



Education and Solidarity in the European Union

Europe's Lost Spirit

Sarah K. St. John

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ISBN 978-3-030-63041-6 ISBN 978-3-030-63042-3 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-63042-3>

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The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*For my family: Guido, Lavinia, Giacomo and Giovanni.
And for anyone who needs to have more faith in themselves. The sky is the
limit, so find your wings.*

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Introduction

Solidarity has become a question of survival for the European Union (EU) as it recovers from a decade of crises, only to start the new decade amid a global pandemic. Global and European challenges, alongside a rise in populism, have left the establishment of strong EU solidarity struggling, despite initiatives from within the EU calling to *connect with citizens* to strengthen the community. The need to bolster the European project with deep-rooted solidarity is not a new concept of our times. It was in fact highlighted as early as the 1948 Congress of Europe in The Hague as a fundamental necessity for the project's success. The subsequent European Cultural Conference of 1949 proposed education as a means to diffuse the notion of a united Europe. This book tells that story of the European Movement's mission to create through education a European spirit to secure the success of European integration, and how much of that mission reflected in the Europe of today.

In tracing the development of an EU education policy, which never managed to be established as a fully fledged area of European competence, the book draws links between the crisis of solidarity experienced by the EU today and the difficulties faced throughout European integration to foster spirit through education. European symbols have been created, including a European flag, a European patrimony of historic towns and sites, and a Europe Day, but has it been enough to foster a European

spirit and solidarity? Economic, financial, military, demographic and environmental crises at global level have put European solidarity to the test and have the capacity to strengthen the European Union or shatter it. Was a European spirit created and lost or did it ever really exist at all? What role did education play in fostering spirit, to what extent did it succeed and what were the obstacles in relying on education? The book makes the case that education has not been a stable mechanism for fostering spirit due to its national attachment to identity and nation-building. However, without education, it has been a challenge to foster the spirit needed to establish a strong sense of European solidarity to overcome the crises the EU faces today.

The book's primary objective is to explore the linkage between education and European solidarity to suggest that today's crisis of solidarity in the EU can be connected to the development of (or lack thereof) an education policy at European level. Specifically, it analyses the role assigned to education (secondary, further and higher education, as well as adult and vocational education) in early discussions on European integration to foster the European spirit needed to create a cohesive union of states with a common outlook and mission. It goes on to draw on the current political landscape to highlight the consequences of weak or non-existent European spirit—what the European founders had feared. At the same time, rather than concluding that education should be dismissed as a means to foster solidarity, the book looks ahead to propose how, through lessons learnt, the EU can navigate education policy in such a way that it still has an important role to play in the processes of civic participation and solidarity-building.

The pursuit of this argument follows two theoretical and analytical routes, structured in the book in three parts and outlined in this introductory chapter. The first part of the book, *Education in the European Union*, is dedicated to the origins and evolution of education as an area of European Community policy. To trace competence expansion and analyse the nature of its development, the study is framed within the debate between the opposing integration theories of neofunctionalism (policy development is automatic and is facilitated by the concept of spillover) and intergovernmentalism (member states play a central role in the policy-development process which is therefore driven by converging national interests). The part concludes by illuminating the notion that education has developed according to—and continues to develop along the lines

of—intergovernmentalism due to its close attachment to national-identity formation, nation-building and national solidarity.

The book's second part focuses on the notion of solidarity between theory and practice, while the final part, *The entwinement of education and solidarity in the European Union*, unpacks the challenges and possibilities for fostering European spirit and solidarity through education, as advocated by the European Movement, triangulating the theoretical concepts of Durkheim to understand solidarity, Hegel for input on how individuals relate to their society, and Habermas on citizens' participation in the public sphere and the role of learning processes. It elaborates this linkage between education and nation-building to seek answers to what it implies for the EU today in the face of the crises, when a demand for European solidarity is in short supply.

Exploring through the notion of spirit the intertwine between education and solidarity, the book presents an interdisciplinary study that avoids the compartmentalisation of education studies, philosophy and political science to bring ideas together that shed fresh light on contemporary debates currently under the spotlight. The study does not limit its appeal and benefit to educationalists, but also opens up the field of education to a wider audience in European policymaking, with attention made to attracting practitioners looking beyond the confines of their policy area to understand how education might impact hot policy topics, as well as to academics seeking to make more sense of education's scope across European studies.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The first of the content chapters *Education and the European "Idea" (1945–1956)* addresses the initial concrete steps towards constructing Europe and the already embedded role of education in this process. Discussions on the uniting of Europe took place in the framework of the pressure group the European Movement and specifically at the Congress of Europe in The Hague in 1948. In addition to the political specificities of bringing the nations of Europe closer together, representatives proposed the cultural unification of Europe, stating that if the European project were to succeed, it could not just be a political union, it had to exist in the hearts of its citizens. A European spirit was a fundamental component. The congress considered education to be a mechanism for fostering European spirit and put forward a series of initiatives for the

implementation of this mission. The aim of this chapter is to introduce the work of the European Movement, and to outline the discussions that took place in the context of the Congress of Europe and the subsequent European Cultural Conference (1949) on fostering a European spirit through initiatives in the field of education. The timeframe reflects the initial discussions on uniting Europe until the Treaty of Rome establishing a European Community and evidence is provided by documentation on the European Movement, consulted at the Historical Archives of the European Union.

Chapter 3 *The road to a European Community education policy (1957–1970)* outlines the emergence of a formal place for education in European integration. Emphasis was placed on the development of activities in education at European level with a cultural attachment in order to foster European spirit. However, tracing the development of an education policy at European level reveals a shift in the nature and missions of activities. Despite marked attention during early discussions on uniting Europe, education was not included in the 1957 Treaty of Rome setting up the European Community. Closely related was a provision for vocational educational training, and although it left a door open for education, it meant that activities with an economic attachment drove forward policy development. The chapter aims to summarise the development of a European Community education policy from 1957 until 1976, when education took shape as a formal competence of the European Community. It aims to reveal how member states and the European Community have approached cooperation in the field of education and the establishment of a formal policy field, namely that its association with the economic and political missions of the European Community facilitated its path and shaped its purpose at European level. Evidence is drawn from European Community documentation at the Historical Archives of the European Union as well as European Community communications and policy documents.

Chapter 4 *Developing a Community level education policy (1971–present)* continues the historical account of EU education policy from the point when the European Community began to hold a recognised competence in the area of education, in particular the “Janne Report” of 1973, which was completed by the Belgian Minister for Education to pinpoint the basic elements of an education policy at Community level. Two action programmes, the Social Action Programme and the Education Action Programme, followed swiftly, helping to cement Community activities in

the fields of education and training. The 1980s were peak years for education policy, which saw the creation of the Erasmus Programme and new Education and Training Action Programmes, and the 1990s saw further restructuring and reforms in Teaching and Learning as steps towards the learning society. The Lisbon Strategy of the 2000s threw focus onto life-long learning and the Open Method of Communication. Finally, the last decade has witnessed ever intensifying activities, especially through the Europe 2020 Strategy, which has placed education high on the agenda to reinforce a knowledge economy in Europe. Research has been carried out through the study of policy papers and EU documentation.

Chapter 5 *An intellectual hub for Europe: The College of Europe and the European University* presents the complex creation of these institutions, the latter of which took almost three decades to establish due to conflicting interests and the implications of cooperating in education at European level. The creation of these institutions acts as an informative case study for demonstrating how European cooperation of the field of education translates into practice. This chapter traces the European University project from its roots within the European Movement discussions to the establishment of the European University Institute in Florence and the College of Europe in Bruges. The chapter is based on archival research at the Historical Archives of the European Union, where documentation from the European Movement as well as the European University Institute was consulted. The timeframe reflects the first discussions on the European University in the framework of the European Movement until the European University Institute was established.

Such a significant role for education in the early stages of European integration should have implied an impetus to the development of a European Community education policy, but this did not turn out to be the case and education continues to struggle to find its place as a full-fledged EU competence. Chapter 6 *Education: A complicated policy field* unpacks the complexities that surround European-level cooperation in education. Europe's founders had underestimated what emerged to be an area of national sensitivity in which the European Community found itself negotiating statism to develop initiatives in the field of education.

Tracing the evolution of education as an area of European Community competence reveals that there are numerous opportunities for spillover to occur, leaning towards neofunctionalist theory, but policy development appears resisted. What emerges is that member states appear reluctant to upload power in matters relating to education when initiatives lean

towards a cultural orientation, while they appear more willing when a clear economic benefit can be identified. This suggestion that member states have been able to influence the direction and scope of policy development is in line with an intergovernmentalist view of how integration occurs, in particular Moravcsik (1998). To explain this reluctance to engage in European policymaking in matters relating to education, this chapter explores the notion that education is entwined and embedded in nation-building, which forms the foundation's national sovereignty, identity and solidarity (Neave 2001). This analysis begins by clarifying the terms nation, nation-states, nationality and national identity, before exploring the connection with education at national level. The significant role that education has to play in the building of nation-states mirrors the necessity for education to be involved in the building of a united Europe at European level. This is precisely what nation-states are uneasy about because it implies the risk of diluting national identity with European identity. A patent tension that emerges between fostering European identity, solidarity and spirit with that of preserving national identity, solidarity and spirit, which provides a tangible explanation for member states' reluctance for the EU to meddle in its educational affairs.

In Chapter 7 *Understanding European solidarity, spirit and identity: Theory* the book shifts to Part II. The part's first chapter has a twofold aim of introducing non-specialist readers to the concepts of solidarity, identity and spirit; and exploring the current debates surrounding these concepts. The chapter draws on the work of scholars such as Karagiannis (2007) to map a theoretical understanding of solidarity, including the work of Offe, Baldwin and Durkheim, and leading to Habermas's "Justice and Solidarity" (1989). Habermas, who brings Hegel into the discussion having been influenced by Hegelian insights to reciprocal recognition relating also to spirit, proves an effective theoretical basis upon which to discuss the link between solidarity, identity and spirit, and the crises of the European Union. In his publications "The Postnational Constellation" (2001b), "Europe: The Faltering Project" (2004) and "The Crisis of the European Union: A Response" (2012), Habermas argued that national identity acts as a barrier to ever closer union and what he sees as the holy grail of transnational democracy and cosmopolitan community (Murphy and St. John 2019).

The chapter highlights the calls for greater solidarity within Europe, exploring what European solidarity implies in pragmatic terms, including the different versions of solidarity that emerge when facing different types

of crises in the European context. This includes how public support for European solidarity varies according to the issue involved—financial, immigration, natural disasters, terrorism or the environment—and the instruments used for risk and burden sharing (Genschel and Hemerijck 2018).

Created with non-specialists in mind, Chapter 8 *An Introduction to Europe's Decade of Crises: Solidarity in Practice* outlines the challenges and crises facing the EU in the last decade. In particular, the chapter presents two cases in point to demonstrate scenarios in which the supply for European spirit and solidarity has not met the demand: disintegration in the case of the UK and the rise to power of populism in Italy. Solidarity breaks down when individuals are not informed about how European integration works, how they can make sense of it and therefore stand together in times of crisis. On the other hand, it also breaks down when they feel the European Union is not delivering. Both case studies imply a need for greater transparency between the EU institutions and the people, in accordance with Habermas's ideas on mutual understanding. The case of the UK voting to leave the bloc, with questions from the people like "what has the EU ever done for us?" or "why should they tell us what to do?" suggest a strong indication that a key aspect leading to voters' decisions is the fact that the European Union is simply not understood. In the British context, deeper discussions take place on a long-standing resistance to European integration due to a distinctive nationalist English identity (Risse 2005). In fact, considering national political elites' influence on fostering European identity (Göncz and Lengyel 2016), it can be said that an almost complete lack of European sentiment portrayed by the British government to its citizens has resulted in the worst possible case: a decision to leave the EU.

Italy, however, is historically pro-European, but it has been a principal receiver of migrants during the migrant crisis. The feeling in Italy is that the country has been left to fend for itself in the face of hundreds of thousands of arrivals, which has led to the popularity of the *Lega* (former Northern League) party advocating hard anti-immigration policies. *Lega* became a governing party in a coalition with the populist *Movimento Cinque Stelle* (M5S), which indicates Italians' dissatisfaction with the immigration issue and what is felt to be a lack of support from the European Union on the matter.

Shifting to the third part, Chapter 9 *Past and present challenges, and future opportunities, for engaging education to address the solidarity crisis*

provides the core of the book's analysis. The European Union has been facing crises for over a decade, beginning with the economic crisis of 2007 and continuing tough challenges, stemming in particular from migration, which is at the centre of the European Union's very *raison d'être*: free movement. The political landscape is overwhelmed with a wave of populism that is increasingly taking more nationalistic stances towards issues to defend against what are perceived to be influxes of migrants. Although not limited to Europe, this is questioning the legitimacy of the European Union.

The chapter draws links between the current political climate, dwindling solidarity and the struggles for achieving fully fledged competence in education at European level. Deepening Habermas's link discussed earlier by between identity, solidarity and facing the current crises, Habermas provides further theoretical enlightenment in his discourse on learning processes. He suggests that it is possible to learn our way out of nationalism and nation-state-bounded public policies. He makes continuous reference across his publications to the kind of "learning processes" on which the European Movement placed considerable emphasis in generating a form of supranational citizenship, culture and identity. In particular, Habermas develops the concept of communicative action in a process of renewing cultural knowledge to achieve mutual understanding, coordinating action towards social integration and solidarity through the public sphere.

Crises of the last decade have seemingly led the European Community to recognise that education can be adopted as a vehicle to help overcome the challenges it faces. The 2017 European Commission communication "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture" (COM(2017) 673) includes points on language learning, mobility, teacher training and the creation of institutions, and the European Parliament published a report on "Learning EU in Schools" (2015/2138(INI)). This latter document reflects a response to the ever-increasing realisation that throughout its existence, the European Union has not been fully understood. Leaning again on Habermas's communicative action, it becomes evident that mutual understanding between individuals and the European Union will be imperative if European solidarity is to be created. If not, citizens become prey to the populist movements that do provide—often discrediting—information about the European Union, or to fake news on policy issues that affect its relationship with people.

Unfortunately, it appears that the European Community has completed a full circle when it comes to using education for fostering solidarity. The points outlined in the 2017 Communication hark back to the points already put forward by the European Movement in 1949. Sixty years of European integration has not fully mobilised education as an instrument for European solidarity. While initiatives such as the Erasmus programme have contributed to awakening a sense of being European among a slither of society, it has not formed an inclusive European solidarity that stands strong against the challenges and crises facing the European Union today. While, as Habermas advocates, “the supranational expansion of civic solidarity depends on learning processes” (2012), the development of education at European level will inherently be loyal to intergovernmental policy development, which is controlled at national level and which will protect national identity and nation-building.

The book’s final chapter *Concluding thoughts: Covid-19 providing yet another case study or impetus for EU solidarity?* ties together the argument that the architects of a united Europe aimed to foster a European spirit through education, which was required for the success of the European project. However, the current state of the Union suggests that solidarity is in great demand but the supply is not sufficient and the reactions during this last crisis in the form of the Covid-19 pandemic are putting EU solidarity to the test. It can be argued that Europe has not existed enough, never existed or no longer exists in people’s hearts, which is what the founding fathers had feared. Education has proven a flimsy mechanism for fostering European spirit due to its complex intertwining with nation-building, and therefore national identity and solidarity. A fully fledged European Union education policy could have gone a long way in securing a certain level of solidarity. It is recognised, however, that blame cannot be solely placed on a lack of European Union competence in education. Solidarity levels have also dropped due to the European Union not fulfilling individuals’ expectations. The current challenges facing the European Union therefore present a critical moment in which a re-evaluation should perhaps be considered of how education policy can be better developed to resuscitate European spirit, but it is also an opportunity for the European Union to rethink and push forward reforms in areas where it is falling short.

Nevertheless, it can be said that while Brexit appears the ultimate demonstration of a lack of EU solidarity, the other face of Brexit has forced pockets of strong pro-Europeanness to emerge in a country that

historically lacks attachment to Europe, where remain voters feel they are being robbed of their European identity. This suggests that a certain degree of European spirit is out there, and going forward, especially in the current time of the Covid-19 crisis when solidarity is needed more than ever, the European Union can count on the support of those who do hold it in their heart.

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PART I

Education in the European Union



Education and the European “Idea” (1945–1956)

THE IMPETUS TO UNITING EUROPE

The idea of unifying Europe did not spring as a consequence of the Second World War. Rather it gave impetus to a concept that had been simmering since as early as the 1700s. Not least, Kant alluded to a United States of Europe in his 1795 writings on perpetual peace (*To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*). Victor Hugo suggested in 1849 “a day will come when we shall see [...] the United States of America and the United States of Europe face to face, reaching out for each other across the seas”.¹ In 1929, the French Prime Minister Aristide Briand proposed to the Assembly of the League of Nations the idea of a federation of European nations based on solidarity and in 1930 presented a “Memorandum on the organisation of a system of European Federal Union”.

The Italian anti-Fascists Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi encouraged a federation of European States in their 1941 Ventotene Manifesto. They stated that “the question which must first be resolved, and if it is not then any other progress made up to that point is mere appearance, is that of the abolition of the division of Europe into national, sovereign states”. Furthermore, “a free and united Europe is the necessary premise to the strengthening of modern civilization, for which the totalitarian era represented a standstill” (Spinelli and Rossi 1941). Spinelli and Rossi also

¹At the Congrès de la Paix in Paris.

stated that “the general spirit today is already far more disposed than it was in the past to a federal reorganization of Europe. The hard experience of the last decades has opened the eyes even of those who would not see, and has matured many circumstances favourable to our ideal”. This mirrored the thinking of Winston Churchill, who already in 1930 in the *Saturday Evening Post*, had also suggested that a “European Union” was possible between continental states. At the end of the war, Churchill then revived the idea of a “United States of Europe” in a speech at the University of Zurich in 1946 (Mautell 1998).

Thereafter, Churchill continued to champion European unity through the Anglo-French United European Movement (UEM), which formed the origins of the pressure group, the European Movement. The UEM provided a platform for the coordination of organisations that were created in the wake of the Second World. It derived from the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity (ICMEU), under which structure it organised a meeting that took at The Hague in the Netherlands on 7–11 May 1948, commonly known as the “Congress of Europe”.

The objectives of the Congress of Europe were threefold: to demonstrate the widespread support that existed for unifying Europe; to secure an exchange of views and establish agreed recommendations for action and to provide a new and powerful impetus to the campaign.² The Congress wanted to demonstrate that public opinion in support of European unity existed in the free countries of Europe and to discuss the challenges facing European unity as well as to propose practical solutions to governments. Lasting three and a half days (or 60 hours), there was a determination to bridge differences and find a basis on which to join forces under a common objective in which they all ardently believed.

Presided by Winston Churchill as honorary president, the Congress of Europe gathered representatives of European as well as international countries to exchange ideas on the development of a European Union and discuss the construction of a united Europe. The Congress profoundly influenced the shaping of the European Movement, which was formally established soon afterwards on 25 October 1948. The European Movement’s objective was to transform relations between the European States and its citizens by always placing the citizen at the heart of Community

²Verbatim Report, Plenary Session I, Congress of Europe at The Hague, ME2945, HAEU (1948).

construction. The European Movement is still in existence, represented in 39 national European offices and regroups 36 international Associations.³

Following the Congress of Europe, the European Movement created the Council of Europe in May 1949 and, in a further stage, it organised the European Conference on Culture, which took place in Lausanne, Switzerland, in December 1949. In a "Message to the Europeans" during the final plenary session of the Congress of Europe, chaired by former Prime Minister of Belgium Mr. van Zeeland, delegates pledged their dedication to working towards a united Europe:

Europe is in danger, Europe is divided, and the greatest danger comes from her divisions. Impoverished, overladen with barriers that prevent the circulation of her goods but are no longer able to afford her protection, our dis-united Europe marches towards her end. Alone, no one of our countries can hope seriously to defend its independence. Alone, no one of our countries can solve the economic problems of today.⁴

Delegates at the Congress of Europe focused their minds on the question of European unity and a federation of Europe. The Second World War had put pressure on national economies and a national financial policy was no longer a viable solution to overcome and reach the root of a state's economic difficulty. The problems they faced demanded world-wide solutions, and such solutions could not be founded on a divided Europe.

Delegates sought to define how a united Europe could be more than just cooperation between governments. They thought in terms of creating federal European institutions with full power, capable of bringing into existence a new league of free people. Under the pressure of grave events, a number of governments accepted that it was necessary to foster cooperation in the economic and military spheres in order to confront the dangers that had arisen during and after the war.

They were aware that a united Europe could provide benefits across its member states, but that such benefits could not be achieved without some temporary interference in certain national and sectional interests. There would be resistance from governments towards any meddling in

³<http://europeanmovement.eu/who-we-are/history/>.

⁴Message to the Europeans adopted at the close of The Hague Congress, 1948 (ME-421, HAEU).

their affairs and so, according to delegates at The Hague, the real problem in uniting Europe lay in creating a European organisation of supranational nature. But to talk of a united Europe without conceiving a European government and a European parliament was far from realistic.⁵

A vigorous opposition was thus expected from those whose interests would be adversely affected, and who would therefore seek to mobilise and misuse patriotic sentiment with the objective of holding back their governments. In this case, it was considered that if a state were able to withstand such potential pressures, it would have the solid foundations of an informed and convinced public opinion that would be ready to face the challenge of uniting Europe.⁶

EUROPEAN SPIRIT AND CONSCIOUSNESS: BUILDING SOLID FOUNDATIONS

To create those foundations, delegates attached an organic meaning to the concept of European federalism. The Europe they envisaged meant a way of life for groups and individuals, and a world that was heading towards conflict put European people, divided and powerless, in danger of being the first victims. While a united Europe would cause upheaval because every national-level policy issue would be seen in a new light, it would be fundamental in allowing citizens to rediscover their true spirit, a European spirit, and to devise new social orders in harmony with this spirit.⁷

This line of thought continued at the European Cultural Conference, which took place a year later in Lausanne. The General Rapporteur stated that the problem was simple: “Europe or war”. Europe could not be saved if nations continued to believe in their separate salvation. It would not be possible to choose between individual freedom and social justice because “liberty without justice is disintegration”, and Europe would only be able

⁵The Vital Question, proceedings from the Congress of Europe at The Hague, 1948 (ME-421, HAEU).

⁶Verbatim Report, Plenary Session I, Congress of Europe at The Hague, 1948 (ME-2945, HAEU).

⁷The Vital Question, proceedings from the Congress of Europe at The Hague, ME421, HAEU (1948).

to safeguard its own interests by safeguarding the dignity of man.⁸ In this sense, the European Cultural Conference appealed to intellectuals to shoulder their responsibilities by vigilantly watching over governments and experts, proclaiming the principle of the dignity of man, the foundation of all European civilisations. The conference appealed to national governments to abolish all barriers that paralyse rather than protect the cultural life of Europe, and to realise that expenditure on education confers on nations a more durable power of resistance in the long-term than expenditure on armaments. Finally, the conference appealed to the European Assembly to do everything its power to support European cultural institutions, without which a common awareness among Europeans could not be developed, and to all Europeans to refuse to believe in the inevitability of war.⁹

The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alcide De Gasperi, declared in a message to conference delegates that the main principle of uniting Europe is in the conscience of the spiritual and cultural community rather than the political, legislative, economic and social coordination.¹⁰ This need to address culture within the process of European unification was also reiterated in a message to the conference from Paul van Zeeland, in which he suggested that Europe's battle would be waged not only in economics and politics, but also in the cultural field, and that European conscience was becoming ever more a living reality:

Beneath the cross-currents of our interests, there is a common bed, constituted by traditions and hopes [...] and to reveal or to affirm cultural affinities may become one of the essential factors making for European unity.¹¹

In his opening address at the Congress of Europe, Dr. Henri Brugmans, President of the Bureau of the Union of European Federalists (UEF), declared the need to stimulate European political consciousness, and a

⁸Rapport sur la conférence de Lausanne - présenté par le Rapporteur Générale, ME531, HAEU (1949).

⁹Rapport sur la conférence de Lausanne - présenté par le Rapporteur Générale, ME531, HAEU (1949).

¹⁰Message de M. De Gasperi, European Cultural Conference, ME534, HAEU (1949).

¹¹Message from M. Paul Van Zeeland, European Cultural Conference, ME534, HAEU (1949).

bold and far-seeing European public opinion. European public opinion would not be the sum of individual national public opinions, but something *sui generis* that would be new in history: a common European citizenship.¹² He did not deny that the task would be complicated and obstacles would need to be faced, but he affirmed that:

If Europe discovers how to regenerate itself in unity, it will at the same time be able to reassert its independence in the world. It will be both moral and social independence, since among the great powers it will have brought forth its own peculiar type of society, born from free association and from stimulating cooperation¹³

Mr. Carandini, delegate for Italy, added in his speech in The Hague that the aim was to create new common rapports between people who share Europe as their geographical and spiritual base, adhering to a European citizenship.¹⁴ The General Report of the European Cultural Conference later highlighted that it was necessary to outline a new political framework for Europe that was inspired by spiritual and cultural considerations in addition to its more obvious political considerations. The European Cultural Conference aimed to provide this definition and to show that culture cannot only be of practical assistance to initiatives in other fields that seek to achieve European unification, but that European unification itself is also essential for the survival of European culture in all its rich diversity.¹⁵ However, conference delegates had to consider a balance between respecting the freedom of the mind, and recognising the responsibilities that go with it. The notion of “culture in the service of European unity”, which underlines responsibilities, is different to “a united Europe in defence of culture”, which indicates the way freedom of the mind can be safeguarded from the dangers that threaten it.

The conference could at least begin by taking stock of the status quo of culture in Europe, the difficulties hampering its development and

¹²Speech of Dr. Henri Brugmans, Congress of Europe at The Hague, ME421, HAEU (1948).

¹³Speech of Dr. Henri Brugmans, Congress of Europe at The Hague, ME421, HAEU (1948).

¹⁴Speech of M. Carandini for the Congress of Europe at The Hague, plenary session II. ME421, HAEU (1948).

¹⁵General Report of the European Cultural Conference, ME531, HAEU (1949).