[133] Toby Helm, 'British Euroscepticism: A Brief History,' *The Guardian*, February 7, 2016, sec. Politics, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/feb/07/british-euroscepticism-a-brief-history.

[134] David Levy, Billur Aslan, and Diego Bironzo, 'UK Press Coverage of the EU Referendum,' Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, August 2016, 16, https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/our-research/uk-press-coverage-eu-referendum.

[135] Levy, Aslan, and Bironzo, 4.

Ukraine is not even a member of the EU, but a state with a troubled relationship with the rule of law and democracy even after its independence from Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as exemplified by President Viktor Yanukovych's arrest of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and the undermining of the Ukrainian parliament and courts.[136] Here, even less so than in the UK has the EU had the chance to foster 'Europeanness' as it remains outside the EU's borders on virtually every account. Nonetheless, the idea of Europe and its civic values clearly resonated with Ukrainians, many of whom adopted the most European symbol of all as their battle flag. An additional cause for Ukraine's European turn is likely to be the general fears and aspirations of Ukrainians. According to surveys conducted for the research project *Fears in Post Communist Society on the Eve of 2000: Intensity and Impact on Social Life*, 87 per cent of Ukrainians feared in 1998 for their material well-being and impoverishment. Economic disaster ranked as the country's number one fear.[137] In a similar study in 2005, right after the Orange Revolution, 78 per cent mentioned an increase in prices as their main concern, and 69 per cent feared unemployment the most.[138] Additionally, another study from 2005 which surveyed Ukrainian adolescents aged 10-12 – children who would become adults by the 2014 Euromaidan– found that 'pursuing financially and personally rewarding careers' were their top priorities. It is therefore likely that both democratic and material aspirations were important factors in the 2014 revolution.

That Europeans in the EU increasingly support the European project might be in part due to the increasing effects of banal nationalism over time. However, the rise in support might also come as a result of the activation of a latent European identity as a counter to political upheavals in 2016, when the United States elected Donald Trump as president and the UK voted for Brexit. Nevertheless, it seems the unwaved flag has yet to be activated in the core in a similar fashion as it was among 'Europeans' in the UK and

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[136] Rajan Menon and Alexander J. Motyl, 'Counterrevolution in Kiev: Hope Fades for Ukraine,' *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 6 (2011): 137–38.

[137] Vladimir Shlapentokh, 'Fear in the Post-Communist World,' *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 13, no. 1 (2001): 64, 67.

[138] N Panina, *Ukrains'ke Suspil'stvo 1994-2005: Sotsiologichnyj Monitoring [Ukrainian Society 1994-2005: Sociological Monitoring]* (Kyiv: Sophia Publishing House, 2005), 87.

Ukraine, who were in imminent danger of losing a 'European' future. Surely, these examples cement the European flag as the symbol and representative of the both the EU and the values it advocates for, even among peoples who have no or little experience with top-down nation-building initiatives from the EU.

2.7 Creating an identity

How one chooses to define 'united' and 'European identity', and whether the flag fulfils its goals, is up for discussion. The flag is raised on government buildings all over the Union, and the emblem is printed on documents and other material associated with it, including drinking bottles, sweaters, border crossings, signs raised where EU funds have paid for the building of bridges and roads, and on energy efficiency labels taped onto everything from washing machines to computer screens. You can even find the emblem on every car registered in a member state, making the EU logo virtually ever-present. As Fornäs explains, this system 'secures wide distribution of the symbol all over the union, along its roads and autostradas, almost like blood circulation with the roads as veins and arteries, and Brussels as the pumping heart'. Whether intended or not, simply driving a car becomes a symbolic action, as the freedom of movement across Europe – whether of people, services, or goods – is guaranteed by the emblem on your license plate, and the Union making it possible.[139]

Europe was once defined by the flags of its great powers, with borders guarded by their armies, and the conflicts between them. In fact, the world we live in today comes as a direct consequence of the relationship – or the lack of it – between the great powers of Europe. What the European flag is meant to symbolise is the departure from this history, or rather, the possibility of a future free from the shackles of the past. The flag might lack emotion or cultural foundations as some critics assert, but it is the civic background which makes the European flag stand out as its symbols are not grounded in religion or culture, but in civic concepts which are meant to appeal to several nations at once. It is indeed a traditional ethnic symbol, one which marks outer boundaries and aims to define a people, but

[139] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 119.

still one whose values are founded on the civic principles of diversity, democracy, and the legacy and lessons from a thousand years of European civil wars.

Chapter 3

An ode to Europe

This chapter examines the European anthem as a symbolic means of communication. It discusses the anthems properties as they relate to European identity creation, and its history as a poem and symphony by prominent European artists. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the history of national anthems and the question of what makes a good anthem, paying particular attention to the German anthem's evolution since its inception. The symbolic qualities of the European anthem will then be discussed, including its lack of lyrics, its abstract nature, and how they relate to nationalism.

3.1 A brief history and analysis of national anthems

One of the oldest national anthems in history, the Dutch Het Wilhelmus, was written around 1570. It was created as a response to Spanish rule of the Netherlands during the Dutch War of Independence, but did not become the country's official anthem until 1932. The hymn itself, written from the first-person perspective, speaks of a person 'van Duytschen Bloedt' who honours the king of Spain, yet yearns for a kingdom like the

one God gave David in Israel.[140] However, the definition of 'Duytschen' is not clear cut. In the Middle Ages, 'Duytschen' and 'duutsch' referred to the peoples and languages generally located within the lands of the Holy Roman Empire, in what would be present-day Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the Benelux countries (today, 'deutsch' is a German word meaning 'German').[141] In translating the anthem into English, Maria Schenkeveld-van der Dussen writes 'Of German blood am I, Allegiance to my country, I pledge, until I die'.[142] Frits Noske argued instead that 'Duytschen' refers to the 'Dutch' as opposed to 'German',[143] and the website of the Royal House of the Netherlands does the same in its translation.[144] Schenkeveld-van der Dussen states, however, that 'one should not forget that the Netherlands, too, could be considered part of the German empire, and no opposition is meant here between the "German blood" and "my country"'.[145]

The song was considered unfit to become the official national anthem in 1815 when the Kingdom of the Netherlands was founded due to its extensive use by the royalist Orangist faction during their conflict with the revolutionary Patriots in the late 18th century. The new anthem, 'Wien Neêrlands bloed', originally spoke of Dutch blood 'free from foreign blemishes' or 'alien stains', but was later changed to 'whose heart beats bravely and freely'. According to the National Library of the Netherlands, the original

[140] Jemimah Steinfeld, 'Blurring the Lines: National Anthems Are Back in Fashion. Why and Where Are People Being Forced to Sing Against Their Will?,' *Index on Censorship* 46, no. 4 (2017): 115. René van Stipriaan, 'Words at War: The Early Years of William of Orange's Propaganda,' *Journal of Early Modern History* 11, no. 4–5 (2007): 331–45.

[141] Luc De Grauwe, 'Emerging Mother-Tongue Awareness: The Special Case of Dutch and German in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period,' in *Standardization: Studies from the Germanic Languages*, ed. Andrew Robert Linn and Nicola McLelland, vol. 235 (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002), 99–115.

[142] Maria A. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, *Dutch Literature in the Age of Rembrandt: Themes and Ideas*, vol. 28, Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1991), 6.

[143] Frits Noske, 'Early Sources of the Dutch National Anthem (1574—1626),' *Fontes Artis Musicae* 13, no. 1 (1966): 87–94, 88.

[144] 'Music, Lyrics and Customs - National Anthem - Royal House of the Netherlands,' Royal House of the Netherlands (Ministerie van Algemene Zaken), accessed May 4, 2020, https://www.royal-house.nl/topics/national-anthem/music-lyrics-and-customs.

[145] Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, *Dutch Literature in the Age of Rembrandt*, 28:6.

line is today seen as discriminatory. The Het Wilhelmus regained its popularity after a republishing in the late 19th century before becoming the official national anthem in the inter-war period.[146]

The case of the changing of the national anthems and their interpretations in the Netherlands, a proportionally small state, is just one example of how important it is for a national anthem to convey a unifying message and to be perceived as doing so. As Pål Kolstø argues, 'the flag, anthem, and other emblems are often contested by various ethnic and political groups', and as in the case of the Het Wilhelmus at the time of the founding of the Kingdom of the Netherlands: '[i]nstead of unifying the nation they divide it'.[147] Anthems are symbols used by the state in the process of nation-building, as exemplified by the fact that every nation possesses an anthem.[148] They may reflect cultures or serve as a national 'collective voice';[149] they're used to make internal statements about national identity, create bonds, motivate to action, and legitimate authority;[150] and they exist among other fetishised objects through which nationalism takes shape.[151] It is therefore interesting that there is a lack of academic literature on the topic of national anthems, as expressed by Oliver Lauenstein et al.[152]

Much like with flags, we can assume that an anthem in itself does little to create identity alone, and that it is a means of communication which requires an appropriate environment to fulfil its function. According to Émile Durkheim, symbols are inherently neutral objects given meaning by

[146] Noske, 'Early Sources of the Dutch National Anthem (1574—1626),' 87; H. Tollens, *Gezamenlijke dichtwerken*, 1:184; 'Broadside Ballads 1. Wie Nederlands Bloed - Those of Dutch Blood - The Memory.'.

[147] Kolstø, 'National Symbols as Signs of Unity and Division,' 676.

[148] Lauenstein et al., 'Oh Motherland I Pledge to Thee …,' 315.

[149] F. Gunther Eyck, *The Voice of Nations: European National Anthems and Their Authors* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995), xiv, xx.

[150] Karen A. Cerulo, 'Symbols and the World System: National Anthems and Flags,' *Sociological Forum* 8, no. 2 (1993): 266.

[151] Anne McClintock, 'Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family,' *Feminist Review*, no. 44 (1993): 71.

[152] Lauenstein et al., 'Oh Motherland I Pledge to Thee …,' 315.

societal conditions,[153] but Karen Cerulo argues that 'society as manufacturer is too broad' for national anthems as symbols. Instead, it is the political elites 'who manufacture and distribute' them, referencing 'the social conditions *they* face and the goals *they* wish to project to their constituents and observers'.[154] She found that an anthem's making is based on the sociopolitical context in which it is created and adopted, finding that anthems will either exhibit more basic (low frequency of motion, low magnitude of motion, and conjunct style) or more embellished (opposite qualities) melodic codes depending on the political circumstance of the state in question.[155] For example, anthems exhibit more basic melodic codes when adopted in a state with high internal, external, and formal control[156] ('God Save the King' in 18th century monarchical Great Britain, categorised as a hymn), while more embellished anthems are adopted by states with opposite values ('La Marseillaise' in revolutionary France, categorised as a march).[157]

However, Cerulo places little emphasis on lyrics. F. Gunther Eyck, however, highlights the poetic roots and nature of European anthems, and places them into varying categories, encompassing themes such as liberty, resistance, and contentment.[158] As such, Oliver Lauenstein et al. correctly assert that national anthems are both political texts, a 'mnemonic of national identity' (a tool or learning device), and 'texts used to describe and activate a particular conception of nationhood'.[159]

Contrary to flags, which can be both active and passive symbols of nation-building, an anthem traditionally requires active participation. Failing to participate in reciting its lyrics when expected to may appear as an act of

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153 Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1915).

154 Karen A. Cerulo, 'Sociopolitical Control and the Structure of National Symbols: An Empirical Analysis of National Anthems,' *Social Forces* 68, no. 1 (1989): 128.

155 Cerulo, 85.

156 Cerulo, 93.

157 Karen A. Cerulo, 'Analyzing Cultural Products: A New Method of Measurement,' *Social Science Research* 17, no. 4 (December 1, 1988): 321–37.

158 Eyck, *The Voice of Nations*.

159 Lauenstein et al., 'Oh Motherland I Pledge to Thee …,' 316.

protest or dissent. So important are anthems to state-builders or nationalists that, either by law or social norms, one might risk severe penalties, legal or otherwise, for not singing along. China announced in 2017 that disrespecting the anthem could lead to punishments of up to three years in prison,[160] and in the United States in 2018, President Donald Trump called for the deportation of NFL players who refused to stand for the anthem before the beginning of matches (but failed to declare where they would be deported to).[161]

Hobsbawm and Ranger argued in *The Invention of Tradition* that the national anthem is one of three symbols 'through which an independent country proclaims its identity and sovereignty, and as such they command instantaneous respect and loyalty. In themselves they reflect an entire background, thought and culture of a nation'.[162] The last sentence is debatable, as anthems can be divisive for a myriad of reasons, but representing an entire nation is indeed what anthems aim to do. Anthems are in this way a symbol of identity creation because they attempt to actively rally members of the nation around key concepts and sides of said nation, usually brought to light in the anthem itself.

The use of anthems varies from nation to nation, but as with the words 'loyalty', 'duty' and 'patriotism', Hobsbawm and Ranger argued that the significance of national traditions lie specifically in this 'undefined universality'.[163] To them, 'old' traditions stand in contrast to 'invented' traditions; whereas the former 'were specific and strongly binding social practices', the latter 'tended to be quite unspecific and vague as to the nature of the values, rights and obligations of the group membership they inculcate'. At the same time, the invented traditions symbolising the nation

[160] Chris Buckley and Keith Bradsher, 'Jail Time for Disrespecting China's Anthem Jumps From 15 Days to 3 Years,' *The New York Times*, November 4, 2017, sec. World, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/04/world/asia/china-hong-kong-national-anthem.html.

[161] Adam Edelman, 'Trump Says Athletes Who Kneel during Anthem 'Maybe Shouldn't Be in the Country,'' NBC News, May 24, 2018, https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-says-nfl-players-who-kneel-during-national-anthem-maybe-n876996.

[162] Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 11.

[163] Hobsbawm and Ranger, 11.

were accompanied by practices which were 'virtually compulsory', such as standing and singing the anthem, and saluting the flag. As such, Hobsbawm and Ranger argue, it is the emotionally and symbolically important *signifiers* of national membership – not the nation's 'statutes' or objects – that matter.[164] Therefore, as with a flag, an anthem must be universal enough to appeal to the nation in question.

National anthems are thus one of several invented traditions meant to symbolise the nation. As such, they are also emblematic of specific visions of nationhood, which, by approaching them through the lens of feminist theory, allows us to uncover the messages they convey about and to the nation. These messages are often traditional in nature, and tend to lend themselves to a traditional view of gender roles. Benedict Anderson used the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as an example of a symbol of national unity and the immortalisation of the individual's effort on behalf of the nation. However, as argued by R. W. Connell, the soldier and military service were and are traditionally male-dominated areas of profession.[165] One could therefore assume that the Unknown Soldier is male, as opposed to gender-neutral – emphasising first and foremost 'male virtues' or normative masculinity[166] including the virtues of strength, honour, and dignity. As with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, national anthems, as part of a 'commemorative landscape'[167], also tend to present history through traditional lenses. A look at contemporary or previous versions of current national anthems reveals this pattern.

The seventh stanza of the Norwegian anthem 'Ja, vi elsker' recalls 'All that the fathers have fought, And the mothers have wept', while the less frequently sung third stanza tells of how 'Even women stood up and fought,

[164] Hobsbawm and Ranger, 10–11.

[165] Joane Nagel, 'Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 2 (1998): 248.

[166] George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity*, Studies in the History of Sexuality (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[167] Sara Mcdowell, 'Commemorating Dead 'Men': Gendering the Past and Present in Post-Conflict Northern Ireland,' *Gender, Place & Culture* 15, no. 4 (2008): 335.

As if they were men'.[168] The anthem often returns to the struggles of fathers in defending and upholding the country. The German, Austrian, Danish, Belgian, and French anthems all refer to their respective countries as 'fatherland', while the Italian anthem is commonly referred to as 'Brothers of Italy'. In 2018, in an effort to make the anthem 'O Canada' gender neutral, the Parliament of Canada changed a part of its anthem from 'True patriot love in all thy sons command' to 'True patriot love in all of us command'[169], a phenomenon taking place in several Western countries in the past years.[170] Many anthems, including the French, Italian, British, American, Polish, Norwegian, Kurdish, Ukrainian, Chinese and Turkish all refer to war, sacrifice, or death from battle,[171] further solidifying them as traditional masculine symbols meant to spark national fervour based on what Cynthia Enloe called 'masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope'.[172] The original version of 'Das Lied der Deutschen', the German anthem, provides a prime example of this masculine traditional symbolism. The second stanza, which is no longer commonly used, opens with 'German women, German loyalty, German wine and German song'[173], a line reminiscent of romantic nationalism which does not honour civic values (which the third stanza does),[174] but a cultural (and arguably ethnic) superiority based on what Enloe would most likely refer to as a kind of masculine nationalism, especially as the phrase relates to women. In this sense, whereas this line of the stanza is based on a male perception of what makes Germany unique, women are turned into

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[168] Jon Gunnar Arntzen, 'Ja, vi elsker dette landet,' in *Store norske leksikon*, January 7, 2020, http://snl.no/Ja,_vi_elsker_dette_landet.

[169] 'Anthems of Canada,' Government of Canada, June 14, 2019, https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/anthems-canada.html.

[170] Leonid Bershidsky, 'Why Germany Won't Have a Gender-Neutral Anthem,' *Bloomberg.Com*, March 7, 2018, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2018-03-07/gender-neutral-national-anthems-are-the-future-but-timing-is-everything.

[171] 'Nationalanthems.Info,' accessed May 8, 2020, http://www.nationalanthems.info/.

[172] Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (London: Pandora, 1989), 45.

[173] Raan, 'Deutschlandlied,' *deutsche-schutzgebiete.de* (blog), July 15, 2018, https://deutsche-schutzgebiete.de/wordpress/deutschlandlied/.

[174] Joep Leerssen, 'Viral Nationalism: Romantic Intellectuals on the Move in Nineteenth-Century Europe,' *Nations and Nationalism* 17, no. 2 (2011): 260.

'national' objects and 'remain close to "nature"'.[175] Indeed, only seven anthems currently in use are written or co-written by women, six of them for states in the global south, with Austria being the only exception to the rule in the EU.[176] Therefore, it appears that national anthems, as means of nation-building, belong to the category of symbolic means of communication. Thus, as with the flag, the national anthem can be identified as a means to foster an ethnic nationalism based on the concept by Anthony Smith because of the time period they were popularised in and the values they tend to hold high, which are often based on a masculinised vision of the nation.

Dag Thorkildsen argues that 'historical raw material' is required to build a foundation for the nation.[177] This raw material can be said to have been language, customs, and the sense of belonging to a specific territory which now make up the modern nation. It might therefore be fitting to examine an anthem whose history involves several significant historical periods and might be argued to harbour such material.

The volatile history of the German anthem is largely related to the major political events of the 20th century. The full lyrics of the national of anthem of Germany, including the opening of the first stanza which states 'Germany, Germany above all, Germany above everything in the world', was originally written by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben while in exile on the island of Helgoland in 1841, three decades before the unification of Germany. Contrary to its modern implication, the line 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles' did not mean 'Germany above all' in the Nazi expansionist sense, but was rather a call for a 'united Germany based on liberal principles', a greater-Germany including Austria.[178] The text must also be viewed in the context of that time's liberal revolutions, whose German supporters adopted the *Deutschlandlied* as their unofficial anthem at the

[175] Nira Yuval-Davis, 'Gender and Nation,' in *Women, Ethnicity and Nationalism: The Politics of Transition*, ed. Robert E. Miller and Rick Wilford (London: Routledge, 1998), 22.

[176] 'Nationalanthems.Info.'

[177] Dag Thorkildsen, 'Norwegian National Myths and Nation Building,' *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 27, no. 2 (2014): 264.

[178] Margarete Myers Feinstein, 'Deutschland Über Alles?: The National Anthem Debate in the Federal Republic of Germany,' *Central European History* 33, no. 4 (December 2000): 507.

1848 Frankfurt National Assembly.[179] During the First World War, the song was made popular among Germans as it related to soldiers fighting and sacrificing themselves for the country, and it was made the official anthem of the Weimar Republic after the war's end. The Nazis later adopted but the first stanza of the *Deutschlandlied* (which includes the 'Deutschland über alles' phrase), and immediately followed it up with the Nazi party song, the *Horst-Wessel-Lied*, while at the same time demanding the Hitler salute during their singing. This combination impacted the way post-war interpreters viewed the said stanza, and why even the *Deutschlandlied* was outlawed along with 'other Nazi songs' by the Allied Control Council.[180]

To use the first stanza as part of a post-war anthem was out of the question for the first Federal Republic President Theodor Heuss. Heuss was a practicing historian, and argued for the adoption of the black-red-gold flag, but rejected the *Deutschlandlied*, both of which had been used by the Weimar Republic and carried the legacy of the 1848 revolution. While this might immediately seem a bit hypocritical – choosing one symbol but not the other – one must remember that even though the Nazis adopted the first stanza and melody of the old anthem as their own, they rejected the republican *tricolore* in favour of the Swastika. For the second stanza, the Nazis found that it, as it mentioned wine, 'did not exemplify Nazi values', and Heuss dismissed it as 'trivial'.[181] Heuss believed simply using the third stanza would be too short and continued to commission a new anthem, but it failed to garner any meaningful support, and in May 1952, President Theodor Heuss and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer came to an agreement making the third stanza the official anthem to be sung at state events.[182]

Meanwhile behind the Iron Curtain, the German Democratic Republic had its own anthem, *Auferstanden aus Ruinen* – 'Risen from Ruins'. A product of the post-war era, is it sang of a Germany 'Reborn out of the ruins […]' of the Second World War.[183] After unification, the G.D.R anthem was

[179] Karlheinz Weissmann, *Die Zeichen des Reiches: Symbole der Deutschen* (Asendorf: MUT, 1989), 72.

[180] Feinstein, 'Deutschland Über Alles?,' 508–9.

[181] Feinstein, 508, 514–15.

[182] Feinstein, 515, 527.

[183] David Childs, *The Fall of the GDR* (London: Routledge, 2001), 113.

abandoned, making the third stanza of the *Deutschlandlied* the official anthem of a united Germany. As such, modern Germans lend their voices to the words 'Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit' – unity, justice, and freedom.

The German example is evidence of the importance for an anthem to accurately evoke a sense of nationhood, and importantly, how the song relates to and conveys the values of the nation. It also shows how anthems are symbols of change and adaption in states. Other than the unified Federal Republic of Germany and West Germany, the former's predecessor states, including East Germany, Nazi Germany, the Weimar Republic, and the German Empire, all had their own anthems or their own unique version of an anthem, all in the scope of the 20th century. From the imperial anthem *Heil dir im Siegerkranz* – 'Hail to Thee in the Victor's Crown' – to the resurrection of the *Deutschlandlied,* Germany's anthems represent rupture, volatility and massive political changes, followed by a popular will to reclaim a national identity which had been suspended by the fascist regime. As illustrated by the findings of Margaret Myers Feinstein, in the years after the war, many West Germans still identified with the *Deutschlandlied,* and did not want it replaced. During that time, much of the public discussion concerning the anthem took place through the media, with citizens sending letters to the editor to have their opinions heard.[184] One SPD (Social Democratic Party) member wrote that he, during the war, 'found the *Deutschlandlied* to be a comforting sign that the old and honorable Germany lived on […] the singing of the *Deutschlandlied* is proof that the connection to the time before Hitler has not been broken'.[185] One reader wrote 'I don't understand why something that my great-grandfather sang with devotion should be discarded'[186], and another wrote, 'Let's stay with the old anthem! We are still Germans!'.[187] Feinstein suggests that the popular support for the old anthem meant that it was a song which represented

[184] Feinstein, 'Deutschland Über Alles?,' 509.

[185] 'Die Nationalhymne,' *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, August 25, 1951.

[186] '"Hymne an Deutschland Diskutiert": Pressekommentare Und Stimmen Aus Dem Publikum,' *Die Neue Zeitung*, January 9, 1951.

[187] W. R, 'Unsere Leser Zur Frage Der Nationalhymne,' *Deutsche Tagepost*, January 11, 1951.

the German nation rather than just the state, and that it symbolised a 're-affirmation' of a German national identity independent of changing state leadership and organisations.

The melody itself however, was originally composed for the song *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser*, 'God Save Emperor Franz', created in honour of Emperor Franz II of the Holy Roman Empire, written by Joseph Haydn. He wanted an anthem for Austria which could rival that of the English *God Save the King* in a time when Austria was locked in conflict with Revolutionary France.[188] Although used first as the anthem of Austria, it ironically no longer serves as its national hymn, and is arguably better known today as the melody of the German national anthem.

When taking a look at the anthems of varying European countries, it becomes evident how much they relate to each other. The Dutch anthem, as we have seen, references both Germany and Spain, and while the Italian includes references to Poland and Russia, both the Italian and Hungarian anthems refer to Austria. The Polish anthem not only mentions Napoleon by name, but Italy and Sweden are also included. Finally, in the original version of the Norwegian anthem, Sweden and Denmark are indirectly referenced through a Scandinavian 'brethren pact'.[189] The inclusion of another country in these anthems usually alludes to warfare, whether as enemies or allies. Together they can be interpreted as retellings of historical consciousness, mostly relevant to the era in which the anthems were written and adopted.

Today, the European Union attempts to forge a European community out of its regions. Similar to modern France, the European Union tends to focus on civic achievements and ideals in its nationalism. However, in contrast to France, determined (especially in the late 19th and early 20th century) to assimilate both new and old citizens into being Frenchmen,[190] the

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[188] H. C. Robbins Landon and David Wyn Jones, *Haydn: His Life and Music* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1988), 301.

[189] Tor Bomann-Larsen, *Haakon & Maud I: Kongstanken*, vol. I (Oslo: Cappelen, 2002), 23–24.

[190] Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 15.

European Union's approach to identity creation comes by way of integration. One way to do so, according to the Adonnino Committee, was through an anthem.

3.2 An ode to Europe

A song 'representative of the European idea'[191] is what the Adonnino Committee sought in its report to the European Council in 1985. It chose 'Ode to Joy', the final movement from Ludwig van Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, as its anthem, which the Council of Europe had done before it. The intention was for it to be played at events and ceremonies, and has arguably become more or less synonymous with the EU ever since.

The advantages of choosing Beethoven's composition as the European anthem become evident once we know its history. 'Ode to Joy' was originally just that, Beethoven's homage to the poem Ode to Joy (*An die Freude*) by German poet Friedrich Schiller, written in 1823 and 1785 respectively.[192] Schiller lived in a time of political repression in the German states, himself a citizen of the Duchy of Württemberg which he was forced to flee due to the threat of imprisonment after writing his first drama, *Die Räuber* (1781). Perhaps as a consequence of this experienced repression, coupled with Kantian influences, Schiller's works revolved around the concept of freedom, both physical and ideal, and even in the personal, political, and aesthetic form.[193]

Referencing no event or time period in so many words, the poem can represent all of European history as divided peoples who eventually come together, in this case, through the European Union. Set to Beethoven's melody, the text is elevated and given an otherworldly tone due to the

[191] Adonnino Committee, 'Report by the Committee on a People's Europe Submitted to the Milan European Council (Milan, 28 and 29 June 1985),' 26.

[192] 'The European Anthem,' European Union, June 16, 2016, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/anthem_en.

[193] Gail K. Hart, 'Schiller's 'An Die Freude' and the Question of Freedom,' *German Studies Review* 32, no. 3 (2009): 479–93, 480, 484.

repeated chorus 'Joy, thou beauteous godly lightning, Daughter of Elysium'[194], a nod to European mythology and the ancient Greek conception of heaven. This is how the EU takes advantage of Thorkildsen's 'raw material' of history[195] to influence the present.

Beethoven himself was one of his times' progressives who, when hearing of Napoleon's march into the Holy Roman Empire, thought that the French general 'might conceivably be the hero he had craved for years, come to free the European world of tyranny […]'.[196] But in contrast to Beethoven's symphony *Eroica*, which was originally named Bonaparte before the French-Corsican crowned himself emperor, 'Ode to Joy' can be said to immortalise ideas rather than individuals. Schiller's original text, including the lines 'Thy enchantments bind together, what did custom stern divide, every man becomes a brother, where thy gentle wings abide'[197], echoes – or rather, acts as a historical anchor – for the idea of a united Europe. The EU itself states that the poem is an example of both Schiller's and Beethoven's 'idealistic vision of the human race becoming brothers', and that the anthem, much like the flag, 'symbolises not only the European Union but also Europe in a wider sense'.[198]

That the EU singles out the vision of the human race as brothers is emblematic of the idea of the Union as founded on Enlightenment values. Not relegated to simply 'Europeans', the inclusion of the 'human race' fits into the EU's values of unity, freedom, and democracy in a civic rather than in an ethnic or culturally based manner, implying that these rights and freedoms should – ideally – be open and available to all of mankind. Indeed, the anthem has no mention of states or nations, and is as such arguably much more universal than the typical anthem.

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[194] Friedrich Schiller, 'Ode to Joy,' trans. William F Wertz (Schiller Institute, n.d.), https://archive.schillerinstitute.com/transl/schiller_poem/ode_to_joy.pdf.

[195] Thorkildsen, 'Norwegian National Myths and Nation Building,' 264.

[196] Virginia Oakley Beahrs, 'Beethoven, Bonaparte, and the Republican Ideal - Exploring Alternative Perspectives,' *The Beethoven Newsletter; San Jose* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 35–36.

[197] Schiller, 'Ode to Joy'.

[198] 'The European Anthem.'

The anthem is therefore a clear example of the European Union's civic approach to a typically ethnic symbol of nationalism. First, the poem on which the song is based has no mention of nations, ethnicity or territory, but is an idealistic song with references to brotherhood of man, ecstatic sensations, gods both ancient and current, and of people in the abstract. Interestingly though, the European anthem is without words entirely, which in some ways might sound antithetical to the very idea of an anthem. The European Union is not alone in lacking official lyrics, however. Spain's national anthem contains no words,[199] and neither do Bosnia and Herzegovina's, Kosovo's,[200] or San Marino's.[201] But what the EU has in common with both Spain, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Kosovo, is that there exists several nations within their territories. Spain consists of several ethnic groups with complicated histories, the largest being Castilian, Basque, and Catalan, which might help explain why Spain, according to Jose Alvarez Junco, led an incomplete nation-building effort in the nineteenth century.[202] Bosnia and Herzegovina are made up of Bosniaks, Croats, and a Serbian minority, and Kosovo consists of Albanian and Serb peoples. This is one major reason why, as argued by Aleksandar Pavkovic and Christopher Kelen, their anthems lack lyrics; 'these are not single nation states or at least conceived as such […] there is no single nation to participate in the necessary unison singing would involve'.[203]

As Fornäs suggests, an anthem should inspire such fervour that it becomes not only tempting, but even irresistible to lend one's voice to the chorus, which in turn inspires identification with both it and the nation.[204] Whether solemn and slow like God Save the King/Queen, or patriotic and

[199] Javier Moreno-Luzón, 'The Strange Case of a National Anthem Without Lyrics: Music and Political Identities in Spain (1785-1913),' *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* 23, no. 3 (2017): 368.

[200] Aleksandar Pavkovic and Christopher Kelen, *Anthems and the Making of Nation States: Identity and Nationalism in the Balkans* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 49.

[201] 'San Marino – Nationalanthems.Info,' accessed May 12, 2020, http://www.nationalanthems.info/sm.htm.

[202] Jose Alvarez Junco, 'The Formation of Spanish Identity and Its Adaptation to the Age of Nations,' *History & Memory* 14, no. 1 (2002): 13–15.

[203] Pavkovic and Kelen, *Anthems and the Making of Nation States*, 46,49.

[204] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 150.

loud like Fratelli d'Italia, the songs are meant to be sung along with. But what happens when an anthem has no lyrics?

When the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe on a European Anthem took up the matter of a European anthem in 1971, it unanimously agreed that Beethoven's Ninth Symphony 'was capable of uniting the hearts and minds of all Europeans, including the younger generation', due to the song having been played in classrooms long before the idea of a European anthem was brought about.[205] When it came to the question of lyrics, the assembly reported that the words of Ode to Joy were more 'in the nature of a universal expression of faith rather than a specifically European one', and wondered 'whether any words acknowledged as "European" could ever be translated into another language and accepted as such by other linguistic groups of the European family'. The assembly therefore proposed simply the tune for Ode to Joy as the European anthem, but not without leaving an opening for future changes with the words: 'One day perhaps some words will be adopted by the citizens of Europe with the same spontaneity as Beethoven's eternal melody has been'.[206]

The report on the assembly's work suggests that official lyrics for the European anthem were deliberately left out. There were two main reasons for this decision. First, the original words in the poem *Ode to Joy* did not reference or mention Europe by name, nor did it specifically refer to its history or peoples; the message was more 'universal' than 'European'. Second, the assembly feared that language barriers would create unsurmountable challenges in the creation of the anthem's lyrics. It is almost perplexing that the assembly believed that the melody itself was capable of delivering a unifying European message, but that Schiller's words were essentially regarded as being 'too little European and too globally inclusive to signify a specifically European identity'.[207]

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[205] Mr. Radius, 'Report by the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe on a European Anthem (10 June 1971),' CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, September 5, 2012, 3–4, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/report_by_the_consultative_assembly_of_the_council_of_europe_on_a_european_anthem_10_june_1971-en-564e2cbf-2254-41bc-8070-83bc07943bf0.html.

[206] Mr. Radius, 4.

[207] Fornäs, *Signifying Europe*, 156.

The undeniable challenge of an anthem for Europe is that the continent consists of dozens of languages, and as of 2020, the European Union prides itself on having 24 official ones. What is interesting about the report's recommendation on the inclusion of words however, is that they do not mention the fact that An die Freude (Ode to Joy), a German poem, might face a hard time convincing the rest of Europe to embrace it, especially considering the 20th century history of Germany and the less than three decades between 1945 and 1971. The EU did attempt to slightly 'Europeanize' the German composer by highlighting his Dutch ancestry and his journey from Bonn, Germany to Vienna, Austria, but as Fornäs points out, other composers were far more cosmopolitan and 'European' than Beethoven, including Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.[208] What makes Beethoven so unique was not necessarily a personal pan-European history (constructed or not), but rather how his works relate to the idea of a more unified Europe. Carlo Curti Gialdino argues that Beethoven, unlike Haydn and Mozart, was 'a deep thinker who was concerned with social problems and new ideas', and that the *Ode to Joy* '[commemorates] the values of truth, liberty, universal fraternity and human happiness' informed by 'Kantian ideals of the [time's] enlightenment culture'. These are ideas which interlock with the overall European project and a European identity which '[goes] beyond the confines of nations and beyond the differences between peoples in order to bring about something more sublime and exceptional in European society'.[209]

To have a multilingual national anthem is not unheard of; O Canada, which officially became Canada's anthem after parliamentary approval in 1980, does in fact carry both a French and an English version.[210] But an anthem

[208] Fornäs, 160.

[209] Carlo Curti Gialdino, 'The Symbols of the European Union — Full Text,' CVCE.EU (CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, July 8, 2016), 2–3, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the_symbols_of_the_european_union_full_text-en-e135ba77-1bae-43d8-bcb7-e416be6bc590.html.

[210] Mary Copland Kennedy and Susan Carol Guerrini, 'Patriotism, Nationalism, and National Identity in Music Education: 'O Canada,' How Well Do We Know Thee?,' *International Journal of Music Education* 31, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 80.

in seven different languages by 1985, and now, dozens? Although difficult, it would not be impossible, as suggested by a German parliamentarian in 1980.[211]

On the question of translation, one can consider anthems the themes of nations. One could only look to international companies with multilingual mottos or ads dubbed into different languages; the words, although different, still carry the same meaning, and allow millions of people across the world to become familiar with the product in question. McDonald's 'I'm lovin it' slogan is officially translated to 'ich liebe es' and 'me encanta' in German and Spanish respectively, and Coca-Cola has changed its name, font, and written language to fit local markets. This concept is often referred to as 'glocalization' (merging the words 'global' and 'local'), a term popularised by Roland Robertson in the 1990's. The term refers to the point where universalism meets particularity,[212] and in marketing terms, it is used when discussing the marketing strategy of international companies when adapting to local, and often foreign, markets. The term originates with the Japanese company Sony's strategy of 'global localization' as opposed to 'global standardization'.[213] Although different in substance, the 'branding' of a product or a nation is not too different in concept – it revolves around the consumer or target audience learning of and identifying with the product. As such, one can envision the establishment of a policy of 'Eurolocality' which would revolve around localising Europe and its symbols. This is exactly what has been done with the euro coins – which consists of a common European and a local national side – without removing the sense of using a European currency.

Indeed, there is precedence for this phenomenon even in the realm of anthems. *The Internationale*, the anthem of the worldwide socialist movement, is a multilingual song containing – although there are minor deviations between versions – the overall same message of uniting workers across the

[211] Caryl Clark, 'Forging Identity: Beethoven's 'Ode' as European Anthem,' *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 4 (1997): 797.

[212] Roland Robertson, 'Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity,' in *Global Modernities Global Modernities* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1995), 2.

[213] Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 46–47.

world 'based on class consciousness and solidarity'.[214] We can compare this to the European effort to unite Europeans across the European nations and languages, based on shared histories, values, and experiences.

The lack of official words does pose a challenge for the European anthem, which, unless sung in the original German or in the unofficial translations, might struggle with inspiring the same fervour as text-based national hymns. Professor Caryl Clark argued in her article on the European anthem that it had become 'truly a bastard child of the Enlightenment: a song without words; hope without text'.[215] However, that the European anthem stands out among the majority of anthems does not necessarily mean it is worthless as an identity-inspiring song. During Beethoven's time, text accompanying a symphony was considered an unusual phenomenon, and some considered the Ninth Symphony the beginning of the vocalised musical drama,[216] and in our own age, movies and video games produce wordless soundtracks which inspire emotional connection depending on the circumstance – music which transcends time, space and language. For example, before Nobuo Uematsu composed the soundtrack to the 2000 PlayStation title *Final Fantasy IX* – which took place in a medieval-inspired setting – he travelled to Europe to '[look] at old castles in Germany' for inspiration. Through nothing but melody, Uematsu 'closely links medieval-style music with […] a romanticized past' with the aim of creating a sense of nostalgia for an 'idealized [era]'.[217] The music, lacking words completely, had 'been crafted to trigger a nostalgic response' for people all over the world, partially through heavy use of the Baroque harpsichord instrument. In this way, music alone, by evoking 'signifiers of the past', creates meaning and emotion even without lyrics forcing through a certain message.[218]

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[214] Ron Kuzar, 'Translating the Internationale: Unity and Dissent in the Encoding of Proletarian Solidarity,' *Journal of Pragmatics* 34, no. 2 (February 1, 2002): 88.

[215] Clark, 'Forging Identity,' 801.

[216] Nicholas Cook, *Beethoven, Symphony No. 9* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 17.

[217] K. J. Donnelly, William Gibbons, and Neil Lerner, *Music in Video Games: Studying Play* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 187–88.

[218] Donnelly, Gibbons, and Lerner, 188,194.

As one Austrian politician noted however, something seemed to be missing when everyone '[went] mute' once the anthem began playing during a ceremony. Finding the right lyrics for every EU language proves a difficult task, and Timothy Garton Ash suggested that, in the end, 'music [alone may be] a more universal language'.[219] For now, it does indeed seem like a no-lyrics anthem is the EU's best attempt to reach out to as many different peoples as possible. Even though a single German song would most likely not be welcomed by the remaining 350 million Europeans whose mother tongues do not include the words 'an die Freude', there does exist translations of the song, which means that it should be possible to add official lyrics to the anthem itself. Music is indeed a universal language, however, and is most likely the closest the EU will come to a one-size-fits-all anthem until the individual Member States can agree on, or even begin the process of, writing official national language variants.

3.3 The banal anthem?

Earlier in this chapter, I asserted that anthems typically are active symbols of identity creation. Similarly, using Michael Billigs theory on banal nationalism and the waved and unwaved flag, I argue that anthems, almost by definition, is an example of the waved flag, in that they almost universally require or seek active participation from its listeners. In this way, anthems are much less in the background and confined to the subconscious compared to the flag. However, the argument might be turned on its head with the European anthem – a song without lyrics. Much like soundtracks, songs without lyrics can appear in the background without participation from the listener, and still create familiarity with the tune. This is especially the case for the European anthem, which uses Beethoven's Ninth Symphony as its theme. As an anthem, Ode to Joy is played during EU ceremonies, but as a piece of classical music, the song is used in a myriad of places and at different times. Because the symphony is a historical product meant for no specific national audience, its lack of official anthem lyrics, and theoretical mass use, the European anthem can be categorised as something of a hybrid between the active and passive anthem, or the waved and unwaved flag. The everyday playing of Beethoven must not

[219] Brandon Mitchener, 'Silence, Please: It's Time to Sing The EU Anthem - Mr. Leitl Seeks Lyrics to Unite A Fractious Continent; `Ode to Joy' in 20 Tongues?,' *Wall Street Journal*, 2003, 1–3.

be overstated however, as classical music is – contrary to popular, modern music – not ever-present in today's life.

The anthem is, perhaps paradoxically in this first instance, 'waved' when the Austrian politician stood silent for the anthem, or when it is played at official European Union ceremonies. It is 'unwaved' however, when played elsewhere in unceremonious circumstances. For example, the European football organisation UEFA have used adapted versions of Ode to Joy before qualifying matches for the European championships in both 2016 and 2020,[220] and these are organisations separate from the EU. Undoubtedly done to signal its identification or relationship with Europe, the UEFA example shows how events outside of EU entities, such as sporting events, can be used to foster a banal European nationalism. Whether it is noticed by the general public – and if it useful at all for identity creation – is another question.

Ode to Joy is perhaps not as banal and wordless as one might think, however. Even though the official anthem remains without lyrics to express 'the European ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity'[221] in the universal language of music, the original lyrics to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony come from Schiller's poem. And even though the European anthem's official version has removed them, the lyrics are still sung from time to time, even at official events. The European anthem was played with a full orchestra at the opening ceremony to the European Capital of Culture, Aarhus, in 2017. The song featured a choir singing the original German lyrics.[222] What is more, when Croatia became the Union's 28th Member State on July 1st 2013, Ode to Joy was played to the lyrics of Schiller at the stroke of midnight,[223] with the then European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in attendance.[224] At classical music festivals, the singers are

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[220] 'UEFA Euro Qualifiers 2020,' Sitting Duck, accessed March 6, 2020, http://sittingduckmusic.com/.

[221] 'The European Anthem.'

[222] *European Anthem, Beethoven, Opening European Cultural Capital Aarhus 2017*, accessed March 6, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqwKJ_HMSWw.

[223] *Croatian EU Celebration - MIDNIGHT 01/07 - 'Ode To Joy,'* accessed March 6, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Prhmh7TNIRc.

[224] Guy Delauney, 'Croatia Celebrates on Joining EU,' *BBC News*, July 1, 2013, sec. Europe, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-23118035.

arguably of as much import as the orchestra, as when André Rieu and his Johan Strauss Orchestra performed Ode to Joy in Maastricht in 2015,[225] the birthplace of the modern European Union. Although slightly different from the official European anthem, which is only two minutes and seven seconds long, Rieu's version of Ode to Joy takes the form of the symphony, and includes the original German lyrics. These slightly longer versions (totalling around four to five minutes) are still often labeled 'European anthem' by organisers and uploaders, and clearly played in relation to the European Union. Based on the fact that the anthem is played alongside lyrics at certain official events might suggest that the EU is experiencing the emergence of an 'unofficial' anthem – and sometimes on its own accord – largely based on the original German version. Whether this will lead to a de facto – or official – anthem with lyrics is uncertain, but there is no doubt that there are options available should the EU chose to pursue the creation of an anthem including words.

The European anthem, by virtue of being a version of the final movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, most likely reaches a much wider audience than it could have if it had been some new creation. Beethoven's Ninth functions almost as a European identity creator in itself, as it has become so closely linked to Europe and the European Union. In this sense, it is a great example of banal nationalism due to it already being a part of the culture, with two centuries of history and tradition behind it, and the likelihood of the song in some shape or form being played for children in music classes, for people during sporting events, and in numerous other situations.

In contrast to many national anthems, the European anthem – even with German lyrics included – has no mention of historical events or time periods, but focuses solely on the ideal. Much like the art of the euro currency, the anthem faces the problem of inclusion and non-inclusion of Member States by favouring some over others, but attempts instead to find common ground through music alone, although the lyrics are rarely far away. In this sense, it treads the fine line Kolstø referred to when stating that national symbols can divide as much as they unite,[226] shying away from anything that can be seen as inherently single-national. But even without

[225] *André Rieu - Ode to Joy (All Men Shall Be Brothers)*, accessed March 6, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9dLGDCdg3g.

[226] Kolstø, 'National Symbols as Signs of Unity and Division,' 676.

official lyrics, the anthem has managed to become a staple of the Union, and with a civic message, it has become one of the main pillars of EU identity creation due to the universal language of music, its history, and the message inherent in the hymn – that of brotherhood among men, European Union member or not.

Chapter 4

Europe coined and minted

Two thousand years ago, the Roman Empire reigned supreme in classical Europe, North Africa and parts of the Middle East. It owed its conquests and Pax Romana largely to its strong system of government and an organised, professional army. But the Romans could not have kept tens of millions of people together with sheer force alone. The state required the trust of its citizens, its vast armies, and of its domestic and foreign traders to function properly. This trust came in the form of the Roman currency – the denarius. Its legitimacy was guaranteed by the emperor himself, as symbolised by his image on the coin.[227] The Romans put their trust in the denarius, and so did others. In fact, as Yuval Noah Harari explains it:

> The trust in Rome's coin was so strong that even outside the empire's borders, people were happy to receive payment in denarii. In

[227] Michael H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 712; Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (New York: Harper, 2015), 204.

> the first century AD, Roman coins were an accepted medium of exchange in the markets of India, even though the closest Roman legion was thousands of kilometres away.[228]

In the Middle East and India, 'denarius' became just another way of referring to coins altogether . In other words, the power of coin is potentially much greater than the weight of its precious metals.

In 1957, in the heart of what had been the capital of the imperial Roman world, six democratic European states entered the aptly named Treaty of Rome, also known as the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community. The treaty aimed to establish a 'Common Market and progressively approximating the economic policies of Member States',[229] which at the time included France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. In short, the Treaty of Rome laid the groundwork for both the implementation of the Single Market and the euro – the latter being what professor Kathryn Dominguez fittingly named European integration's 'diamond head'.[230]

This chapter examines the euro, the main currency of the European Union, focusing on the design of the physical banknotes and coins. The purpose is to find out which symbols they depict, and what this means for European identity creation. The chapter discusses other attempts at establishing common currencies, and the role of currencies in nation-building. Additionally, the chapter looks at why the euro was implemented, including economic and political reasons, and picks apart its design to determine whether the currency is meant to foster a civic or an ethnic nationalism. It highlights in particular Benedict Anderson's theory of imagined communities, but also considers Ronald Inglehart's cultural shift theory as it relates to the changing iconography of money.

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[228] Harari, *Sapiens*, 205.

[229] 'Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community (Rome, 25 March 1957),' CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, November 9, 2015, 4, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/treaty_establishing_the_european_economic_community_rome_25_march_1957-en-cca6ba28-0bf3-4ce6-8a76-6b0b3252696e.html.

[230] Chris. Mulhearn, *The Euro: Its Origins, Development and Prospects* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2008), 3.

4.1 A common currency

When the euro entered circulation as a physical currency of coins and bills in 2002, it had been close to two thousand years since a common currency had existed on this scale in Europe. The denarius could be exchanged and traded all over the Roman Empire, from the provinces in Britain and Portugal in the west to those in Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria in the east. When the euro was introduced in 2002, it did so on the 750th anniversary of the introduction of the Florentine florin in 1252, a currency which – although one of many at the time– truly brought the gold coin back to the continent after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. The florin became something of a universal currency[231] in the Middle Ages due to its trusted value before it was eventually replaced by the Venetian ducat in the late fourteenth century, but these were currencies more akin to 'international [currencies] *par excellence*'[232], like the modern American dollar, rather than euro-type single currencies. Attempts were later made at creating lasting monetary unions between European states, such as the Latin Monetary Union between France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy (1865-1927), or the Scandinavian Monetary Union consisting of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark (1873-1924). Contrary to developments in Italy or Germany during the 19th century however, monetary integration in these unions was not followed by political integration.[233]

As Otmar Issing, former Chief Economist and Member of the Board at the European Central Bank tells it, '[a] common currency went hand in hand with political union under the Pax Romana'.[234] For the European Union, the hope was that the euro would become one of the main drivers of further European integration. It was the Maastricht Treaty of 1991, the Treaty on European Union, which established the European Central Bank and paved the way for the euro. The primary goal of such a bank was to ensure

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[231] William Arthur Shaw, *The History of Currency, 1252-1894* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1896), 1, 11.

[232] Jere L. Bacharach, 'The Dinar Versus the Ducat,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, no. 1 (1973): 77.

[233] Lars Jonung and Michael D. Bordo, *Lessons for EMU from the History of Monetary Unions* (London: The Institute of Economic Affairs, 2000), 23–26, 26–30.

[234] Otmar Issing, *The Birth of the Euro* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 4.

price stability[235], in other words, something that could create trust in its currency and by extension, the EU itself. The euro symbolised one of the clearest changes in financial and political post-war Europe. By the time physical euro bills entered circulation on January 1, 2002, twelve European governments with a combined population of well over 300 million people had agreed to let their individual currencies – among them the French franc, German mark and Italian lira – drift into the annals of history and embrace the equally revolutionary and ancient reality of a common currency in Europe.

4.2 Defining and creating a social group

The euro did not serve simply as yet another currency, however. Economists and academics assessed the positive and negative effects of moving from a multi-currency Europe to a single one. In 1994, five years before the implementation of the European Currency Unit, two such financial historians and political scientists – Barry Eichengreen and Jeffrey Frieden – held that, 'neither economic theory nor economic evidence provides a clear case for or against monetary unification. The direct economic benefits of monetary unification are likely to be relatively small, and may or may not be dominated by the costs'.[236] Thus, due to the lack of financial justification for the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the two economists concluded that, 'events in Europe are being driven mainly by political factors'.[237]

The belief that the EMU would have a limited effect was based on several arguments. First, that conversion rates were so small to begin with, meaning that replacing twelve national moneys with one would not reap the great rewards some were hoping for, in part due to evidence suggesting that 'exchange rate variability and uncertainty are only small effects on

[235] Geoffrey Garrett, 'The Politics of Maastricht,' in *The Political Economy of European Monetary Unification*, ed. Barry Eichengreen and Jeffry A. Frieden (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), 47.

[236] Barry Eichengreen and Jeffry A. Frieden, 'The Political Economy of European Monetary Unification: An Analytical Introduction,' in *The Political Economy of European Monetary Unification* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 5.

[237] Eichengreen and Frieden, 'The Political Economy of European Monetary Unification,' 1994.

trade and investment'. Second, that integration could introduce larger economic costs associated with the loss of policy autonomy.[238] In an academic article published 23 years later in the aftermath of the European debt crisis, Eichengreen postulates that 'however uncomfortable and disruptive life might be within the […] monetary union, the transition back to national currencies would be more uncomfortable and disruptive still', while arguing that the Eurozone 'suffers from chronically slow growth, chronically weak banks, and chronically heavy debts[,] […] further weakened by chronically fractious politics'.[239]

Here we can refer to Robert Mundell's theory on optimum currency areas[240] (complemented later by Ronald McKinnon[241] and Peter Kenen[242]). The theory addresses the question of when a country would benefit from joining a currency union, arguing that the country in question must weigh economic stability loss (from losing its national monetary policy) against the monetary efficiency gain (from increased competitiveness) of a single currency.[243] Adding to this, Richard Baldwin and Charles Wyplosz[244] stress the importance of economic integration in the case of currency unions, arguing that forfeiting one's national monetary policy may become

[238] Lisa L. Martin, 'International and Domestic Institutions in the EMU Process,' in *The Political Economy of European Monetary Unification*, ed. Barry Eichengreen and Jeffry A. Frieden (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 89–90.

[239] Barry Eichengreen, 'How the Euro Crisis Ends: Not with a Bang but a Whimper,' *Journal of Policy Modeling*, When Will the Crisis End in the Eurozone and Emerging Markets?, 37, no. 3 (May 1, 2015): 415.

[240] Robert A. Mundell, 'A Theory of Optimum Currency Areas,' *The American Economic Review* 51, no. 4 (1961): 657–65.

[241] Ronald Ian McKinnon, 'Optimum Currency Areas,' *The American Economic Review* 53, no. 4 (1963): 717–25.

[242] Peter Bain Kenen, 'The Theory of Optimum Currency Areas: An Eclectic View,' in *Monetary Problems of the International Economy*, ed. Robert A Mundell and A Swoboda (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 41–60.

[243] Kurt A. Hafner and Jennifer Jager, 'The Optimum Currency Area Theory and the EMU,' *Intereconomics* 2013, no. 5 (2013): 315.

[244] Richard Baldwin and Charles Wyplosz, *The Economics of European Integration*, 4th ed. (London: McGraw-Hill, 2012).

a major issue if poorer Member States are hit by asymmetrical macroeconomic shocks.[245] This is precisely what happened during the European debt crisis when southern Member States like Greece were hit harder by the macroeconomic shocks by the 2007-2008 global financial crisis than their northern counterparts, in addition to the country's undisclosed budget deficit.[246] However, Robert Mundell himself argued in 1970 for a single currency in Europe, stating that 'economic arguments favour a European money'. He listed five reasons:

> (i) [T]he pecuniary gains to Europe from the reserve saving; (ii) the protection from further expansion of the dollar; (iii) the increase in control over the European money supply; (iv) the recovery of seigniorage to Europe; and (v) a new instrument to correct the U.S. balance of payments.[247]

The complete history of the Eurozone is not yet written, but Eichengreen and Frieden were most likely correct when they suggested that political reasons weighed heavily on the matter of the euro's introduction. In many respects, its implementation was indeed a highly political event. Traders all over the world could now buy and sell euros, and importers and exporters could use the same currency in a market much larger than any of the previous currencies could offer by themselves.

Perhaps more importantly, the euro meant that the citizens of the Eurozone now had a piece of the European project they could actually hold and feel; stone cold proof that the European Union was a fact of life. With the implementation of the euro, Europe did not just exist flying on top of government buildings or in some faraway institution. It could be found anywhere, whether you were buying groceries or paying for a video game. Ordinary Germans would never again have to think about exchange rates when travelling to France, and a Greek businessman could

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[245] Hafner and Jager, 'The Optimum Currency Area Theory and the EMU,' 315.

[246] Mark Copelovitch, Jeffry Frieden, and Stefanie Walter, 'The Political Economy of the Euro Crisis,' *Comparative Political Studies* 49, no. 7 (2016): 814.

[247] Robert A. Mundell, 'A Plan for a European Currency,' in *The Economics of Common Currencies (Collected Works of Harry Johnson): Proceedings of the Madrid Conference on Optimum Currency Areas*, ed. Harry G. Johnson and Alexander K. Swoboda, Collected Works of Harry G. Johnson (London: Taylor and Francis, 1973), 143–77.

easily use the same bills in Athens as he had done at his workplace in Rome. In other words, Europe became something physical. The euro was meant to connect the people using it, creating stronger bonds between peoples of different nationalities and a sense that even if you travelled abroad, you were still at home. In this way, currency becomes 'not only a means of exchange, but also a means for defining a social group'.[248]

My argument for the euro as an identity creator is based on three points. First, money is surely present in the everyday lives of citizens much more so than other symbols of identity creation such as flags or anthems. The symbolic value of coins or bills, filled as they are with symbols and national imagery, therefore lends itself well to Michael Billig's banal nationalism. Furthermore, a text from the Digital Research in European Studies website (CVCE), states in the same vein that '[m]oney talks, and its message is federating, as it is the lowest common denominator of the group using it. This makes it a highly effective and important instrument of identity […]'.[249] This notion is also reflected in a study on the mainstream media commentary on the introduction of the euro in Italy between December 2001 and January 2002: 'The whole debate was framed in historical terms and the new currency was seen as a symbol of unity and strength of the European Union – which in this case was defined as tantamount to Europe'.[250]

Second, it is clear that the European Union sees a common currency as a step towards further integration, as well as an identity shaper. The preamble of Treaty on European Union refers to a single currency as something which will 'promote economic and social progress', which comes before Title I Article I, which states that '[t]his Treaty marks a new stage in the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe'.[251] This suggests that economic integration will lead to political integration in the pursuit of an 'ever closer union', an idea which has existed since at

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[248] Sassatelli, 'Europe in Your Pocket,' 356.

[249] 'The Currency of the European Union,' CVCE.EU by UNI.LU (CVCE.EU by UNI.LU, July 7, 2016), 2, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/the_currency_of_the_european_union-en-de0d4ede-f55d-4610-b666-8ac20af880ab.html.

[250] Anna Triandafyllidou, 'Research Note. The Launch of the Euro in the Italian Media: Representations of Political and Economic Integration,' *European Journal of Communication* 18, no. 2 (June 1, 2003): 259–60.

[251] 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union,' 326/15, 326/16.

least as early as the 1950s when Jacques Reff, an advisor to French President Charles de Gaulle, was quoted as saying 'Europe will be made through a currency, or it will not be made'.[252] In 2008, the European Commission stated in a communication to the other EU institutions that '[t]he single currency has become a symbol of Europe, considered by euro-area citizens to be amongst the most positive results of European integration'.[253] The Commission further declares on its website that one of the benefits of the euro is that it functions as 'a tangible sign of a European identity'.[254] Former Chief Economist at the European Central Bank, Otmar Issing, argued in 2000 that monetary union in Europe worked 'as an unstoppable engine for political unity', and wrote of the euro as a 'clear political testimony'.[255] Robert Mundell, sometimes referred to as 'Father of the euro' for his role in laying its foundation,[256] argued in the 1970s that 'a European money would represent a strong step in the direction of European integration. The case for a European money is therefore tied up with the case for integration'.[257]

Third, the effects of the euro on the European Union system as a whole. Tanja A. Börzel recalls how in order to prevent the breakdown of the Eurozone during the crisis beginning in 2009:

> [T]he euro countries established a whole set of supranational institutions which constitute the most far-reaching deepening of European integration since the creation of the EMU in 1999 – without even touching the Treaties. […] the Fiscal Compact, the European

[252] David Marsh, *The Euro: The Politics of the New Global Currency* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 15.

[253] 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Central Bank' (OPOCE, May 7, 2008), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52008DC0238&from=HR.

[254] 'The Benefits of the Euro,' European Commission, accessed April 22, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/euro-area/benefits-euro_en.

[255] Otmar Issing, 'Europe: Common Money – Political Union?,' *Economic Affairs* 20, no. 1 (2000): 33, 34.

[256] Richard Carter, ''Father of the Euro' Calls for Global Currency,' EUobserver, January 5, 2004, https://euobserver.com/economic/13988.

[257] Mundell, 'A Plan for a European Currency,' 167.

> Stability Mechanism, the Banking Union, the Macro-economic Imbalance Mechanism, and the European Semester reinforce supranational centralization and inter- and transgovernmental co-ordination.[258]

In other words, the euro has led to further political integration in the EU, albeit only after a massive crisis, as argued by Erik Jones, R. Daniel Keleman and Sophie Meunier. They ask whether the EU is 'failing forward' in a 'sequential cycle of piecemeal reform, followed by policy failure, followed by further reform [which has] managed to sustain both the European project and the common currency'.[259] Despite the progress, there is nevertheless a clear risk attached to such a piecemeal integration process, namely that 'the perception that the EU is constantly in crisis is undermining popular support for European integration and the credibility of the EU on the world stage'. Wilfried Loth shares this sentiment when stating that 'crises have been a constant accompaniment to the emergence and development of the European Union'.[260] This does not, however, change the fact that the euro has led to further systematic integration among its members.

4.3 Inspired by reality

This is where the symbolism of the euro comes in. It was no easy task designing a currency for a people and a community which did not truly exist within the same state. When seeking help, lawmakers drew guidelines for how they imagined the coin should look like. The artists could in the end choose between two distinct themes. The first was 'Ages and Styles of Europe', meant to take inspiration from European history. The second became 'Abstract/modern design'. The former theme eventually won, with the winning design by Austrian Robert Kalina chosen by a combination of

[258] Tanja A. Börzel, 'From EU Governance of Crisis to Crisis of EU Governance: Regulatory Failure, Redistributive Conflict and Eurosceptic Publics,' *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 54, no. S1 (2016): 12–13.

[259] Erik Jones, R. Daniel Kelemen, and Sophie Meunier, 'Failing Forward? The Euro Crisis and the Incomplete Nature of European Integration,' *Comparative Political Studies* 49, no. 7 (June 1, 2016): 1010.

[260] Wilfried Loth, *Building Europe: A History of European Unification*, *Building Europe* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2015), 433.

both a jury ranking and a public opinion poll.[261] It was of vital necessity for the ECB that the euro banknotes had a European 'look' to them, as opposed to that of individual nations. This meant that there could be no faces of national icons, since this might trigger both divisions and accusations of national partiality or gender biases. The same went for the name of the currency. Different suggestions rooted in history were offered, among them the famous 'ducat' and 'florin', or the hybrid 'euromark' or the 'European currency unit/ecu'. The European Council eventually decided that the national connotations made them unfit for a common currency, because the euro needed to check two vital boxes: the name had to be the same in all official languages while being compatible with different alphabets and pronunciations. It also had to be 'simple and representative' of Europe as a whole.[262] Thus, if Shakespeare were to comment on the euro, he might have stated something like, 'What's in a name? That which we call the euro, by any other name would probably not unite or create as tight a bond'.

Robert Kalina's take on the euro's design is no coincidence either. Indeed, the euro could not even depict actual historical or otherwise famous buildings for the same reason of foreseen future accusations of national bias.[263] As such, the euro bills depict images of bridges, open passageways and windows which look like real-life structures, but none of which actually are. Additionally, the map of Europe embraced by the twelve stars of the European Union flag is displayed on the back of all bills, accompanied by other symbolic features like the flag of the EU, the euro symbol, and the signature of the President of the European Central Bank. All of which, when combined, is designed to evoke a feeling of trust, familiarity and belonging with the wider European project.

Despite the lack of any historical figures or existing structures, the euro is a remarkably historically conscious item. If you are in possession of a €5

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[261] European Central Bank, *How the Euro Became Our Money: A Short History of the Euro Banknotes and Coins* (European Central Bank, 2007), 23.

[262] European Central Bank, 10.

[263] Oriane Calligaro, *Negotiating Europe: EU Promotion of Europeanness since the 1950s*, First edition., Europe in Transition: The NYU European Studies Series (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 158.

and a €50 bill, you will in fact not be looking at the same bridges and passageways. Rather, they will be radically different due to the nature of the euro's design philosophy. From the smallest to the largest amount, the euro displays structures and architecture from varying historical epochs, starting with the classical period, travelling through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the age of 'iron and glass', and ultimately ending in the twentieth century.[264] The variety of structures from different time periods is a vital component in creating a shared sense of identity. Roman architecture was left behind in both Spain and Bulgaria – not just Italy – and the baroque period left its mark on most of Europe instead of being confined solely within French borders. Kalina himself commented in an interview with British *The Telegraph* in the charmingly named article, 'Euro designer wants to run away' (Kalina was going on holiday outside of Europe) that, 'I decided on windows and archways, open ones to suggest looking toward the future, and bridges to symbolise communication and connection. You can find these motifs anywhere in Europe'.[265] This statement echoes, or rather has been adopted by official EU rhetoric which affirms that, 'windows and doors represent the European spirit of openness, whereas bridges symbolise the close cooperation and communication between European peoples, and between Europe and the rest of the world'.[266]

4.4 Changing sources of legitimacy

Some commentators found this theme too vague. Matthias Kaelberer argued that the euro banknotes' design 'is anonymous and abstract' due to the depiction of architectural styles rather than existing buildings.[267] Eric Helleiner wrote that it 'would be difficult to argue that […] the imagery on the euro has been designed in a way that is meant to foster a strong sense of common European identity', referring to the symbolic bridges and archways as opposed to 'images of common history, landscapes, or

[264] Sassatelli, 'Europe in Your Pocket,' 358.

[265] Michael Leidig, 'Euro Designer Wants to Run Away,' *The Telegraph*, August 4, 2001, sec. World, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1336471/Euro-designer-wants-to-run-away.html.

[266] Sassatelli, 'Europe in Your Pocket,' 358.

[267] Matthias Kaelberer, 'The Euro and European Identity: Symbols, Power and the Politics of European Monetary Union,' *Review of International Studies* 30, no. 2 (April 2004): 168.

culture of the kind that is found on most national banknotes'.[268] Françoise Gaillard lamented the euro's lack of meaning, arguing for the absence of genuinely European collective memories.[269] Fareed Zakaria commented that '[t]he currency looks like it has been designed for a *Star Trek* episode about some culturally denuded land on Mars—not for the home of Socrates, Charlemagne, Martin Luther, Notre Dame, the Uffizi, Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart'.[270] These observations are partly correct, for the most part in that there are no national figures on the banknotes. But 'culturally denuded'?

As Ronald Ingleheart's research on the historical developments of societies tells us, as with currency, societies change and shift from one source of legitimacy to another.[271] Money is often a reflection of the society in which it exists. Therefore, the design of banknotes has similarly never been fixed on a singular design formulation in the age of central banks. The varying motifs can be explained, as relayed by Jacques Hymans, by 'an overall trend toward an ideology of equality, or […] the dispersion of legitimate social power and initiative—from the state to society, and then to the individual'.[272] This is a so-called 'cultural shift' theory, arguing that the ideas and values of societies change with the passage of time, and that they have 'risen and fallen internationally'[273]. Hymans continued the research on currency and created a database on European currencies' different design themes. He found that before 1920, the state dominated currency design, followed by a shift towards the society in the interwar period, before it took a sharp turn towards individuals and non-state actors

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[268] Eric Helleiner, *The Making of National Money: Territorial Currencies in Historical Perspective* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 239.

[269] Françoise Gaillard, 'Which Europe?' (France in Europe - Europe in France, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies: Harvard University, 1999).

[270] Fareed Zakaria, 'Money for Mars,' *Newsweek*, January 11, 1999.

[271] Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1997), 39.

[272] Jacques E. C. Hymans, 'Money for Mars? The Euro Banknotes and European Identity,' in *The Year of the Euro: The Cultural, Social, and Political Import of Europe's Common Currency*, ed. Robert M. Fishman and Anthony M. Messina (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 16.

[273] Hymans, 'The Changing Color of Money,' 8.

after 1980. Hymans added in 2004 that European values were experiencing fundamental upheaval, and that it is necessary for entrepreneurs of European identity to adjust to this fact.[274]

It is interesting to note that the new banknote series for the Norwegian krone released and completed by the Bank of Norway in 2019 utilises a more or less similar design philosophy as the euro. Gone are faces of Norwegian writers and physicists, replaced instead by images of a lighthouse, a Viking ship, a cod, an early 1900's rescue ship, and a lone wave in the ocean. These are all abstract ways of relating to Norwegian culture and history, comparable to the design of the euro. The distinction is of course that these motifs are specifically meant to first and foremost appeal to a much smaller user base and community (Norway versus the entirety of Europe). But they nevertheless appear similar in their abstract design, and the official explanation from the Bank of Norway on what the banknotes show mimic, to some degree, the tone set by the European Central Bank. The ECB explains how the banknotes' 'windows and doorways […] symbolise the European spirit of openness and cooperation'.[275] On the other hand, the Bank of Norway writes in the case of the 1,000 NOK banknote, that 'the wave tells us about the sea, of a counterforce which hones us, and of a force which moves us forward', after which we are told about the importance of the sea in Norwegian history.[276] In this way, while the euro was 'born into' this abstract design philosophy, the Norwegian krone moved or 'culturally shifted' into it, having evolved from depicting the king and coat of arms,[277] to politicians, to writers, explorers and scientists,[278] and finally to displaying historical and natural elements relevant to Norway. Both of these banknote series are examples of new ways of

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[274] Hymans, 13, 24.

[275] 'Design Elements,' European Central Bank, accessed April 27, 2020, https://www.ecb.europa.eu/euro/banknotes/design/html/index.en.html.

[276] 'Motivene på 1000-kroneseddelen (The motifs of the 1000 krone banknote),' Norges Bank, October 23, 2019, https://www.norges-bank.no/tema/Sedler-og-mynter/Ny-seddelserie/Ny-1000-kroneseddel/ny-1000-beskrivelse/.

[277] 'Sedler 1877-1901 (utgave I),' Norges Bank, January 26, 2006, https://www.norges-bank.no/tema/Sedler-og-mynter/utgaatte-sedler-mynter/Utgave-I/.

[278] 'Sedler 1962-1987 (utgave V),' Norges Bank, January 26, 2006, https://www.norges-bank.no/tema/Sedler-og-mynter/utgaatte-sedler-mynter/Sedler-Utgave-V/.

interpreting and displaying cultural heritage, proving that culture consists of more than just historical 'great' men and women.

4.5 Imagined communities

The euro is important to the European project because it attempts to both define and create a social group. Where the borders of Europe go can be argued one way or another, because Europe is at the same time both a geographical, cultural, religious and political phenomenon.[279] But if you own euros, get payed in euros and pay with euros, surely you must find yourself in Europe.

The story of the European Union is the story of a community in the making. Europe itself, along with the notion of 'Europeanness', can be described as an 'imagined community'. '[The nation] is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.'[280] One can safely conclude that a Chinese citizen will never get to befriend every person carrying the similarly designed passport as she does. But even the same is true for a person in a comparatively much smaller community like the United States, or even Norway. Even an inhabitant of the city of Oslo will most likely never meet and share a worthwhile moment to remember with every single member of their city district, let alone every 'Oslonian'.

That the euro is a tool meant to aid with the reconfiguration of the imagined communities of Europe, i.e. turning Spaniards and Dutchmen into Europeans, is not a new phenomenon. Beginning in the 19th century, creating a national currency was closely linked with the endeavour of building a nation[281]. An item which everyone must use in order to survive, can easily be manipulated to send messages its creators wish to be spread. Bills could be adorned with symbols and images, evoking nationalist feelings

[279] J. G. A. Pocock, 'Some Europes in Their History,' in *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 55–71.

[280] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

[281] Eric Helleiner, 'National Currencies and National Identities,' *American Behavioral Scientist* 41, no. 10 (August 1, 1998): 1410.

and a sense of shared experiences. Perhaps most importantly, however, money in the 19th century became standardised. One example is pre-civil war United States, where Eric Helleiner puts the number of different types of banknotes at a staggering 7000.[282] Like the formalisation of language itself, money would become the standardised transactional language of the nation.[283]

Like Fareed Zakaria who criticised the euro for lacking substance and examples of great European figures from history, much of the criticism aimed at the currency stems from this very idea of a lack of real historical anchoring. True, the euro banknotes feature no Caesar Augustus, Leonardo Da Vinci, or Robert Schuman, but this criticism fails to consider three major points. First, the visual imagery of banknotes changes over time. It mirrors the society and culture in which it exists, which is why emperors could be seen to give legitimacy to gold coins in the Roman Empire, and why states did the same in the 19th century. In 10 A.D, you owed your loyalty to the emperor. In 1890, you owed it to the state and government.

Second, while it might make sense for French franc banknotes to feature Gustave Eiffel, an image of the man who built the eponymous Parisian tower will probably fail to resonate with the citizens of Thessaloniki, Barcelona, Florence, or Salzburg. As Hymans' research shows, it was only in the latter part of the twentieth century that images of non-state persons truly began to circulate on national currencies.[284] Concurrently, this was a period of peace between the European great powers after two horrific world wars, and individuals came to represent the nation in a more forward-looking manner. According to Hymans, in the period before 1920, European money often depicted mythical female symbols of states before the period 1920-1949, when materialist depictions of society became more common. In the years between 1950 and 1979, banknotes began more and more to pay tribute to 'individual contributors to high culture', until 1980 to present day, where 'there is continuing change in the *types* of cultural achievers that are depicted'. However, Hymans adds that the past decades

[282] Eric Helleiner, 'Historicizing Territorial Currencies: Monetary Space and the Nation-State in North America,' *Political Geography* 18, no. 3 (March 1, 1999): 320.

[283] Helleiner, 'National Currencies and National Identities,' 1411–12.

[284] Hymans, 'The Changing Color of Money,' 13.

have seen the emergence of a postmodern approach to currency iconography.[285] Since postmodernism 'rejects cultural "author/ity" in favor of a radical democratic vision of author and reader *jointly* producing the meaning of "text"', it follows that a 'postmodern currency design' 'would therefore offer something rather abstract and open to multiple interpretations, enticing the citizen-consumer to identify with and, indeed, to form his or her own vision of community'.[286]

Additionally, the states of Europe were much more consolidated in the 1900s than they had been for most of the 1800s. Italy only became a nation in 1870, with Germany following suit a year later. Nation-building takes time, and states in the pre-war era tended to favour minting and printing images of 'harder' rather than 'softer' images and symbols. After all, the king or head of state was a symbol of power most people in a nation had a relationship with one way or another. But an artist whose painting was something you could not afford to admire up close, in a region you had never visited? Perhaps not so much.

Lastly, the European project, of which the euro is a part, has as one of its most vital commitments to create an imagined community. Its purpose is to find common ground between not only those who are of Spanish and German nationality, but between Spanish and German speakers as well, to in a sense foster a new supra-national nationality. The issue of nationality and belonging is multi-layered because there are so many factors determining one's own imagined community. Additionally, the process of nation-building on the continent has historically often involved an effort from the state or societal elite to make people affiliated with one nation and often one nation only, that their history is linked with that of their state and people, potentially making it more difficult to bridge the gaps between sometimes rivalling senses of belonging. For example, in post-war Austria, history was often used to create distinctions between Austrians and Germans in order to manufacture an Austrian nation separated from a German one. This Austrian national ideology preached that 'Austria and the Austrians had never been part of Germany or the German

[285] Hymans, 15.

[286] Hymans, 21.

nation', tracing Austrian distinctness to the Middle Ages, included religious differences which highlighted Catholic Austria versus Protestant Germany, and argued that Austria had been annexed by Nazi Germany against its will in 1938.[287]

Similarly, even though Norway is neither in the Eurozone nor in the EU, the euro includes the geographical territory of Norway in its map of Europe, and Norway is eligible to become a member of the Union despite twice having turned down the opportunity to do so. Perhaps this can in part be explained by the sense of nationhood in Norway, the kind which a project like the EU almost demands to be forgotten, like Robert Schuman described in his declaration: '[t]he coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany'.[288] Norwegian nationalism in the 19th century largely based itself on opposition to Sweden and Denmark, while it took advantage of national symbols and traditions, like celebrating the Norwegian Constitution to mark Norway's separateness from its 'others'.[289] Of great importance was the establishment of national symbols, myths, and language, with history focusing on the framing of a national destiny and identity unique to Norwegians.[290]

The nation itself is an imagined community – a manufactured community at that – and extending it to a European supranational level is arguably, when it comes down to it, just another attempt at nation-building. Attila Demeter argues that '[n]ational identity was "created" […] by "separating" the individuals from their earlier particular forms of identity […] [and reuniting them] under the nation as the most comprehensive form of political community'. As such, Demeter postulates that there is no 'theoretical hindrance' to once again separate the individual from their current form of national identity, 'and reuniting them in the supranational nation

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[287] Peter Thaler, 'National History: National Imagery: The Role of History in Postwar Austrian Nation-Building,' *Central European History* 32, no. 3 (1999): 280.

[288] Robert Schuman, 'The Schuman Declaration,' European Union, May 9, 1950, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration_en.

[289] Gabriella Elgenius, 'The Politics of Recognition: Symbols, Nation Building and Rival Nationalisms,' *Nations and Nationalism* 17, no. 2 (2011): 398.

[290] Øyvind Østerud, *Det Moderne Statssystem og andre Politisk-Historiske Studier*, *Norbok* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1987), 54.

encompassing all the citizens of Europe'.[291] The euro must therefore reflect this, and pinpoint where there is common ground and shared cultural and historical memories.

4.6 Two sides of the same coin

Where the Kingdom of Italy in the 19th century attempted to build an Italian nation and create bonds between Venetians and Florentines, and Romans and Sicilians, the European Union must forge them between Italians and Frenchmen. This is why the euro banknotes depict bridges and other architecture based on major European time periods and events. As of 2020, every single English pound banknote displays the queen on the obverse side (front) and famous British individuals and buildings on the reverse (rear),[292] but their notable characteristic is the time period the bills are confined to. The iconography of the English pound spans over 200 years, depicting individuals and buildings from the Industrial Revolution to the middle of the 19th century. The euro, on the other hand, takes us on a journey through history, displaying a potential 2000 years of history, and declares to all Europeans: You were here all along. Despite what some might see as an 'anonymous and abstract'[293] design, the euro must almost by definition rely on such images to produce a product most people can stand behind and relate to. The Roman bridge becomes not only a historical reference, but also a connector between two points of interest. The bridges of the euro connect the past with the future. The same goes for the archways and open windows, only their openness speaks of an undetermined future where anything is possible. One could interpret it as a language of its own, with every bill telling the story of 'this is how we got here, but the future is for you to decide'.

Of course, the banknotes do not tell the whole story. The euro is also made up of coins, eight different ones, from the 1 cent to the €2 coin. What differentiates the coins from the bills, is that the former offer both a national and a European side to them. The coins generally display a total of three distinct national images. One for the 1, 2 and 5 euro cents, another for the

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[291] Demeter, 'The European Nation?,' 114.

[292] 'Current Banknotes,' Bank of England, March 21, 2019, http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/current-banknotes.

[293] Kaelberer, 'The Euro and European Identity,' 168.

10, 20 and 50 euro cents, and a third for the €1 and €2. Thus, whereas the banknotes tell the collective story of Europe in a more abstract way, the coins offer a link between the individual nation and the Union in a more traditional sense. It is a rare thing for a currency to be so diversified, but the coins are further proof that the euro is a product of the modern era. The Cypriot 50 euro cent displays a classical trading ship, the Finnish coin depicts the traditional Finnish heraldic lion, and in Slovenia, you can spot the local Triglav mountain on the national side.[294] Despite being one currency, the euro manages to tell stories from its unique regions while gathering them together in a shared book of histories.

A fascinating side to this story is the fact that even though the French euro coins first and foremost are meant to let the French connect with Europe, we can most likely find French euros all over the Eurozone. As more and more time goes on and more people travel and leave behind their 'national' coins, the more common it will be to find Greek euros in Spain, Slovakian euros in Italy, and Maltese euros in Belgium. A study conducted by the Euro Spatial Diffusion Observatory in France over the scope of ten years between 2002-2012, totalling around 20,000 respondents and 300,000 coins, gives credence to the idea of a mixing of national and foreign euro coins. From March 2002 to December 2011, the proportion of foreign euro coins circulating in France had risen from 5 per cent to 34 per cent. At the same time, the proportion of surveyed individuals whose wallet carried at least one foreign euro coin rose from 24 per cent in 2002, to 89 per cent in late 2011. Distance from national borders, cross-border movements, commuting between cities for work purposes, and the movement of tourists all contribute to the spread of certain types of euro coins.[295] Because of this phenomenon of intra-European movement of coins, the euro becomes not only a static item, but a living object which in its own right is a symbol of the inter-connection between the peoples of Europe. The euro coin evolves from being a currency adorned with symbols, to become the very symbol of European integration itself.

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[294] '50 Cent,' European Central Bank, 2019, https://www.ecb.europa.eu/euro/coins/50cents/html/index.en.html.

[295] C. Grasland et al., 'Diffusion of Foreign Euro Coins in France, 2002-2012,' *Population and Societies*, no. 488 (April 2012): 1, 4.

4.7 Uncertain future, yet strong support

Thus far, this chapter has largely avoided dealing with the economic sides of the euro currency, due to the focus on symbolism in this report . However, since the euro as a symbol of identity creation is linked to the banknotes and coins, which are reliant on the currency, it is necessary to discuss popular opinion of the latter. The euro is relatively new in terms of European Union achievements, but the currency itself, known as the European Currency Unit (ECU) before becoming the euro, came into use before it became a physical money. Monetary integration in Europe can be traced back to 1978, when the European Council established the European Monetary System (EMS), and with it, the ECU. The EMS was not a single currency in itself, but an exchange rate regime which aimed to promote closer monetary policy cooperation between the various central banks of the European Community's Member States in order to lay the foundation for monetary stability. It did so by offering 'stable but adjustable exchange rates' defined by the ECU, which was 'a currency basket based on a weighted average of EMS currencies'.[296] The ECU was a purely electronic unit with no physical currency attached to it, with one of its main objectives being the ability to make foreign diversification possible without relying on the currency of a single country.[297] The ECU was replaced by the euro on a 1:1 basis on 1 January 1999 as a means to pay with cheques, bank transfers or card payments, but did not become a physical currency and legal tender until 1 January 2002.[298]

The euro as a single currency was in part intended to create monetary harmony amongst its members, as exemplified by the irrevocable conversion rate fixing between the euro and the individual currencies of the EU Member States.[299] It goes without saying that the euro is much more than a

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[296] 'Glossary: European Monetary System (EMS) - Statistics Explained,' Eurostat, August 2, 2013, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary: European_Monetary_System_(EMS).

[297] 'Glossary: European Currency Unit (ECU) - Statistics Explained,' Eurostat, May 24, 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:European_currency_unit_%28ECU%29.

[298] 'Glossary: Euro - Statistics Explained,' Eurostat, December 19, 2014, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Euro.

[299] Issing, *The Birth of the Euro*, 20.

symbolic item meant to foster a European identity, and purely economic elements seem to have factored in when Europeans from different countries were surveyed on the new currency. As a rule, citizens of countries whose currency had experienced successive periods of high inflation were more positive to a potential euro currency, as in Italy (in 1995, 68 per cent were for the euro with only 10 per cent against), while citizens of countries with a relatively stable currency, like Germany's, were less enthusiastic (same survey, 34 per cent for, 45 per cent against).[300] Otmar Issing suggested that Germans' trust in their currency and central bank had a historical dimension to it, arguing that the importance of monetary stability and the people's high regard for the Bundesbank were born out of the memory of hyperinflation in the first part of the century.[301]

Support for the single currency rely on several others factors as well, however. Adrian Favell argues that so-called 'Eurostars' – European citizens who are both highly educated and live and work in another EU country – are the most likely demographic to be supportive of the single currency.[302] Jeffry Frieden asserted that individuals employed in the public and export sector, international trade and banking, as well as those working for multinational corporations, were also more likely to favour a common currency.[303] This opinion is made more probable if the individual harbours at least diffuse support[304] for the EU as a whole.[305] As such, support for the a

[300] 'Standard Eurobarometer 44,' European Commission, April 1996, 49, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/1416.

[301] Issing, *The Birth of the Euro*, 22.

[302] Adrian Favell, *Eurostars and Eurocities: Free Movement and Mobility in an Integrating Europe* (Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2008).

[303] Jeffry A. Frieden, 'Invested Interests: The Politics of National Economic Policies in a World of Global Finance,' *International Organization* 45, no. 4 (1991): 425–51; Jeffry A. Frieden, 'Making Commitments: France and Italy in the European Monetary System, 1979-1985,' in *The Political Economy of European Monetary Unification*, ed. Barry Eichengreen and Jeffry A. Frieden (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994), 23–47.

[304] David Easton, 'A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support,' *British Journal of Political Science* 5, no. 4 (1975): 435–57.

[305] Susan A. Banducci, Effrey A. Karp, and Peter H. Loedel, 'The Euro, Economic Interests and Multi-Level Governance: Examining Support for the Common Currency,' *European Journal of Political Research* 42, no. 5 (2003): 685–703.

common currency in Europe is dependent on a myriad of factors related to age, education, occupation, and political affiliation, with Matthew Gabel finding that individuals from higher income backgrounds, from skilled professions, the highly educated, and those favouring a bourgeois party were more likely to support European integration than those on the other end of the respective scales.[306]

Before its arrival, some economists, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, doubted the single currency would bring any economic benefits at all. With the financial crisis in 2008 and the subsequent Greek debt crisis which threatened to undo the Eurozone itself, the euro currency saw its worst days yet. The system set in place was not prepared for a financial shock of such a magnitude, and around 2010, the end seemed near. But the euro bounced back, and the EU created new institutions to counter sovereign debt issues, namely the European Stability Mechanism.[307]

What the future holds is uncertain. During the Greek debt crisis, many speculated that Greece might be forced to leave the Eurozone. The same went for Italy when the Italians voted in a populist government in 2018,[308] and for France before Emmanuel Macron was elected instead of Eurosceptic Marine Le Pen. Indeed, few Eurozone countries – at least in the south of Europe – are safe from similar speculations. But as of 2019, none of these fears have come to pass. European leaders have managed to come together to save the euro time and time again, sometimes only in the very last second and by uttering words of confidence like those of the President of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, in 2012: 'Within our mandate, the

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[306] Matthew Gabel, 'Public Support for European Integration: An Empirical Test of Five Theories,' *The Journal of Politics* 60, no. 2 (1998): 348.

[307] Ledina Gocaj and Sophie Meunier, 'Time Will Tell: The EFSF, the ESM, and the Euro Crisis,' *Journal of European Integration* 35, no. 3 (April 1, 2013): 240.

[308] Wolfgang Münchau, 'Italy Poses a Huge Threat to the Euro and Union,' Financial Times, December 11, 2016, https://www.ft.com/content/a7b94c72-be2a-11e6-8b45-b8b81dd5d080.

ECB is ready to do whatever it takes to preserve the euro. And believe me, it will be enough'.[309]

That currencies face problems and that their value fluctuates is old news, but what makes the euro special is its reliance on trust and support from Eurozone citizens and their individual governments in order to survive as a currency and symbol of European integration. The euro finds itself in this unique predicament because it has replaced older, more familiar currencies which could return if enough people wished for it. As such, the public opinion towards the euro has been studied and researched like no other currency, due to the importance of and correlation between public support for the euro and its sustainability.[310] A thorough study based partially on the EU's own substantial Eurobarometer surveys found that, between 1990-2014 – meaning even before the common currency was implemented and including the Eurozone crisis – public support remained on average positive towards the euro, even during the crisis years between 2008-2014 and in each individual Member State (other than short periods in Finland and Greece in the pre-crisis period). The study assumed that support for the euro depended on inflation, growth in real GDP per capita, and unemployment, but concluded, along with academic, that 'citizens' support for European monetary unification and the euro is critical to evaluate the future of European integration and the potential move towards supranational governance'.[311] In the latest Eurobarometer from 2019, 76 percent of respondents said the euro was good for the EU, and another 65

[309] Mario Draghi, 'Verbatim of the Remarks Made by Mario Draghi,' European Central Bank, July 26, 2012, https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2012/html/sp120726.en.html.

[310] Felix Roth, Lars Jonung, and Felicitas Nowak-Lehmann D., 'Crisis and Public Support for the Euro, 1990–2014,' *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 54, no. 4 (2016): 945.

[311] Roth, Jonung, and Nowak-Lehmann D., 945, 950, 956; Banducci, Karp, and Loedel, 'The Euro, Economic Interests and Multi-Level Governance,' 686; Karl C. Kaltenthaler and Christopher J. Anderson, 'Europeans and Their Money: Explaining Public Support for the Common European Currency,' *European Journal of Political Research* 40, no. 2 (2001): 141.

percent answered that they believed the euro was good for their country. This is the highest support ever recorded for the common currency.[312]

Whether the support for the euro remains will depend on several factors, but its significance to the European project suggests that it is here to stay. The explanations for the currency's existence are civic, in that it promotes institutional integration, but the way the euro is designed shows a desire to promote a common heritage and historical foundations. This ultimately makes the euro a symbolic means of communication grounded in ethnic nationalism with the intention of fostering a European identity based on shared cultural features rather than purely institutional integration.

[312] 'Flash Eurobarometer 481: The Euro Area' (European Commission, November 2019), 7–11, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/flash/surveyky/2243.

Chapter 5

European Capitals of Culture and the city

The focus of this chapter is the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) programme initiated by the European Union in 1985 as the 'European City of Culture', and the city as an actor in an international space. As the report deals with the question by which means the EU has attempted to develop a common identity, this chapter will contribute to this question by examining the ECOC programme and its history. The chapter will begin by discussing the diverging concepts of nationalism and terms like 'the West', and how they relate to the motivations of the European project and the EU's cultural policy. It will then discuss the origins of the ECOC programme and which aspects of culture it attempts to exploit in its endeavours to highlight a common heritage. The city as an actor separate from the state, through projects such as town twinning, will be examined, and how the cosmopolitanism of cities relates to a European identity. It will then examine how the ECOC programme has been conducted in practice, showing that, due to the originally decentralised nature of the initiative, cities were essentially able to shift the focus of the programme from a Europeanising effort into one of urban and cultural regeneration, which in turn has led to structural changes in the programme's development, and influenced the EU's own definition and motivations for the programme. Finally, I will discuss whether the programme is in line with overarching EU aims through the type of nationalism it is founded on.

5.1 Diverging nationalisms and the concepts of Europe's 'East' and 'West'

In 1951 the European Coal and Steal Community was made up of France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. Apart from West Germany and Italy, the remaining four were located west of the Rhine, where for France in particular, Hans Kohn argued that a 'Western'[313] – partially referring to civic aspects – form of nationalism had emerged in the 18th century. This nationalism, also represented by the United States and Great Britain, 'found its expression predominantly […] in political and economic changes', which corresponded to 'changing social, economic, and political realities'. This nationalism existed in contrast to an 'Eastern' – ethnic – nationalism found east of the Rhine, among states including Germany and Italy, where 'nationalism found its expression predominantly in the cultural field', based on 'irrational and pre-enlightened concepts and tending towards exclusiveness—which where to supply the ideological background of the great conflict of the [20th century]'.[314] As opposed to France, where Kohn argued that nationalism was 'connected with the concepts of individual liberty and rational cosmopolitanism', nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe, and Germany in particular, often based itself on:

> [T]he myths of the past and the dreams of the future, an ideal fatherland, closely linked with the past, devoid of any immediate connection with the present […]. [Lacking] self-assurance […] their own nationalism appearing [to themselves] as something infinitely deeper than the nationalism of the West'.[315]

As Anthony Smith remarked, however, Kohn's geographical dimension is simplistic, despite being valid overall: '[it] overlooks the influence of both kinds of ideological nationalism in different European communities […]', including the liberal influences of Kant and Schiller in the German states,[316] or rational thinking in some Czech and Hungarian nationalisms. Additionally, both models can be found in nationalist movements in both

[313] Smith, *National Identity*, 80.

[314] Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 4, 457.

[315] Kohn, 330.

[316] Kohn, 404–5.

the 'East' and the 'West'.[317] In Germany itself, the concept of 'the West' was given several, often contradictory meanings in the 19th century. 'The West' could refer to Europe and the United States; to European states with liberal constitutions opposed to the Holy Alliance between Prussia, Austria, and Russia; to the United States and France as revolutionary countries; and Romano-Germanic civilization. Two out of these four descriptions included Germany, and two did not. Additionally, 'the West' derived its meaning from the oppositional stance against 'the East', associating the former with civility and progress, and would later include notions of freedom, democracy and individuality.[318]

A major reason for Germany's move to 'Eastern' nationalism in the 18th and 19th centuries had to do with how it '[hesitated] between West and East, between consolidation into a national state and the still powerful tradition of world empire'. It did not, according to Kohn, develop a legal and rational concept of citizenship, but instead focused on the 'folk' (ethnic nation/people), partially because the renaissances of early modern Europe became first and foremost 'a literary and intellectual movement rather than a factor moulding political and social life', doing little to alter Germany's politics. Indeed, many Germans lived under oppression from local princes, and few living before the French Revolution wished to challenge the princes' right 'to oppress at will'. Perhaps most importantly, Kohn argued that 'nationalism presupposes the existence, in fact or as an ideal, of a centralized form of government over a large and distinct territory', which was not the reality in the decentralised and fragmented Holy Roman Empire. As a consequence, there was no public opinion in Germany akin to that in Western political entities like England and France, which led to a lack of meaningful growth of patriotism or nationalism in the former. Without a popular political idea of liberty, Germans were therefore unable to 'integrate'.[319]

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[317] Smith, *National Identity*, 80–81.

[318] Riccardo Bavaj and Martina Steber, *Germany and 'The West': The History of a Modern Concept* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015), 11.

[319] Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 332, 331, 369, 4, 350.

This notion of 'East' and 'West' lends itself to the question of where 'Europe' or 'European civilization' actually lie. The idea of a 'European culture' is arguably closely linked to this concept of the 'West', a term which historically has often been interchangeable with 'Europe'. In the 1962 book *History of Western Civilization*, Europe is described as something more than just a geographical expression; it 'denotes a particular kind of historic civilization', and the author conflates the two terms.[320] This abstract definition allows 'Europe' to move through time and space, akin to when Édouard Glissant said of the West: '[t]he West is not in the West. It is a project, not a place'.[321] Similarly, Anthony Padgen says of Europe that its identity 'has always been uncertain and imprecise […]. Like all identities it is a construction, an elaborate palimpsest of stories, images, collective memories, invented and carefully nurtured traditions'.[322] It is what allowed the English scholar Francis Bacon in 1623 to use the phrase 'we Europeans' even in a time when the continent was split into different warring kingdoms and empires and its 'identity' was in the making. Christendom itself, a concept used to bundle the different European states together in a 'sacred sheepfold', became a way to differentiate 'Europe' from the rest, even cutting itself off from other Christian denominations; when Russia claimed Moscow to be the Third Rome under the Russian orthodox faith, the 'traditional' notion of Christendom was instead becoming the 'Christendom of Europe', having its centre of gravity pushed westward.[323]

In other words, Christendom was both a flexible term, and one which became interchangeable with Europe, as argued by John Hale. This is how, during the Reformation which led to the fragmentation of the Christian faith into Catholic and Protestant, Calvin was prompted to refer to the

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[320] Carlton Joseph Huntley Hayes, *History of Western Civilization Volume I* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), xvi–xvii.

[321] Édouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), 2.

[322] Anthony Pagden, 'Europe: Conseptualizing a Continent,' in *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 33.

[323] John Hale, *The Civilization of Europe in the Renaissance* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 3–4.

magnitude of the event as 'the shattering of Europe' (Europae concussio), and not only the shattering of Christendom.[324]

It is worth reiterating that Hans Kohn's distinction between the 'West' and the 'East' places Germany and Italy within the culture of the east, even though today they would likely be assigned to Western, Central or Southern Europe. It was in the Age of Enlightenment that historians like Voltaire, Edward Gibbon, and David Hume set out to define 'Europe' as a secular civilisation with a secular history befitting the age of modernity, and in this way wrestling the concept of history away from the Church.[325] This was one way of politicising the idea of Europe, a phenomenon which never really stopped. The Austrian Chancellor Metternich in the early 19th century spoke of Asia as beginning at the road leading east out of Vienna,[326] and the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga, writing in 1934, noted that Western Europe ended and Central Europe began at the border between the Netherlands and Germany.[327] In these examples, the 'real' Europe, namely 'Latin Europe' in the West, ended where Islam and the Ottoman Empire began, and later, where fascism had taken control. During the Cold War, 'Europe' would sometimes end at the Iron Curtain and where the Soviet-dominated part of the continent began.[328] At the same time, Gaullism in France after the Second World War made a distinction between 'the West' and 'Europe'. It placed France, West Germany, and the rest of Western Europe in the latter group (excluding the United States), laying the basis for a policy of organising and integrating European power.[329] Today, the political entity calling itself the European Union encompasses most of Europe, but not all of it.

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[324] John Elliott, 'Revolution and Continuity in Early Modern Europe,' in *The General Crisis of the Seventeeth Century*, ed. Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith, 2nd Edition (London: Routledge, 1998), 111.

[325] Pocock, 'Some Europes in Their History,' 62.

[326] Tony Judt, *A Grand Illusion? An Essay on Europe*, Reprinted Edition (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 47.

[327] Nicolette Mout, 'Does Europe Have a Centre? Reflections on the History of Western and Central Europe,' *European Review* 14, no. 2 (2006): 257–268.

[328] Pocock, 'Some Europes in Their History,' 69.

[329] Jonas Hagmann, *(In)Security and the Production of International Relations: The Politics of Securitisation in Europe* (London: Routledge, 2014), 107–8.

There is of course more to this story of nationalism than just 'West' and 'East'. As stressed by Michael Ignatieff, civic values such as liberty, equality, and democratic participation were for a long time intended for and limited to white males in France, Britain, and the United States. In this case, 'civic constitutionalism rested, in effect, on a social and cultural homogeneity enforced by civic exclusion'.[330]

It is nevertheless with the 'ideal' civic nationalist and ideological background in mind that France, supported by the United States[331] – two of the most prominent countries belonging to the civic nationalist tradition – set the tone for the institutional and developmental values of the European project. This tradition is so important to the fundamental values of the EU that they are highlighted as early as in the 1957 preamble to the Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community (Treaty of Rome), as it refers to economic and social progress and development, grounded in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.[332] The Treaty on European Union continues this legacy, its preamble stating in part: 'Drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law'. It also makes clear the importance of liberty, human rights, solidarity between cultures, and a common citizenship. Furthermore, Article 2, in addition to listing several of the values named above, adds that the Union is founded on 'the rights of persons belonging to minorities[,] […] pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice [and] solidarity'. Judging by the preamble, values make up most of what the European Union bases its existence on, in addition to 'ending the historical division of the European continent' and to 'strengthen and [converge]' their economies.[333] These values are civic in nature, stemming from the Enlighten-

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[330] Michael Ignatieff, 'Benign Nationalism? The Possibilities of the Civic Ideal,' in *People, Nation and State*, ed. Edward Mortimer (New York: I. B. Taurus, 1999), 144.

[331] Craig Parsons, 'Showing Ideas as Causes: The Origins of the European Union,' *International Organization* 56, no. 1 (2002): 59.

[332] 'Treaty Establishing the European Economic Community (Rome, 25 March 1957),' 3.

[333] 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union,' 326/15-326/16.

ment through the confirmation of humanism as a main inspiration, mentioning even the institution of a common citizenship – as opposed to a hypothetical 'creation' of a new ethnic group – as an EU aim.

Yet despite the importance of culture in nation-building – being now the first of the inspirations named in the entire treaty – culture as a European area of policy is fairly recent. The first formal and legal instance of culture in the Treaties appeared in Article 128 of the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht, today part of Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.[334] It states that, '[t]he Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore'. It shall do this in part through the 'improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples'; 'conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance'; 'non-commercial cultural exchange'; and 'artistic and literary creation'.[335]

From this, we once again see a stress on the diversity of culture and nations in the EU. However, the reference to a 'common cultural heritage', 'European peoples', and cultural heritage of 'European significance' highlight the EU's ambition to establish a European cultural space where individual and local cultures can be appreciated by the whole community. This reads somewhat like an attempt to foster a de facto European culture, a notion which arguably is reflected in a brochure on EU cultural policy published by the European Commission in 2002. According to this brochure, EU cultural policy has four main aims: 'to bring out the common aspects of Europe's heritage'; 'enhance the feeling of belonging to one and the same community'; 'recognizing and respecting cultural, national and regional diversity'; 'helping cultures to develop and become more widely

[334] European Commission, 'A Community of Cultures. The European Union and the Arts. Europe on the Move, 2002,' EU Commission - Brochure, 2002, 3, http://aei.pitt.edu/15064/; 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union' (EUR-Lex), 326/121, accessed June 2, 2020, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_2&format=PDF.

[335] 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,' 326/121-326/122.

known'. The brochure also stressed the significance of the Maastricht Treaty in making culture a 'fully fledged aspect of European action'.[336] This language, while idealistic – or perhaps because of it – is fairly imprecise, a criticism which will help explain why the European Capitals of Culture programme has struggled with communicating the 'European dimension' part of its agenda.

5.2 A brief history of the European Capitals of Culture programme

One of the main initiatives of EU cultural policy is the European Capitals of Culture programme. Originally called the 'European City of Culture', the ECOC event was established in 1985 through a resolution of the Council between ministers responsible for cultural affairs.[337] The idea for the initiative was conceived by the Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri, allegedly after a conversation between herself and her French counterpart, Jack Lang, about the lack of European cultural events.[338] Mercouri famously stated that 'it was time for our (the Culture Ministers) voice to be heard as loud as that of the technocrats. Culture, art and creativity are not less important than technology, commerce and the economy'.[339] The first European City of Culture was chosen to be Athens in 1985, perhaps reflecting the view of antiquity and ancient Greece as Europe's roots, and only seven months later the first festival was underway. It included an exhibition at the Greek National Art Gallery, along with musical, theatrical, and dance events.[340] Since 1985, 62 cities have hosted the event, with another nine selected to take part between 2021 and 2024. The cities include major historical and cultural centres like Florence in Italy as well as

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[336] European Commission, 'A Community of Cultures. The European Union and the Arts. Europe on the Move, 2002,' 3.

[337] 'Official Journal of the European Communities, C 153, 22 June 1985,' EUR-Lex, No C 153/2, accessed May 15, 2020, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/BG/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AC%3A1985%3A153%3ATOC.

[338] 'European Capitals of Culture: The Road to Success From 1985 to 2010' (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: European Commission, 2009), 3.

[339] Robert Palmer et al., 'European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission Part 1' (Brussels: Palmer/Rae Associates, August 2004), 41.

[340] 'European Capitals of Culture: The Road to Success From 1985 to 2010,' 3, 13.

the less-known, although historically significant, city of Rijeka, Croatia. The programme is open to both EU Member States, candidate countries and potential candidate countries for EU membership, and European Economic Area and European Free Trade Association countries participating in the Creative Europe Programme.[341]

As stated by the resolution of 1985, '[t]he event has been established to help bring the peoples of the Member States closer together, but account should be taken of wider European central affinities'.[342] As with the cultural policy stated a decade later in Article 128 of the Treaty of Maastricht, we can interpret from the resolution that the aim is in essence the same, to establish a truly European culture space. This agenda is reiterated and expanded in a Decision by the European Parliament and of the Council in 1999. The Decision *inter alia* declared that the ECOC programme was meant to, 'highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share'. Crucially, it is stated in Article 3 of the Decision that the nomination of the chosen city must 'include a cultural project of European dimension, based principally on cultural cooperation'.[343]

The presence of the 'European' dimension has varied, however. Kiran Klaus Patel notes how 'the programme was very flexible, with substance and procedure only being loosely defined'.[344] Similarly, the British economist John Myerscough, who was the main author of a major report on the 1994 European Capital of Culture in Glasgow, found that there was no single rule or design for adding the European dimension to the programme. Similarly, no plan with clear instructions on how to organise the

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[341] 'European Capitals of Culture Factsheet,' Creative Europe - European Commission, May 4, 2016, 1–2, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en.

[342] 'Official Journal of the European Communities, C 153, 22 June 1985,' No C 153/2.

[343] Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 Establishing a Community Action for the European Capital of Culture Event for the Years 2005 to 2019' (Official Journal of the European Communities, May 25, 1999), L 166/2 http://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a238a2f1-6266-45bb-83ed-d5736cb443f5/language-en.

[344] Kiran Klaus Patel, 'Integration Through Expertise: Transnational Experts in European Cultural Policies,' in *The Cultural Politics of Europe: European Capitals of Culture and European Union Since the 1980s*, ed. Kiran Klaus Patel (New York: Routledge, 2013), 74.

event or compile expertise existed.[345] Robert Palmer, the director of Glasgow's ECOC programme who took up the mantle after Myerscough and analysed the ECOC events between 1995 and 2004, had similar remarks. He noted that 'the challenge […] is that there is no agreed formula for a cultural programme', and that on the question of how to implement the European dimension, 'cities interpreted the meaning of [this] term in different ways […] About a third of the ECOC preferred to focus on a broader international rather than just a European dimension'. He concluded that the ECOC 'is a powerful tool for cultural development that operates on a scale that offers unprecedented opportunities', yet ultimately found that the cultural dimension 'has been overshadowed by [local] political ambitions', and that 'the European dimension has not been a primary focus, and the potential of ECOC has not been realised as a means of promoting European integration and cooperation'.[346] In other words, ECOC presented an opportunity to re-vitalise urban areas and attract cultural investment, but was found lacking in its ability to promote 'Europeanness'.

Following the recommendations of the reports, the Council formulated a new Decision in October 2006. It aimed to better monitor the proposals 'in order to enhance their European dimension', establish a 'panel of six national and seven European experts' to oversee the selection phase and to guide and monitor the process leading up to the event, and establish 'networks of former official European Capitals of Culture' to play constructive roles in sharing experiences and best practices. Additionally, the Decision aimed at rewarding those cities who successfully added a European dimension to their programme with a monetary prize, and established a designation period of six years in order for the cities to be able to prepare for the event.[347] The Decision was revised and replaced once more in 2014, strengthening both the application process, further detailing the criteria

[345] John Myerscough, *European Cities of Culture and Cultural Months: Summary Report* (Glasgow: Network of Cultural Cities of Europe, 1994), 48–200.

[346] Palmer et al., 'European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission Part 1,' 15, 18, 23.

[347] 'Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 Establishing a Community Action for the European Capital of Culture Event for the Years 2007 to 2019' (Official Journal of the European Union, November 3, 2006), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32006D1622&from=EN.

for successful submissions and the monitoring process. The Commission now takes on a bigger role. Among other tasks it assumes the responsibility of '[ensuring] the overall coherence of the action', stating that:

> Since the objectives of this Decision, namely to safeguard and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe, to highlight the common features they share and to foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States […], but can rather, by reason of scale […] be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.[348]

This is the first time in a Decision on the ECOC programme that the EU officially states it is better suited to handle a cultural programme of this size than the individual Member States, and makes the European Capitals of Culture programme less intergovernmental – and more supranational – than it ever has been.

5.3 Defining culture

'Culture' is a term of several definitions, owing to the word's ambiguity. An important question then becomes what type of culture it is the European Commission wishes to disseminate and support; how does the Commission actually interpret culture? The word itself derives from the Latin *colere* and *cultuvare*, meaning 'to till the ground' and 'prepare the ground for crops'. This eventually took on new connotations in English, French, and German, to incorporate meanings related to development and refinement, and to describe 'systems of values and behaviour' and 'systems of ideas [and] beliefs […]'.[349] In 1952, A. L Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn traced the modern historical evolution of the word. They argued that in

[348] 'Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 Establishing a Union Action for the European Capitals of Culture for the Years 2020 to 2033 and Repealing Decision No 1622/2006/EC' (Official Journal of the European Union, May 3, 2014), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014D0445&from=EN.

[349] John R. Baldwin, Sandra L. Faulkner, and Michael L. Hecht, 'A Moving Target: The Illusive Definition of Culture,' in *Redefining Culture: Perspectives Across the Disciplines*, ed. John R. Baldwin et al. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 5.

the 18th century, culture referred to a kind of general history, before meaning 'enlightenment culture and improvement culture', and describing 'the characteristic mode of human existence' which the authors argued originated from the Germanic 'kultur'. It is partially from this 'kultur' we get the English descriptions of culture as 'system of ideas, beliefs' and 'systems of values and behaviors'.[350] In *The Invention of Culture*, Roy Wagner argued that our modern conception of the term 'culture' contains 'several associations' and 'creative ambiguity', tied both to an 'opera-house' sense and a more anthropological approach which 'amounts to an abstraction of the notion of human refinement and domestication from the individual to the collective'. In the sense of the 'opera-house', culture 'represents the creative increment, the productivity that creates work and knowledge by providing its ideas, techniques, and discoveries', often found in 'museums, libraries, symphony orchestras, universities, and perhaps its parks and zoos', and preserved, taught, and added to in varying institutions; 'the sum total of achievements, inventions, and discoveries that define our idea of "civilization"'.[351]

It is this last definition which I argue summarises the EU's approach to culture in the European Capitals of Culture initiative. Despite never defining culture *per se*, academics have found that the use of terms such as language, culture, people, history, traditions, religion and European values in the form of liberal democratic norms by EU leaders have been central to European cultural promotion strategies.[352] Judging by the programmes themselves, the ECOC events feature dance, music, theatre, and artistry on various levels, often – and preferably – taking inspiration from and cultivating a common European cultural dimension, which arguably may only be feasible through showcasing major cultural achievements. The ECOC in Weimar, Germany in 1999 is emblematic of this. The city

350 A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, vol. 47:1 (Cambridge: The Museum, 1952), 23, 27; Baldwin, Faulkner, and Hecht, 'A Moving Target: The Illusive Definition of Culture,' 6.

351 Roy Wagner, *The Invention of Culture*, Second edition. (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 21–23.

352 Richard McMahon and Annabelle Littoz-Monnet, 'Conclusion: Cultures of Defining Culture - EU Cultural Policy in the Context of the Study of Culture,' in *Post-Identity? Culture and European Integration*, ed. Richard McMahon (London: Routledge, 2013), 212–34, 221.

focused on its alleged history as 'the heart and soul of the German Classical Period – home to Goethe, Schiller, and a plethora of other writers, musicians, artists, and architecture', but also 'the lowest points of German history and the assault on civilization by the Nazis,'[353] symbolised by the concentration camp Buchenwald located only five miles outside the city.[354]

5.4 The importance of culture

The role of culture to the EU was conveyed, at least symbolically, in 2009 by then President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso. He stated that, 'I am convinced that the European project is fundamentally a "cultural" project', arguing that culture was 'essential for achieving the EU's strategic objectives of prosperity and solidarity'.[355] The Decision from 2014 reflects this position. It is important however, to establish how the EU has and continues to celebrate its culture(s), and in what context it does so.

In 2004, the Reflection Group on 'The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe', a group of European politicians and scholars considered the values which might be relevant for the continued European unification process. Summarising the history of the EU and European integration, they argued that, so far, the Union had been 'enormously successful'. However, they found that the way European integration was approached by the EU had to evolve. The group stated that as the memories of the Second World War began to fade, the economic goals of the EEC and the EU began to dominate the agenda, arguing that economic goals alone were not enough to replace the post-war political forces which were necessary to promote European integration in the first place. Instead, a new source of political energy could be found in 'Europe's common culture' which had to be made easy to understand for the public in order to become more politically effective. Such a common culture was, according to the group, not only what could propel Europe into becoming a unified political entity, but an entity based on both individual and institutional solidarity. Thus,

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[353] 'European Capitals of Culture: The Road to Success From 1985 to 2010,' 26.

[354] Paul Neurath, Nico Stehr, and Christian Fleck, *Society of Terror: Inside the Dachau and Buchenwald Concentration Camps* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 19.

[355] 'European Capitals of Culture: The Road to Success From 1985 to 2010,' 1.

the creation of such a 'European' culture was deemed 'one of the most important long-term tasks of European politics'.[356]

This is in line with Brigid Laffan's observations on the decline of the 'Monnet method' – a neofunctionalist strategy which based itself on deeper integration without much involvement from the broader electorate – named after one of the 'founding fathers' of Europe, Jean Monnet. Writing in 1996, Laffan argued that 'a stronger sense of community' through 'inclusive political values' and a 'civic dimension of nationhood' was necessary in order to form a true 'political' Europe instead of simply an economic one.[357] Evidently, this is more or less what the EU has attempted to do, through the promotion of a community which is 'united in diversity', which, as Gerard Delanty argues, 'is the phrase which perfectly captures the cultural logic of Europeanization' and 'expresses the political spirit of the age'. Yet Delanty argues that current activity at EU level, such as the establishment of a European citizenship and greater national interconnectedness, does not mean that a European society is emerging. Instead, he wonders whether the EU is better at creating 'cosmopolitans' than Europeans,[358] as contemplated by Daniele Archibugi.[359] In this sense, it is argued that European values and cosmopolitism share many features,[360] such as inhabiting several identities and the possibility of belonging to several communities at once.[361]

5.5 The city and cosmopolitanism

The question put forth by Delanty on cosmopolitanism lends itself well to the idea of the city as an identity creator. This is because cities have long been centres of cultural mixing. After the end of antiquity in Europe, it

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[356] Biedenkopf, Michalski, and Geremek, 'The Spiritual and Cultural Dimension of Europe,' 5–8.

[357] Brigid Laffan, 'The Politics of Identity and Political Order in Europe,' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 34, no. 1 (1996): 81–102, 83, 100.

[358] Delanty and Rumford, *Rethinking Europe*, 59–60, 184–95.

[359] Daniele Archibugi, David Held, and Martin Köhler, *Re-Imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 219.

[360] Delanty and Rumford, *Rethinking Europe*, 193.

[361] Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice* (Oxford: University Press, 2002).

was in the high Middle Ages and the early modern period that cities became true urban centres as they oversaw the intensification of social, economic, and cultural change, as a result of growth of populations, higher agricultural output, the retreat of epidemics and greater political stability. In the late modern period in Europe, urban growth was propelled by a decline in mortality rates, rural to town migration, as well as increasing ethnic movements, technological innovation, and the establishment of major cities as global marketplaces.[362] Cities even established so-called 'town twinning' (or sister city) schemes, where two cities, sometimes sharing historical connections or contemporary concerns, establish special bonds with one another. The motivations for such schemes vary from humanitarianism to philanthropy and development, sometimes considered cities' own 'local foreign policy'[363] in that the phenomenon is a way for cities to reduce the political distance between potentially far-away urban centres; to establish formal agreements, trade relations, joint programmes; and exchange visits.[364]

Antoine Vion argued that the concept of town twinning may be seen as the first municipal effort to define their interests on the international stage. Similar to the founding of ECOC decades later, town twinning had its roots in the pursuit of European integration. Launched in France as early as the late 1940s the concept was meant to build European unity and promote municipal autonomy, and be an investment in future international exchanges in the wake of the Second World War. In the 1950s the concept was adopted by the organisation Monde Bilingue, which instead of European unity, sought to promote global peace through bilingualism and universal brotherhood more in line with modern cosmopolitanism. Additionally, in 1951, the Council of European Municipalities was founded (today

[362] Peter Clark, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Cities in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9–15.

[363] Brian Hocking, *Localizing Foreign Policy: Non-Central Governments and Multilayered Diplomacy* (London: Macmillan, 1991); J. Lofland, 'Consensus Movements: City Twinning and Derailed Dissent in the American Eighties.,' *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 11 (1989): 163–96.

[364] Nick Clarke, 'Globalising Care? Town Twinning in Britain since 1945,' *Geoforum* 42 (2011): 115–25, 115–17.

the Council of Municipalities and Regions), a group whose aim was to encourage municipal exchanges and projects.[365] In this respect, the idea to take advantage of the potential of cities to reach social or economic goals is not a novel one.

The ECOC programme is about bringing Europe to the city and the city to Europe, but it is in the cities where cosmopolitan identities tend to flourish.[366] This is crucial because cosmopolitanism may be interpreted as an identity which could potentially rival that of 'Europeanism' mainly because they share many of the same features. Whereas the European identity is based on 'unity in diversity', cosmopolitanism can be defined as an identity where the individual harbour several identities both local and global, and where differences are celebrated or at least seen as enriching as long as they comply with foundational political institutions like basic human rights.[367] The latter then, has no need for the fostering of a 'European' culture, for it is global in its outlook.

However, some scholars have argued that cosmopolitanism does not have to work in opposition to European identity or European culture. Delanty argues that the European identity is about adopting a certain view of the world, one which embraces otherness. To him, those harbouring a more 'flexible' view of their nationality may find that cosmopolitanism may actually lead to identifying more with the EU and Europe due to its reflexive stance towards individual and collective identity.[368] Florian Pichler found that people characterised by wider cosmopolitan affiliations were significantly more likely to support the European project, and that phenomena like globalisation, transnationalism, and supranational politics help explain why some people identify with both Europe and the world as a whole.[369] Finally, Ulrich Bech and Edgar Grande postulate that the European project can be reborn from below through cosmopolitanism in the sense of recognising the differences of Europe, which include moving the

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[365] Antoine Vion, 'Europe from the Bottom Up: Town Twinning in France during the Cold War,' *Contemporary European History* 11, no. 4 (November 2002): 623, 627, 639–40.

[366] Pichler, 'How Real Is Cosmopolitanism in Europe?,' 1122.

[367] Pichler, 1108; Kwame Anthony Appiah, 'Cosmopolitan Patriots,' *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 3 (1997): 621; Beck and Grande, 'Cosmopolitanism,' 71.

[368] Delanty and Rumford, *Rethinking Europe*, 194–95.

[369] Pichler, 'How Real Is Cosmopolitanism in Europe?,' 121–22.

European project forward based on the principle of differentiated integration, as opposed to uniform integration and harmonisation.[370]

While it might be that cosmopolitanism is compatible with a sense of European identity then, it seems that the original aim of ECOC, which was to first and foremost promote common aspects of a particularly European heritage, is more about fostering a European type of nationhood than a 'no-nationhood' or a global one. In order to see what type of nationalism the European Capitals of Culture programme celebrates and attempts to foster, one must consider their achievements and practices.

5.6 The Capitals of Culture in practice

The first ECOC events in the late 1980s took place in Athens, Florence, Amsterdam, West-Berlin, and Paris, already 'internationally established centres of culture with huge stocks of symbolic resources'[371], essentially some of the major 'brand names' in European cultural history. The choice of such major, well-known cities is arguably indicative of a top-down display or an elite interpretation of the best of 'high culture' on offer, but this selection was no doubt also a result of the fact that, between 1985 and 1994, the choice of city was left as a matter for the national authorities in each Member State. However, despite the contributions of these cities to 'European' cultural history, none of them used the EU's official wording as the motivations for their events. Whereas the EU sought to promote an overarching European cultural dimension to the public, the Palmer Report – a major report based on studies of ECOCS held from 1995-2004 commissioned by the European Commission – noted how the city organizers' motivations and rhetoric instead would often align more with particular interests and ambitions, or at the very least alter the original programme intent.[372]

Athens wanted 'to provide a substantial stimulus to Greek culture', and reported to increase people's consciousness of culture both as entertain-

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[370] Beck and Grande, 'Cosmopolitanism.'

[371] Patel, 'Integration Through Expertise: Transnational Experts in European Cultural Policies,' 76.

[372] Palmer et al., 'European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission Part 1,' 44–45, 47.

ment and education, the modernisation and renovations of important cultural infrastructure, and ECOC was allegedly the first cultural experience in Greece where locals felt like they were taking part in something truly European. Florence wished to 'reinforce its image', and reported featuring an enhanced cultural programme and infrastructural improvements, like the restoration of the Piazza della Signoria. Amsterdam, thus far coming closest to the official wording, sought to 'investigate the cultural identity of the various countries of Europe and how these countries could influence each other'. This did not mean that the event itself was successful. On the contrary, Amsterdam was marred by organisational ambiguity after the city government itself refused to be a part of the event. It was the Cultural Ministry of the Netherlands who had originally put forth the city's nomination, but the city itself felt no ownership of it, perhaps especially in a year when it was considering cutting its cultural budget and had recently failed in its bid to host the Olympic Games. It was therefore up to NGO organisations to see the event through, and even though few significant long-term positive impacts of the ECOC were reported, the organisers praised the establishment of better connections with central and eastern European stakeholders.[373]

The event in Glasgow in 1990 was the first city to set multiple aims regarding both cultural, economic, and social goals, and became the first ECOC city to truly show what the programme could offer in terms of urban renewal, with many significant long-term impacts like the increase in jobs in the culture and creative industries, the positive transformation of Glasgow's image as a city, the establishment of connections and networks with European stakeholders, and the restoration and construction of various parts of the city.[374] It also distinguished itself by the ability to simultaneously support cultural activity in previously neglected neighbourhoods and establish prestigious arts venues.[375]

Studying the impact of the ECOC events, the Palmer Report found that almost every city had established infrastructure programmes which

[373] Palmer et al., 166–68.

[374] Palmer et al., 167–68.

[375] Beatriz García, 'Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration in Western European Cities: Lessons from Experience, Prospects for the Future,' *Local Economy* 19, no. 4 (November 1, 2004): 319.

helped revitalise or restore older cultural objects, encouraged some form of cultural or social development, international visibility, and a rebranding of the city, as was the case with Glasgow. Additionally, the European dimension was often seen as either lacking or mostly anecdotal, meaning the effect was difficult to quantify or prove with hard data.[376] This is what eventually prompted the EU to restructure and update the programme, and to assume a more assertive role in the decision-making process. For the ECOC 2009 in Linz, Austria, for example, the artistic team leading the event made significant changes to the objectives and motivations of the city's bid during the development process, going from focusing on the city as a 'laboratory of the future, exploring and combining media, art in public spaces' to one which in a much clearer way wished to represent the city and Austria on a European stage. The final proposal highlighted the cultural characteristics of the city and local region surrounding it, embrace openness, and to portray the role Linz played during the Nazi era in order to come to terms with past responsibilities.[377]

Additionally, Palmer showed that economic goals, such as urban development and investments in the culture and creative industries, are increasingly assuming centre stage.[378] This is confirmed in a report on a conference on the summary of 25 years of European Capitals of Culture: 'Over the years, the [ECOC] have also become a unique opportunity to regenerate cities, to boost their creativity and to improve their image. […] the [ECOC] event has evolved into a structural type of investment […] to encompass impacts on the longer term socio-economic development of the city and its surrounding area'. Recognising the value of culture-led development, this conference report stressed that what made the ECOC event unique was the European dimension strategy and the aims of increasing

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[376] Palmer et al., 'European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission Part 1,' 164–72.

[377] Andrew McCoshan et al., 'Ex-Post Evaluation of 2009 European Capitals of Culture: Final Report to DG Education and Culture of the European Commission in the Context of the Framework Contract for Evaluation Related Services and Support for Impact Assessment (EAC/03/06)' (Birmingham: Ecorys, 2011), 23–27.

[378] Palmer et al., 'European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission Part 1.'

mutual understanding and to unify Europeans,[379] even though this was evidently less true for the first ECOCs, as shown above.

Acknowledging the potential difficulties in adding a European dimension, a report from 2011 on the ECOCs of 2009 had several recommendations on how to approach this aspect, which are still valid today.[380] These include European themes in a city which may need to be 'reinterpreted in new, fresh ways', as exemplified by the use of Cold War-era art in Vilnius, Lithuania; 'hidden' European heritage aspects, drawing attention to minority communities and the impacts of immigrants, like Vilnius emphasising its Polish and Jewish communities; and to explore 'difficult and challenging European themes', such as Linz addressing its Nazi past. Additionally, co-operating with cultural operators and artists from other countries was encouraged as long as it did not hinder the development of the programme.[381]

In the end, during the first 25 years of the event's life, the European cultural dimension, which was arguably the *raison d'être* for the entire programme, varied ostensibly from one city to the next. In 1993, Antwerp, 'deliberately chose not to focus on Europe', instead adopting an international focus. This is in stark contrast to the ECOC in Lisbon a year later, where the organisers 'were constantly aware of the need to hold European events' by, among other aspects, inviting Spanish and German artists to perform. In 2007, Sibiu, a Romanian town with a long cross-cultural history in multilingual Siebenbürgen, focused on its cultural, spiritual and historical links to Europe, highlighting issues and cooperation on a European level by improving and establishing a long-term image for the city,

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[379] 'Summary of the European Commission Conference "Celebrating 25 Years of European Capitals of Culture"' (Brussels: European Commission, March 23, 2010), 4–5, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/capitals-culture-25-years-conclusions_en.pdf.

[380] 'Compendium of Recommendations from Ex-Post Evaluations of European Capitals of Culture 2007-2016' (European Commission, March 2018), https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/files/ecoc-compendium-recommendations_en.pdf.

[381] McCoshan et al., 'Ex-Post Evaluation of 2009 European Capitals of Culture: Final Report to DG Education and Culture of the European Commission in the Context of the Framework Contract for Evaluation Related Services and Support for Impact Assessment (EAC/03/06),' 90–91.

new investments in city infrastructure and public spaces, a new tourism policy, more cultural events, and highlighting the city's European connection through a rendition of 'Faust'. To the organisers, the event represented 'the intimate reconnection of the city with the European values and spirituality, with which it had been intimate for almost 800 years and from which it was brutally and artificially cut after 1945'. And in Stavanger, Norway in 2008, the focus was 'enormously international', basing itself on cooperation between Norwegian, European and international stakeholders, focusing on putting on projects throughout the year instead of a few major events, and by launching a conference on human rights set to take place every two years.[382]

5.7 ECOC as an instrument of soft power

An international approach rather than a simple 'European' dimension has proven, however, to contribute to the ECOC events in ways which echo, if not the original scope of the European Cities of Culture agenda, then at least aspects of the over-arching motivations of the European Union. Additionally, the similarities with the 'cities' foreign policy' concept and city twinning are striking, as the urban projects and city connections and network-building have come more to the fore. Stavanger's peace conference on conflict resolution featured Nobel Peace Prize Laureates,[383] and in this way, goals and motivations which are not simply European, but arguably universal – in this case, peace – were being lifted to the forefront. Furthermore, the trend which Glasgow began, namely taking advantage of culture as a vehicle for urban and social development and regeneration, continued, as when Guimarães in Portugal used the ECOC event to rebrand itself as a cultural and historical city, leading in part to an increase in both number of tourists and locations they travelled from.[384] Today, the European Commission states on its websites that the event is meant to '[f]oster the contribution of culture to the development of cities', and that it serves

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[382] 'European Capitals of Culture: The Road to Success From 1985 to 2010,' 12–61.

[383] Nicole L. Immler and Hans Sakkers, '(Re)Programming Europe: European Capitals of Culture: Rethinking the Role of Culture,' *Journal of European Studies* 44, no. 1 (March 1, 2014): 6.

[384] Susana Bernardino, J. Freitas Santos, and J. Cadima Ribeiro, 'The Legacy of European Capitals of Culture to the 'Smartness' of Cities: The Case of Guimarães 2012,' *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* 19, no. 2 (2018): 152–55.

as an 'excellent opportunity for: [r]egenerating cities, [r]aising the international profile of cities, [e]nhancing the image of cities in the eyes of their own inhabitants, [b]reathing new life into a city's culture, [and] [b]oosting tourism'.[385]

The idea that so-called mega-events could stimulate economic growth and social development[386] became relevant to politicians outside of Western Europe in an age where the notion of 'returning to Europe' sat high on the agenda for many Eastern European states formerly located under the Soviet yolk. Western Europe appeared to many Eastern Europeans an attractive place to live and even as a 'reference culture'[387]; '[a concept addressing] the fact that some cultures […] have acted as models that other cultures imitated, adapted or resisted'.[388] Furthermore, Alexandros Sianos argues that the ECOC events serve as 'an attractive "soft power" resource for the European Union'[389], 'soft power' being the term coined by Joseph S. Nye to describe 'the ability to obtain preferred outcomes by attraction and persuasion rather than coercion and payment'.[390] This is exemplified by the fact that even though the ECOC event can be costly and difficult affairs to manage, cities apply to host them on a purely voluntary basis. Additionally, cities all over Europe, including non-EU Eastern European states, applied to host them shortly after the fall of the USSR. The first of

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[385] 'European Capitals of Culture,' Creative Europe - European Commission, accessed May 20, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en.

[386] For more on this discussion, see: Beatriz Garcia, 'Deconstructing the City of Culture: The Long-Term Cultural Legacies of Glasgow 1990,' *Urban Studies* 42, no. 5–6 (May 1, 2005): 841–68; García, 'Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration in Western European Cities'; Nils Asle Bergsgard and Anders Vassenden, 'The Legacy of Stavanger as Capital of Culture in Europe 2008: Watershed or Puff of Wind?,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17, no. 3 (2011): 301–320.

[387] Alexandros Sianos, 'European Capitals of Culture: A 'Soft Power' Resource for the European Union?,' *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity* 5, no. 1 (February 6, 2017): 2–4.

[388] J. van Eijnatten, 'Beyond Diversity: The Steady State of Reference Cultures,' *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity* 3, no. 3 (2015): 4–5.

[389] Sianos, 'European Capitals of Culture,' 4.

[390] Joseph S. Nye, 'The Information Revolution and Power,' *Current History* 113, no. 759 (2014): 19.

the former Soviet bloc cities to host the event was Weimar in former East Germany in 1999, followed by Krakow and Prague in 2000.

Emblematic of the perceived attraction of ECOC, is that the idea to host the event in Weimar was conceived by the last minister of culture from the German Democratic Republic (GDR), 'who suggested that Weimar should try to win the title in order to raise funds necessary for restoring the city' due to the loss of workplaces after the closure of big factories, and to restore decaying infrastructure. The goal was to '[restructure] Weimar as a culture, education and tourist city […]'.[391] But before there was a European City of Culture in the East, the Council established in 1990 a 'European Cultural Month' (ECM) for interested European countries '[basing themselves] on the principles of democracy, pluralism, and the rule of law' outside the Community. This initiative lasted until 2003.[392] For these cities, which among others included Krakow in 1992, Budapest in 1994, and St. Petersburg in 1996, Palmer noted that the aim was often to 'raise the European or international profile of the city and to be recognized as a cultural city', but also to 'increase interest in culture', 'highlight changes in society', and to 'stimulate innovative projects in contemporary culture and arts fields'. It was stated that, for St. Petersburg, 'the ECM was also a symbol of the integration of Russia in Europe'.[393]

Despite not entirely fulfilling the goal of having the European dimension centre stage then, the European Capitals of Culture initiative has, I argue, partially succeeded as an initiative by remaining attractive to cities. Either by presenting cities' history through or in conjunction with a European perspective, developing new strategies for development, or being an attractive initiative for both Western and Eastern European stakeholders, the initiative furthers the European Union agenda of closer cooperation between the regions of Europe. The fact that ECOC has developed from mainly taking place in well-established hubs of 'high culture', like Athens and Florence, to medium-sised or even small cities, like Sibiu, Romania in

[391] Silke Roth and Susanne Frank, 'Festivalization and the Media: Weimar, Cultural Capital of Europe 1999,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 6, no. 2 (2000): 223.

[392] 'Official Journal of the European Communities, C 162, 3 July 1990,' EUR-Lex, July 3, 1990, 162/1, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/ALL/?uri=OJ:C:1990:162:TOC.

[393] Palmer et al., 'European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission Part 1,' 158.

2007 and Bodø in 2024 (the first with less than 200,000 inhabitants and the latter with less than 100,000), further points to the increasingly inclusionary aspects of this cultural initiative, as well as the documented effect ECOCs have had on the development and possible reinvigoration of cities and regions that cannot get this kind of funding or exposure elsewhere. This is in line with the stated EU aim to 'strengthen and converge' the economies of the Member States by simultaneously developing the individual cities and regions through funding and investments, and fostering intra-European cooperation through collaboration with partner cities, often former ECOC hosts.

5.8 The ethnic-civic hybrid

Chris Shore has argued that the EU's approach to culture contains fundamental contradictions which violate 'the very *telos* of European integration'. In his view, 'the goal is not 'diversity' but 'unity': not ever-closer union of the peoples of Europe but the creation of a 'European people'. He claimed that the EU's policies reflect a kind of 'postmodern communitarism' and 'undermine[s] the hegemony of nation-states' which may eventually come 'at the cost of excluding "non-Europeans"'.[394] Shore assumes that 'unity in diversity' is a misleading slogan which in reality simply means 'unity', arguing that the EU's aim is to '[promote] the idea of Europe's overarching unity through that diversity'.[395] He further argues that the EU's cultural approach violates its ultimate aims enshrined in the preamble to the EU's founding treaties. His argument is based on the misconception however, that a 'European' culture or people is in opposition to national identities, when in reality, it can serve as, in his own words, either an 'overarching' identity or a complementary one, potentially acting as one of several anchors of belonging or 'imagined communities'. Additionally, that the cultural policies contradict the Treaties, as argued by Shore, is hardly the case, as the ECOC decisions show; The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union aims to '[contribute] to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional

[394] Shore, 'In Uno Plures'? EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe,' 19–22.

[395] Shore, 17.

diversity and at the same time bringing the common heritage to the fore'[396], the same principles which the ECOC initiative is founded on.

Indeed, we may imagine this overarching European community as a picture book where Europe is the common denominator between the featured cities. Athens, Sibiu, Stavanger, andWeimar – they all present their unique sides and local contributions to aspects of European history and culture. The fact that they were influenced by some of the same phenomena (for example the Reformation), experienced the same historical events (Second World War), and today aspire to reach the same ideals (democracy), binds them together in ways cities outside 'Europe' cannot, and is evidenced through architecture and local customs. At the same time, the cities are able to rebrand themselves as uniquely positioned in some form or another, as with Guimarães as a vital medieval city in Portuguese history. Contrary to Shore's argument then, European cultural policy as it relates to ECOC aims at this duality between highlighting the local as well as the supranational aspects of culture and history, not simply 'unity' without 'diversity'.

Thus, the nationalism of the European Capitals of Culture is based on several aspects. It conveys an ethnic form of nationalism through its promotion of a specifically European heritage, often expressed through the use of traditionally European music, dance, or other forms of art created by European historical figures like Fernando Pessoa and Dante. It also takes advantage of historical periods, both older and more recent, to inspire common European cultural memories. However, ECOC also takes a civic approach by having as a prerequisite of hosting the event that the city in question aspires to uphold democratic and pluralist values,[397] and by the fact that the event itself is meant to promote cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, and to '[raise] awareness of the value of cultural diversity at local, national and international levels'[398] – not simply on a European

[396] 'Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 Establishing a Union Action for the European Capitals of Culture for the Years 2020 to 2033 and Repealing Decision No 1622/2006/EC,' 132/1.

[397] 'Official Journal of the European Communities, C 162, 3 July 1990,' 162/1.

[398] 'Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 Establishing a Union Action for the European Capitals of Culture for the Years 2020 to 2033 and Repealing Decision No 1622/2006/EC,' 132/1.

one. With the aim of creating a common European cultural space and to 'strengthen the feeling of belonging to a common cultural area', the EU is employing a method of nation-building – or cultural-building – which is reminiscent of Hans Kohn's 'Eastern' nationalism which focused on 'culture', while also having as its foundation the principles of 'Western' nationalism which was grounded in pluralistic and economic ideals.

Chapter 6

Intra-European mobility and the Erasmus programme

This chapter will examine the concept of mobility within the EU with a focus on the Erasmus programme initiated by the European Union in 1987 as a practical means of communication. It will specifically look at how this programme aims at fostering a European identity among its participants. It will contribute to the overall report question by uncovering on what grounds the programme was founded, what the underlying motivations were and still are, survey what the scholarship says about its net impact on students' identity from participating in the programme, and assess the significance of mobility for EU identity creation. The chapter begins by discussing the history of Erasmus and its role in European identity creation, creating a link between formal education and the idea of socialising members of a common society. It then examines how the programme contributes to the larger idea of citizenship and territorial belonging, briefly comparing it to some of the freedoms afforded by citizenship itself. The question of a language barrier is also reviewed with Erasmus's effect on English-Taught Programmes in non-English-speaking Europe. Finally, the findings on the programme's contribution to the creation of a European identity among its participants is discussed.

6.1 The historical dimension of EU educational programme names

With the implementation of the TEU in 1992, the Treaty Establishing the European Community (now Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) was updated to include education as a policy field for the EU with Article 126 and 127 (today Article 165 and 166). The article states in part that, '[t]he Community shall contribute to the development of quality education', mainly by 'developing the European dimension in education' and 'encourage mobility of students and teachers', and also by 'promoting cooperation between educational establishments'.[399] Other than the Erasmus programme which was created in 1987, the European Commission has since established several programmes related to education, including the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes along with the Bologna Process, all with the purpose of adding a European dimension to education.

What is evident with these programmes is that they are all named after renowned European historical figures or places. Socrates was established in 1995 as the European Community action programme on education as an umbrella programme for EU educational initiatives running for five years at a time, incorporating the Erasmus (which will be examined shortly), Comenius, and Lingua programmes. The Socrates programme was intended to develop a European dimension in education on all levels to strengthen the spirit of European citizenship, and to promote contact between young people in the European Union. Comenius was intended to build partnerships between schools in different Member States through a European education project (EUP), and Lingua was meant to increase bilingualism and thus combat the language barrier faced by a multilingual Europe.[400]

The Leonardo da Vinci programme was designed to support vocational training policies in the Community, meant to ultimately enable young people to gain a 'vocational qualification recognized by [...] the Member

[399] Official Journal C 191, 'Treaty on European Union,' July 29, 1992, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A11992M%2FTXT.

[400] 'Decision No 819/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 1995 Establishing the Community Action Programme 'Socrates'' (Official Journal of the European Communities, March 14, 1995), 87/12, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31995D0819&from=EN.

State in which it is obtained'.[401] Additionally, the Bologna Process was launched with the aim of converging the educational systems in Europe to better enable student mobility in a European Higher Education Area.[402]

A quick overview of these programmes suggests that the European Commission regularly looks to history for names with legitimising power. Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus, and Comenius are all highly influential European scholars and philosophers, although the first two arguably more so than the latter two on a European scale. However, it is clear that the names have meanings apart from simply being historical figures; Johan Amos Comenius for example, wrote language textbooks in the pursuit of children's education, and produced the first illustrated textbook for children,[403] hence his name being used for a programme aimed at pupils. This is also the case for the Bologna Process, an intergovernmental initiative where the European Commission is a member, named after the University of Bologna in Italy founded in 1088 (although this date was later disputed by Paul Grendler who argued it was founded sometime in the 12th century).[404] The 'process' is meant to establish a common area for education in Europe, and is named after the continent's supposed first university. This draws a historical line from the present back to the modern origin of higher education, and creates a symbolic connection between what would become a period of renewal in European history (the Renaissance), and modern Europe.

The most famous of the programmes is arguably the Erasmus programme, which came to give its name to Erasmus+, the overarching programme which includes Comenius and Erasmus, established in 2013. Desiderius Erasmus himself was one of the great personalities and scholars of the late

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401 Official Journal of the European Communities, '94/819/EC: Council Decision of 6 December 1994 Establishing an Action Programme for the Implementation of a European Community Vocational Training Policy,' Pub. L. No. 31994D0819, 340 (1994), http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/1994/819/oj/eng.

402 'Sorbonne Joint Declaration,' May 25, 1998, http://ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/1998_Sorbonne/61/2/1998_Sorbonne_Declaration_English_552612.pdf.

403 Justin L. Glenn, 'The Intellectual-Theological Leadership of John Amos Comenius,' *Perichoresis* 16, no. 3 (July 1, 2018): 49–50.

404 Paul F. Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 6.

Renaissance and the Reformation. Born in the Netherlands, he travelled to universities and other areas of research in Italy, France, England, and Germany, embodying the focus on mobility in these programmes.[405] The common denominator for the EU educational initiatives as they relate to European identity is the mobility aspect. However, academic literature points to the skewed availability of Erasmus to people from less advantaged backgrounds.[406] This criticism will be discussed later in this chapter.

6.2 Erasmus and the creation of Europeans

When the Adonnino Committee in 1985 proposed ways to establish institutions and symbols able to foster a European identity, education was part of its list of recommended policy fields to explore. Not only did it suggest the implementation of a 'European dimension' in the educational material of Member States, but more importantly, the '[fostering of] school exchanges and meetings between schools and to remove obstacles in their way'. Recalling how the ECOC programme took inspiration from town twinning, Erasmus serves as another example of how the EU has based its identity-building programmes on existing initiatives like the concept of student exchange programmes. For the committee, '[u]niversity cooperation and mobility in higher education [was] of paramount importance'.[407] Thus, it was in 1987 that a Council Decision adopted the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students, commonly known by its abbreviated form, Erasmus (seemingly a backronym). The decision was primarily meant to increase the mobility of students and teachers significantly while promoting cooperation between European universities in order to: '[allow the Community to] draw upon an adequate pool of manpower with first hand experience of economic and social aspects of other Member States, while ensuring equality of opportunity for male and female students as regards participation in such mobility'; 'to [secure] the competitiveness of the Community'; 'to strengthen the in-

[405] Roland Herbert Bainton, *Erasmus of Christendom* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), 25, 33, 55, 223.

[406] Manuel Souto-Otero et al., 'Barriers to International Student Mobility: Evidence From the Erasmus Programme,' *Educational Researcher* 42, no. 2 (March 1, 2013): 70–77.

[407] Adonnino Committee, 'Report by the Committee on a People's Europe Submitted to the Milan European Council (Milan, 28 and 29 June 1985),' 13–15.

teraction between citizens in different Member States with a view to consolidating the concept of a People's Europe'; and to '[…] create the basis upon which intensified cooperation in the economic and social sectors can develop at Community level'.[408] In other words, Erasmus was established with clear economic and social motives.

By the time the Erasmus programme entered the history books in 1987, Sofia Corradi had spent much of her life advocating for international student exchange programmes. Referred to as 'Mama Erasmus'[409], Corradi is considered one of the founding mothers of the programme. After having her degree from Columbia University in the United States rejected by the University of Rome in Italy and being told that, '[s]tudents shouldn't go and study abroad because if Italian students go abroad to study, they will pollute the culture we live in'[410], Corradi worked tirelessly for twenty years to establish the initiative which eventually would become Erasmus. Her motivation was to promote a culture of student mobility, not just for the sake of one's professional education, but first and foremost to learn from the cultural experiences the programme provides, including coming into contact with different value systems and to mature as a person.[411]

From Corradi's perspective, Erasmus has a unique place in the fostering of cultural understanding. She contends that it is important that Erasmus students are neither 'tourists' nor 'immigrants', as the first often 'come and go' and only superficially interact with the host culture, while the latter

[408] Official Journal of the European Communities, '87/327/EEC: Council Decision of 15 June 1987 Adopting the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (Erasmus),' Pub. L. No. 31987D0327, 166 (1987), 166/21-166/22, http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/1987/327/oj/eng.

[409] *Sofia Corradi: 'Mamma Erasmus'* (Rome: European Parliament, 2016), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3MbmQX5xeU.

[410] Sofia Corradi, *Interview: Will Erasmus Live on Forever?* (Europarltv, 2012), 03:21, https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/interview-will-erasmus-live-on-forever_N003-0218_ev.

[411] Sofia Corradi, *Erasmus Programme: The Origin, Preparatory Years and Foundation, 1963-1986, of the European Union Initiative for the Exchange of University Students, Reported and Documented by the Scholar Who First Conceived of It* (Rome: Laboratory of Lifelong Learning and Laboratory of Comparative Education of the State University 'Roma Tre,' 2006), 55–58.

regularly face obstacles and may have a hard time adopting the said culture. Instead, Erasmus students stay in the host country for a much longer time than ordinary tourists, and they have institutions, like the university, ready to aid and take care of them when they arrive, even given funding (the amount is relative to one's country and destination) to help them make the move. Additionally, Erasmus students must apply to be a part of the programme – they are not forced to take on a journey abroad. As such, they are seen as more likely to be open to foreign cultures and to have the potential to learn more from their experiences.[412]

Umberto Eco stated in 2012 that, '[…] Erasmus has created the first generation of young Europeans. I call it a sexual revolution […]'.[413] In an interview, Corradi agreed with Eco's remarks, answering affirmatively to the question of whether Erasmus had helped 'create' Europeans more than any EU law, adding that '[…] love really is an instrument for making peace between peoples'.[414] Indeed, in 2014, the European Commission proudly announced that 33 per cent of former Erasmus students had a partner of a different nationality, and that 1 million 'Erasmus babies' had been born to these couples since 1987. Additionally, 40 per cent of Erasmus students had changed their country of residence or work at least once, all of these pointing to the programme's participants' internationalised, or Europeanised, career trajectories and biographies.[415]

In 2013, 26 years after the adoption of Erasmus, a new regulation updated the programme. Now named 'Erasmus+', among its other aims the programme was meant to (and expanded from simply intended to promote equality between men and women), 'promote […] equality between men and women and measures to combat discrimination based on sex, racial

[412] Corradi, 56–57; Thomas Nørgaard, 'Liberal Education in the Erasmus Programme,' in *Internationalisation of Higher Education and Global Mobility*, ed. Bernhard Streitwieser (Oxford: Symposium Books, 2014), 100–101.

[413] Gianni Riotta, 'Umberto Eco: 'It's Culture, Not War, That Cements European Identity,'' *The Guardian*, January 26, 2012, sec. World news, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/26/umberto-eco-culture-war-europa.

[414] Corradi, *Interview*, 05:07.

[415] 'Erasmus Impact Study Confirms EU Student Exchange Scheme Boosts Employability and Job Mobility,' European Commission, September 22, 2014, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_14_1025.

or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation [and to widen the access] for members of disadvantaged groups'; 'promote understanding between people and to contribute to the sustainable development of higher education in partner countries'; 'support mobility, equity and study excellence'; 'resolving [...] issues that create difficulties in obtaining visas and residency permits'; 'addressing Europe's high level of unemployment [...], promoting a culture of lifelong learning, countering social exclusion and promoting active citizenship'; 'contribute to the development of [...] the European integration process'; and promote 'lifelong learning', meaning 'formal' (refers to all institutional education), 'non-formal' (learning taking place through planned activities) and 'informal' (learning as a result from daily activities). Crucially, the programme 'shall support only those actions and activities which present a potential European added value'.[416] In this sense, 'EU added value' is defined as 'the value resulting from an EU intervention which is additional to the value that would have been otherwise created by Member State action alone'.[417] In the context of Erasmus, it would make sense to view the EU added value as the positive effects of studying abroad in another European country as opposed to the 'neutral' value of staying at home.

6.3 The importance of mobility

Judging by the obstacles Erasmus is meant to tear down, the programme is primarily intended to support and increase the mobility of (mainly) European youth and young adults, including students and educators, with a main aim of deepening European integration and identity among its intended audience. This integrationist theory harkens back to Karl W. Deutsch, who argued that the cross-border movement and mobility of people allows for increased contact between citizens of different backgrounds,

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[416] Official Journal of the European Communities, 'Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 Establishing 'Erasmus+': The Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport and Repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC Text with EEA Relevance,' Pub. L. No. 32013R1288, 347 (2013), 347/51-347/57, http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1288/oj/eng.

[417] 'SEC(2011) 867 – Commission Staff Working Paper: The Added Value of the EU Budget,' European Commission, June 29, 2011, 2, https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/staff-working-paper_en.

laying the foundations for institutional integration.[418] Neil Fligstein makes a similar argument, claiming that '[t]he process of creating a European society entails that people from different countries are getting to know one another directly. […] People who travel and work across borders do not just have national identities, but come to see themselves as Europeans'.[419]

'Mobility' is a key word here, as it relates to the concept of citizenship. As argued by Cherry James, '[h]istorically, universities have been exalted as the places where citizenship is cultivated: students living and learning: becoming citizens'[420]. Ultimately, creating 'citizens of Europe' is a major motivation of the EU, based on every initiative mentioned so far in this report that works to foster a common identity and make Europeans 'aware' of their shared cultures, histories, and opportunities, and to lay down laws which affords everyone the same rights and freedoms. When it comes to the Erasmus programme then, we can find many similarities between it and EU citizenship; they are both inherently meant to remove barriers for mobility within the Union (including the participating countries where Erasmus is concerned), and to encourage the capitalisation of that mobility. This strikes at the heart of civic nationalism, as both Erasmus and the concept of citizenship are both rights-based initiatives – initiatives which actively seek to tear down the barriers and boundaries of the nation-states which are based on both legal and cultural exclusivity and belonging. As Dimitry Kochenov contends, '[t]he main logic behind the nationalities of the Member States […] is that of *settling* the nationals within the confines of the states. The main logic of EU citizenship, on the contrary, consists of liberating citizens […] since the main EU citizenship right is to *leave* one's Member State of nationality and to settle elsewhere in the Union'. As such, EU citizenship is founded on the civic and democratic ideals laid down in the Treaties as one of the 'four freedoms', namely

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[418] Karl W. Deutsch, SA Burrel, and RA Kann, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1968).

[419] Neil Fligstein, *Euroclash: The EU, European Identity, and the Future of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 2.

[420] Cherry James, *Citizenship, Nation-Building and Identity in the EU: The Contribution of Erasmus Student Mobility* (London: Routledge, 2019), 1.

the movement of people, being able to move and settle in another Member State and to 'vote with one's feet'.[421]

The same can be said for Erasmus. Erasmus's main function is to facilitate the mobility of its users, crystallised by the fact that the international and collaborative concepts of the programme is reiterated time and time again in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, along with the idea of 'active [European] citizenship', referring to the 'participation of young people in democratic life in Europe'.[422] In this way, Erasmus is a means not only to foster a civic European identity, but also a European constituency which will support the European project in the future.[423] It is, in other words – and contrary to many other means of communication which are more passive – an investment in people which require their active participation. Instead of being afraid of, in the words of the Italian civil servant, having one's culture 'polluted'[424], the entire purpose of Erasmus is cultural mixing or at the very least cultural understanding and respect.

Erasmus has influenced another, major obstacle to European integration and mobility: the language barrier. A major part of national identity, Benedict Anderson argued that the formation of standardised language was a significant contributor to the emergence of nationally 'imagined communities' in early modern societies.[425] Since 2013 the EU has adopted 24 languages as officially recognised within the Union.[426] These exist alongside European countries which are not members but participants in the Erasmus programme, such as Norway, Iceland, and Turkey. Sharing a language is often seen as a prerequisite for the idea of a collective identity

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[421] Dimitry Kochenov, 'Mevrouw De Jong Gaat Eten: EU Citizenship and the Culture of Prejudice,' *EUI Working Paper*, RSCAS 2011, 3–4, https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1765983.

[422] 'Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2020,' European Commission, February 26, 2020, 5, https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-programme-guide-2020_en.

[423] Kristine Mitchell, 'Student Mobility and European Identity: Erasmus Study as a Civic Experience?,' *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 8, no. 4 (2012): 493.

[424] Corradi, *Interview*, 03:21.

[425] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 44.

[426] 'Języki UE (EU Languages),' European Union, accessed May 24, 2020, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-languages_en.

along with common origin, heritage, and memory, and the lack of a common mother tongue may make it difficult to establish a shared identity, especially as it relates to opinion formation and coherent action.[427] This fragmented language landscape also relates to education. The fact that domestic places of learning almost exclusively taught in their national language up until the 21st century acted as a barrier to student mobility, but as shown by recent studies, Erasmus and the growth of international students have massively increased the availability of English Taught Programmes (ETPs). The numbers are clear for non-English-speaking Europe: in 2001, only 725 ETPs existed, a number which climbed to 2,389 in 2007, and rose again to 8,089 in 2014.[428] Erasmus was not the only reason for this change. The wish to attract non-European students also had an impact, as both other European and foreign students could not be expected to master, or even learn, the language of the host country, especially if the countries were not called France, Germany, or Spain.[429]

The opportunities afforded by Erasmus then, 'Europeanises' two vital spaces of nationhood: mobility within the territory associated with the programme, and the matter of language, both which we can assume are likely to influence each other in a circle of increased opportunity. The inherent importance of mobility in the Erasmus programme is therefore established.

6.4 Effects of the programme on identity

The results of the Erasmus programme insofar as they relate to the contribution to European identity formation are disputed. Jan Truszczyński, the European Commission Director-General for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, claimed that the programme '[unites] young Europeans in common values and across national borders [and fosters] understanding

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[427] Erik Oddvar Eriksen, 'Conceptualising European Public Spheres: General, Segmented and Strong Publics,' in *The European Union and the Public Sphere: A Communicative Space in the Making?* (London: Routledge, 2007), 29–30.

[428] Bernd Wächter and Friedhelm Maiworm, eds., *English-Taught Programmes in European Higher Education: The State of Play in 2014* (Bonn: Lemmens, 2014), 16, 26.

[429] Wächter and Maiworm, 26.

and solidarity', adding that '[n]o other EU programme has been as effective as Erasmus in achieving both of these goals'.[430] Indeed, by January 2020, more than 10 million people, including students and academics, had participated in Erasmus since its inception,[431] and the apparent success of the initiative is symbolised by the Union's continued and increased funding of the programme, as it is set to more than double its budget from the all-time high of €14.71bn between 2014-2020, to €30bn between 2021-2027.[432]

Researchers are more divided on the issue. Christof van Mol, Russel King and Enric Ruiz-Gelices argue that one can observe an increase in European identity from participating in the programme[433], while Emmanuel Sigalas and Iain Wilson argue that the European identity experienced by some Erasmus students preceded their sojourn rather than being a product of it.[434] However, in more recent studies, van Mol finds that an increase in European identity is dependent on regional variation, more likely among Italians and Belgians than Norwegians and Austrians, and is probably partly explained by macro-factors like the home country's historical relationship with the EU.[435] Additionally, Kristine Mitchell highlights that the

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[430] Jan Truszczyński, 'Is Erasmus Europe's Success Story?,' openDemocracy, December 17, 2012, https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/is-erasmus-europes-success-story/.

[431] '10 Million Erasmus Participants and Counting,' European Commission, January 28, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_20_130.

[432] Denise Chircop, 'Erasmus 2021-2027: The Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport' (European Parliamentary Research Service, November 2018), 1, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/628313/EPRS_BRI(2018)628313_EN.pdf.

[433] Christof van Mol, 'The Influence of European Student Mobility on European Identity and Subsequent Migration Intentions,' in *Analysing the Consequences of Academic Mobility and Migration*, ed. Fred Dervin (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2011), 29–50.Russell King and Enric Ruiz-Gelices, 'International Student Migration and the European 'Year Abroad': Effects on European Identity and Subsequent Migration Behaviour,' *International Journal of Population Geography* 9, no. 3 (2003): 229–52.

[434] Emmanuel Sigalas, 'Cross-Border Mobility and European Identity: The Effectiveness of Intergroup Contact During the Erasmus Year Abroad,' *European Union Politics* 11, no. 2 (June 1, 2010): 241–65; Iain Wilson, 'What Should We Expect of 'Erasmus Generations'?,' *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 49, no. 5 (2011): 1113–40.

[435] Christof van Mol, 'Intra-European Student Mobility and European Identity: A Successful Marriage?,' *Population, Space and Place* 19, no. 2 (2013): 209–22.

studies by Sigalas and Wilson focused primarily on students *from*, and foreign students studying abroad *in*, the United Kingdom, skewing the results of Erasmus identity creation potential due to the research being overly UK-centric. Her study finds that, while it is true that Erasmus does not enhance the European identity of British students, the opposite is true for French, Italian, Spanish and German students; they all reported an increase in identification with Europe. This can be explained by the outlier identity of British students who were found to be almost three times more likely than students belonging to the other nationalities to begin the study viewing themselves in exclusive national terms (but explaining why this is was beyond the scope of the study).[436]

Mitchell's is a quantitative study based on surveys answered by 1,729 students from 28 universities in six different countries over two stages, the first shortly before the sojourn began, and the second round administered around six months after the first. It was made up of 1,435 Erasmus students going abroad, and 294 non-Erasmus students who remained in their home country. Furthermore, for this last distinction between Erasmus and non-Erasmus students, Mitchell found that even though the non-Erasmus students displayed no significant change in their identity over the course of the survey, the Erasmus students did. Erasmus students are inherently more likely to already identify as European than non-Erasmus students, but for those Erasmus participants who 'never' identified as European before their sojourn during the survey's first stage, three quarters had begun doing so after the second round six months later.[437] This last finding is potentially particularly significant since it challenges Theresa Kuhn's 'ceiling effect' – a theory stating that an Erasmus exchange will have miniscule effects on European identity creation because university students are already likely to identify as European.[438]

Additionally, a qualitative study on Romanian students' sense of European identity following an Erasmus sojourn found that a latent feeling of

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[436] Kristine Mitchell, 'Rethinking the 'Erasmus Effect' on European Identity,' *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 53, no. 2 (2015): 330–348.

[437] Mitchell, 335–40.

[438] Theresa Kuhn, 'Why Educational Exchange Programmes Miss Their Mark: Cross-Border Mobility, Education and European Identity,' *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 50, no. 6 (2012): 995.

being European is common among the students before their time abroad, but that Erasmus may function as a catalyst to activate this identity, even if it exists as a second or third identity after national and regional affiliations. Georgiana Udrea found that 'Erasmus students mentioned actualizations of their national identity […], as well as actualizations of a European sense of self (both civic and cultural)' (actualization referring to the active sense of association with the identity), adding that national and European identities are not incompatible. Crucially, many of the students highlighted the mobility afforded to them as Erasmus students – and EU citizens – in making them feel like European citizens.[439]

6.5 Barriers to participation

However, there is another factor which might influence the effect of Erasmus and the *a priori* European identity in students, namely their social backgrounds and varying levels of financial means. Labelled 'the only shortcoming that Erasmus has' by 'Mama Erasmus' Sofia Corradi[440], the programme provides many opportunities, but offers a relatively small monthly grant (€170-€470 depending on the country of study and origin)[441] to its participants. In this sense, the grant is meant to cover additional costs – not the main living costs – of studying abroad, making students reliant on other types of funding to fully cover their stay. The opportunities afforded by Erasmus may therefore not be as widely available as the European Commission portrays.

This position is supported by research, which has shown that financial barriers pose a major obstacle to participation in the Erasmus programme. A study from 2002 found that financial costs were seen as the most common barrier to foreign studies among German students, where 61 per cent of non-mobile students and 41 per cent of mobile students determined it

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[439] Georgiana Udrea, 'European Identity and Erasmus Mobility. Insights from Romanian Students' Experiences,' *Revista Română de Comunicare Şi Relații Publice* XIV, no. 5 (2012): 27–29.

[440] Corradi, *Interview*, 03:48.

[441] 'Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2020,' 46–47.

a significant barrier.[442] A study from 2010 commissioned by the European Parliament found that 56 per cent of students deemed studying abroad to be too costly for consideration, but also that financial reasons varied between countries (36 per cent in Sweden compared to 72 per cent in Spain). Additionally, the study approximated that financial considerations caused a potential annual loss of between 980.000 and 1.5 million Erasmus students, which would come on top of the roughly 488.000 students already participating (and discounting 24 per cent of students who said they simply were not interested in studying abroad). Interestingly, countries like Spain and Portugal, with a higher financial barrier to study abroad, also showed a high participation rate, compared to Sweden and Denmark where the financial barrier was seen as relatively low and the participation rate was equally low.[443] This might suggest that Portuguese and Spanish students see Erasmus as a way to find opportunities abroad, as shown by a similar study produced on behalf of the Commission from 2014.[444] This study also revealed that 58 per cent of students listed uncertainty about costs as a barrier for participation, suggesting that there is validity in the critique of Erasmus as disproportionality favouring financially advantaged students.

Furthermore, a study by Theresa Kuhn shows that people from low-education households are less likely to take advantage of Erasmus, partially because Erasmus is a programme mainly offered at university level. This does not mean that the low-educated are not able to adopt a European identity; on the contrary, transnational interactions have strong, positive effects on their identity as Europeans, but they are unlikely to inhabit an *a priori* European identity without such interactions, unlike the highly educated.[445]

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[442] Barbara M. Kehm, 'The Contribution of International Student Mobility to Human Development and Global Understanding,' *US-China Education Review* 2, no. 1 (January 2005): 22.

[443] Hans Vossensteyn et al., 'Improving the Participation in the Erasmus Programme' (Brussels: European Parliament, 2010), 43–47.

[444] 'The Erasmus Impact Study' (Luxembourg: European Commission, 2014), https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-impact-study_en.

[445] Kuhn, 'Why Educational Exchange Programmes Miss Their Mark.'

6.6 Mobility and Erasmus as signifiers of civic nationalism

As this chapter has shown, Erasmus was founded on the principles of tearing down barriers to student mobility in Europe, inspired in part by the connection between education and international mobility. The programme provides opportunities for education and provides (albeit a relatively small amount) funding for studies across the EU and beyond, essentially acting as an incentive for mobility and giving young Europeans reasons to leave their home country for a time and interact with other Europeans. In this way, Erasmus shares some aspects of citizenship or at least the process of citizen-making, as it encourages and allows for social interactions between citizens from the European 'polity' and education in a 'European' as opposed to national setting. This makes Erasmus a civic programme, and solidifies the importance of mobility to the European project and EU identity creation. It does not in itself promote aspects of ethnic nationalism, but the cultural results of the programme might, insofar as students are encouraged to learn about, familiarise themselves with and immerse themselves in the different cultures and the diverse groups of peoples they meet. Through such interaction, it is hoped that Erasmus will help with fostering a common European identity, based both on the civic opportunities the EU has afforded them through the programme, and through the social and cultural experiences and memories they make.

However, while some studies show that the programme has little to no effect on European identity formation,[446] more recent studies suggest it does indeed have a positive impact,[447] while highlighting the importance of the students' country of origin in determining the influence of Erasmus. Barriers to participation still remain, such as the financial costs of studying abroad. The levels of education also factor in, revealing an area of improvement for the programme, namely that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to take advantage of Erasmus.[448] As the EU considers Erasmus one of their greatest success stories, doubling the programme's funding for the next budget frame, it also aims to increase the

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[446] Sigalas, 'Cross-Border Mobility and European Identity'; Wilson, 'What Should We Expect of 'Erasmus Generations'?'

[447] van Mol, 'Intra-European Student Mobility and European Identity'; Mitchell, 'Rethinking the 'Erasmus Effect' on European Identity.'

[448] Kuhn, 'Why Educational Exchange Programmes Miss Their Mark.'

number of possible participants as well as making the programme more available to people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Whether this goal will be met remains to be seen. In summation, Erasmus displays many of the same civic ideals that the European Union itself espouses: mobility, shared opportunities, and increased interaction between the peoples of Europe.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

This report began by asking by which means the European Union attempts to foster a European identity, and which types of nationalism its signifiers promote. The report based itself on a chosen set of means of communication, included due to their symbolic aspects or because they displayed more practical approaches to identity creation. Therefore, to narrow the scope of the report, I chose the flag, anthem, and currency as examples of symbolic means of communication, which also had precedents in history, and the European Capitals of Culture and the Erasmus programmes as 'practical' means of communication which demand active civic participation. The report also sought to determine whether the signifiers were founded on a civic or an ethnic tradition of nationalism, by basing the terms mainly on Anthony Smith's definition which tied civic nationalism to common laws, rights, and political institutions, and ethnic nationalism to cultural heritage and traditions, religion, and ethnicity.[449]

The findings in this report underscore the European Union's agenda to foster a European identity which at the same time attempts to overcome dividing factors of the nationalism of its Member States, and replace them

[449] Smith, *National Identity*.

with loyalties to a shared European 'imagined community'.[450] The idea of belonging to a European civilization is not novel (as the concept has been articulated through various terms like 'Christendom', 'the West', or indeed 'European'),[451] but it is the scope and the means by which a modern European identity is constructed, and the type of nationalism promoting it, which warrant research.

This report finds that the European Union has placed emphasis on civic values when promoting a European identity. The initiatives and signifiers examined – the flag, anthem, currency, ECOC, and Erasmus – are all grounded in the Treaties which highlight the Union's principles such as democracy, liberty, human rights, equality, the rule of law, and importantly, 'ending the division of Europe' and to 'deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions'.[452] In this respect, the report finds that it has been crucial for the Union's symbols to simultaneously highlight aspects shared by European nations, while, if not disregarding their respective differences, then portraying their uniqueness as strengths to the common identity.

Flags, anthems, and currencies are symbolic means of communication which have been employed in nation and identity-building processes.[453] As such, these symbols have been prone to espouse nationalisms built on ethnic foundations which highlight national uniqueness and belonging. They traditionally represent totems in the Durkheimian sense, meant to establish bonds, promote patriotic action and legitimise authority.[454] However, I have argued that the European Union has taken these symbolic signifiers and promoted an identity based on civic values. What all the symbols in this report share, is their abstract 'designs'; the flag is made up of stars in a circle – not a cross; the anthem is all music and no words; and the common currency shows no apparent 'national' preference

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450 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

451 Hale, *The Civilization of Europe in the Renaissance*; Elliott, 'Revolution and Continuity in Early Modern Europe'; Hayes, *History of Western Civilization Volume I*.

452 'Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.'

453 Cerulo, 'Symbols and the World System'; Sassatelli, ''Europe in Your Pocket''.

454 Cerulo, 'Symbols and the World System,' 243–44; Whitney Smith, *Flags Through the Ages and Across the World* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975).

through depiction of famous individuals, but instead displays architecture, maps, and other symbols. This is significant, because the EU is a supranational political construct which lacks traditional ethnic underpinnings. Thus, it cannot rely on natural, ancestral, or national cultural ties and heritage,[455] but must build a European identity on other concepts, and like most multiethnic and multinational communities lacking common descent, it does so through interpretable symbols.[456] This goes against the idea of an exclusive cultural or religiously based European civilisation promoted by Karl Anton Rohan, but as argued by Hartmut Behr, the EU's ascension requirements, so-called 'standards of civilization', may in fact act as a new way to assert an 'enlightened' civilisation (especially onto Eastern Europe) in a modern imperial-like fashion.[457]

This is not to say that these symbols are empty signifiers. Whether it is the flags in the stars or the bridges on the euro bills, they are meant to convey a message of unity[458] – of a community connected by bridges instead of being separated by them.[459] Through these symbols, according to Luuk van Middelaar, the euro tells a story about the European community (with a small c) itself; 'Europe, the notes said, was born in Antiquity, has a long history, and cherishes her metamorphoses'.[460] This lends aspects of ethnic

[455] Sassatelli, 'Europe in Your Pocket,' 363.

[456] Max Haller, 'Epilogue: Europe as a New Nation or a Community of Nations?,' in *Toward a European Nation?: Political Trends in Europe - East and West, Center and Periphery: Political Trends in Europe - East and West, Center and Periphery* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 247.

[457] Anita Prettenthaler-Ziegerhofer, 'Eurotopias: Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-Europa and Rohan's Europäischer Kulturbund,' in *The Space of Crisis: Images and Ideas of Europe in the Age of Crisis: 1914–1945*, ed. Matthew D'Auria and Vittorio Dini (Bern: Peter Lang B, 2013), 176; Hartmut Behr, 'The European Union in the Legacies of Imperial Rule? EU Accession Politics Viewed from a Historical Comparative Perspective,' *European Journal of International Relations* 13, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 239–62.

[458] Council of Europe and European Commission, 'Publications Office – Interinstitutional Style Guide – Annex A1 – Graphics Guide to the European Emblem.'

[459] Georg Simmel, 'Bridge and Door,' *Theory, Culture & Society* 11, no. 1 (February 1, 1994): 5–10.

[460] Luuk van. Middelaar, *The Passage to Europe: How a Continent Became a Union* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2013), 243.

nationalism to the design as it highlights cultural heritage and history as opposed to institutions, which in turn exclude nations not involved in these historical processes.

The practical means also display a multifaceted nationalism. The European Capitals of Culture programme was founded on the idea of cultural dissemination in Europe to bring the citizens of the various Member States together, both by highlighting their cultural diversity and adding a European dimension which focused on shared aspects of European heritage.[461] Even though the motivations for the programme itself was originally focused on culture, it evolved into a way for cities to reinvigorate themselves through urban development and investments in cultural programmes.[462] As with the Erasmus programme, the focus of these initiatives are ultimately European cultural intermingling, as they promote movement inside Europe, and the appreciation for and greater understanding of other European cultures. Erasmus was originally meant to facilitate the creation of a future European 'constituency' based on mobility and education,[463] and in this way, its origins are civic. An ethnic aspect exists here too, however, as illustrated by the Union's celebration of both couples and babies 'produced' as a result of Erasmus participation, a phenomenon called a 'sexual revolution' by Umberto Eco.[464]

The European Union's means of communication, both symbolic and practical, are therefore mainly based on civic nationalism through the emphasis on rights and pluralist values, even though they reveal aspects of ethnic nationalism when focusing on cultural heritage.

Chris Shore however, has argued that the European Union has no tangible or self-identifying European Public and no 'demos' which could grant its

[461] 'Decision 1419/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 1999 Establishing a Community Action for the European Capital of Culture Event for the Years 2005 to 2019,' 14.

[462] Palmer et al., 'European Cities and Capitals of Culture: Study Prepared for the European Commission Part 1'; Bernardino, Freitas Santos, and Cadima Ribeiro, 'The Legacy of European Capitals of Culture to the 'Smartness' of Cities.'

[463] Mitchell, 'Student Mobility and European Identity,' 493.

[464] 'Erasmus Impact Study Confirms EU Student Exchange Scheme Boosts Employability and Job Mobility'; Riotta, 'Umberto Eco.'

institutions legitimacy.[465] But how does one determine the existence of a people? One way is by interpreting the Eurobarometer results: in late 2019, 70 per cent of responders felt they were citizens of the EU, up from 41 per cent in 1991 when a similar question on attachment to Europe was posed.[466] The voter turnout for the 2019 European Parliament elections – although still significantly lower than the turnout for most European national parliament elections – rose to 50.62 per cent, its highest level since 1994 with an eight point jump from 2014.[467] Another is by looking at Europeanisation effects on Erasmus participants (although this is a small number compared to the overall population), where some recent studies suggest that students do identity more with Europe after their sojourn.[468] In 2003, Michael Bruter found that a majority of participants in an experiment on European identity felt anger when they saw someone burning the European flag, had positive feelings towards a European passport, and wished to see both the European and national flags present when leaders made public TV statements.[469] Even though these factors hardly prove the existence of a solid supranational European nation, they do suggest that a not insignificant number of Member State citizens participate in European Union civic activities and feel a certain association towards it. Visual studies may also help us understand why symbols are important to European identity creation, as they suggest that images and their use can tell us much about both the communicator and the target of communication, and

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[465] Shore, 'In Uno Plures'? EU Cultural Policy and the Governance of Europe.'

[466] It must be noted that opinion polls are not foolproof, and that Höpner and Jurczyk argue they are actively misleading. 'Standard Eurobarometer 92 Autumn 2019' (European Commission, November 2019), 14, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/2255; '35 Years of Eurobarometer,' 17–18; Martin Höpner and Bojan Jurczyk, 'How the Eurobarometer Blurs the Line Between Research and Propaganda,' MPIfG Discussion Paper (Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, 2015), https://econpapers.repec.org/paper/zbwmpifgd/156.htm.

[467] 'EU.'

[468] Mitchell, 'Student Mobility and European Identity'; van Mol, 'Intra-European Student Mobility and European Identity'; Udrea, 'European Identity and Erasmus Mobility. Insights from Romanian Students' Experiences.'

[469] Bruter, 'Winning Hearts and Minds for Europe,' 1158.

research shows that visual communication is becoming more and more important in politics.[470]

Because symbols have been believed by European actors to be important for the creation of a European identity,[471] we can determine that Hobsbawm's theory on invented traditions and symbols as vital to nation-building is valid and relevant in this respect. The European flag is commonplace throughout the Union, and so is the currency in Eurozone countries. Along with the anthem, they are 'emotionally and symbolically charged signs of club membership', often used by nations to signal their sovereignty and independence.[472] Because they are so common, they can also be categorised as banal because they reproduce ideological habits enabling the establishment of nations.[473]

This is not to say EU symbols exist without criticism. On the contrary. Its flag has been described as being unable to arouse emotion, representing an organisation which disregards society and culture.[474] The euro's design has been called too abstract, devoid of meaning, and even culturally denuded.[475] The ECOC programme has only seen relative success in the European dimension domain, and the Erasmus programme has been criticised for only catering to the elite, which is inherently more likely to feel an affinity toward the EU anyway.[476] The anthem, one of few in the world without lyrics, has been described as, 'truly a bastard child of the Enlightenment: a song without words; hope without text', and 'ill fit for a club

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470 Popa and Dumitrescu, 'National but European?'; Gunther Kress and Theo Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, Second edition (London: Routledge, 2006); Paul Messaris, *Visual 'Literacy': Image, Mind, and Reality*, *Fulcrum.Org* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994); Maria Elizabeth Grabe, *Image Bite Politics: News and the Visual Framing of Elections* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

471 Adonnino Committee, 'Report by the Committee on a People's Europe Submitted to the Milan European Council (Milan, 28 and 29 June 1985).'

472 Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 11.

473 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

474 Jousserand, 'Drapeau, Hymne, Monnaie et Bientôt Carte d'identité ?'

475 Kaelberer, 'The Euro and European Identity,' 168; Gaillard, 'Which Europe?'; Zakaria, 'Money for Mars.'

476 Kuhn, 'Why Educational Exchange Programmes Miss Their Mark.'

with little hold on public attention'.[477] These criticisms highlight the difficulties inherent in fostering a supranational identity, because such an identity – at least at this stage in the EU's history – cannot rely on exactly the same building blocks as those which support Member State nationalism. The Union has therefore approached such symbols with modifications, removing the specifically national and replacing it with concepts which can be shared.

Nationalism has been one of, if not the most powerful political force in Europe in the past two centuries.[478] Michael Billig rightfully deemed it the 'endemic condition'[479]; it is steady and always maintained, and citizens are constantly reminded of which nation they belong to – or which they don't. The story of modern Europe is a story of nationalism and competing nations, and the recent rise of populism in the form of a xenophobic 'authoritarian nationalism' proves that ethnicity and ethnic nationalism has yet to lose their potency.[480] The European Union does not stand apart from these trends and events; rather, it exists in its very midst, a direct result of wars between nations and itself a driver of an identity which stands in opposition to the exclusive nation. Yet the EU plays the 'game of nations' as well. The Union's use of signifiers which have long been tools of the state suggest that, although it officially seeks to undo the dividing factors of ethnic nationalism, acknowledges the identity creating powers inherent in its symbols. Why else would it adopt means of communication which are identical to those employed by nation-states, and use rhetoric which emphasise the existence of a people, a community, or common heritage?

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[477] Clark, 'Forging Identity,' 801; [Charlemagne], 'The Enduring Influence of Kraftwerk,' *The Economist*, May 16, 2020, https://www.economist.com/europe/2020/05/16/the-enduring-influence-of-kraftwerk.

[478] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Smith, *National Identity*; Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986); Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

[479] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 6.

[480] Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Cultural Backlash: Trump, Brexit, and Authoritarian Populism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108595841.

Yet acknowledging the power of 'national' symbols does not mean the motivations behind the symbols are the same. As seen, most of the Union's signifiers are portrayed as symbolising or promoting rights and values – not ethnic or national superiority or exclusivity, but plurality and diversity. However, that rhetoric coming from EU leaders and its treaties so often emphasise civic values suggests that a European identity indeed lacks the ancestral and cultural ties which nations traditionally are predicated on.[481] Crucially then, the European Union – by definition – cannot successfully employ ethnic nationalist rhetoric because there exists no European ethnicity in the same sense that there exists Italian, Polish, or Irish ethnicities. All far-right 'nationalist' parties in the European Parliament want to weaken the Union and 'give back' power to the nation-states. Civic nationalism is therefore the only real nationalism viable for the EU to promote, at least until enough people begin to think of themselves as ethnically and culturally European.

The move from ethnic to civic nationalism does not necessarily entail the end of superiority ideas, however. The EU's 'standards of civilization' as they relate to law and economy may become a new form of identity which espouses a European superiority over 'others' who do not share the same values. Whether this will eventually evolve into a theory of who is 'good enough' to become European is not certain (maybe it already has), but civic ascension requirements, whether they keep Turkey or others from partaking in the European project, do indeed determine whether one's nation can 'ascend' to the European arena and may even represent a new form of 'civilizing mission'.[482]

This report has shown that nationalism, both civic and aspects of the ethnic, remain important parts of European identity creation in the European Union. Even though the Treaties emphasise the former, allusions to common cultural heritage prove that traditional means of communicating identity are never far away. The challenge of course is that while regional or national identities are often based on 'thick' forms of identity rooted in cultural and historical ties, a European identity is grounded in 'thin' forms; a post-national, cosmopolitan identity loyal to common rights and

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[481] Sassatelli, 'Europe in Your Pocket,' 363.

[482] Behr, 'The European Union in the Legacies of Imperial Rule?'

justice.[483] As the thicker forms of identity demand much more time to take shape, the thinner loyalties effectively become the only viable means of constructing a European identity in the short to medium term which can support the expansion of the civic European project.

At the time of writing, the most important European symbols have only been in existence for around 35 years at the most. And while the European experiment began in 1951, the Union only launched its cultural policy in 1993, with European leaders seemingly acknowledging the importance of thicker cultural foundations to any community. It underscores the European Union's perhaps greatest challenge: to foster a truly common identity which transcends the nation-exclusive, capable of supporting the European project through thick and thin.

[483] Delanty and Rumford, *Rethinking Europe*, 68,85.

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