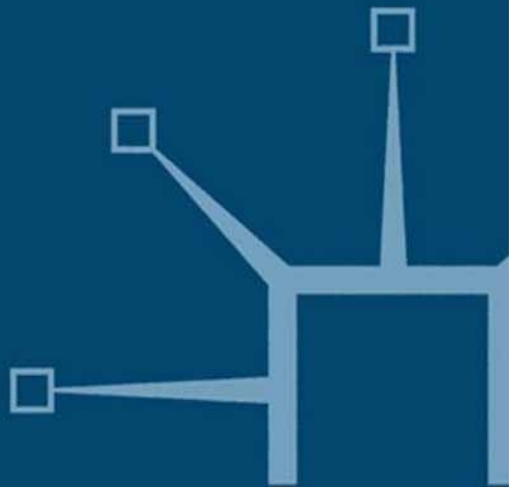


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European Identity and the Second World War

Menno Spiering
Michael Wintle



European Identity and the Second World War

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ENGLISHNESS: Images of National Identity in Post-War Literature

IDEAS OF EUROPE SINCE 1914: The Legacy of the First World War (*edited with M. Wintle*)

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IMAGE INTO IDENTITY

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European Identity and the Second World War

Edited by

Menno Spiering

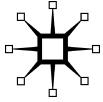
*Lecturer in European Studies,
University of Amsterdam*

and

Michael Wintle

*Professor of Modern European History, European Studies,
University of Amsterdam*

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2011 978-0-230-27323-8

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First published 2011 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

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Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

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ISBN 978-1-349-32373-9 ISBN 978-0-230-30694-3 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/9780230306943

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11

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The cover illustration is of a Marshall Aid poster of Europe as a ship, 1950, courtesy of the International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam.

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Preface

The idea for this book was one of the fruits of a project of research cooperation between the departments of European Studies at the Universities of Amsterdam (NL) and Aarhus (DK), and more broadly between the Faculty of Arts at Aarhus and the Huizinga National Research School in the Netherlands. The project was a multidisciplinary study of European identity in the period between 1939 and 1970, and was directed by Professor Michael Wintle. It was generously sponsored in 2005–7 by the Netherlands Research Council (NWO), which facilitated the holding of three international symposia and conferences over the period of three years, with more than eighty papers delivered in all. Some of the chapters in this collection began as papers at those conferences. That collaboration built in turn on a previous research exercise undertaken by some of the same partners in 1999–2002, which examined the *First World War* and its impact on the idea of Europe. Special thanks are due to Jan Ifversen, Head of History and Area Studies at Aarhus, who was a co-applicant to the NWO and was our host at a very successful academic gathering in Sandbjerg, DK in January 2007. We are grateful to the NWO, and to various research funds at the Universities of Amsterdam and Aarhus, which contributed additionally to some translation and other costs. Thanks also to Noortje Willems, who compiled the index. Most of all, our thanks are due to our colleague contributors both to the book and to the conferences, for their patience, perseverance and collegiality.

Menno Spiering and Michael Wintle
European Studies, University of Amsterdam

Contributors

Matthew D'Auria graduated from the Università l'Orientale of Naples in Political and International Studies. He is currently completing his doctoral thesis at the Centre for European Studies at University College London on the history of European political thought, focusing on the relationship between historiography and politics in eighteenth-century France. He is collaborating with the Department of Sociology and Political Science at the Università degli Studi di Salerno on a research project on the history of European federalism. In 2005 and 2006, he was awarded a Marie Curie Assistantship at UCL, where he taught several BA and MA courses. He is currently a Teaching Fellow in the German Department and in the Centre for European Studies at UCL.

Annemarie van Heerikhuizen is a historian and a Lecturer at the University of Amsterdam, working in the Department of European Studies. She studied Modern and Theoretical History, and took her doctorate in 1998. She lectures on European integration politics, Dutch foreign policy and the history of the idea of Europe. Her research is directed towards the cultural-political development and transformation of the idea of European unity since the Renaissance. She is interested mainly in the personal ideas of the European founding fathers, as laid down in their writings. Her publications include *Pioniers van een Verenigd Europa. Bovennational denken in het Nederlandse Parlement (1946–1951)* (Amsterdam, 1998); 'William Thomas Stead, Den Haag en de wereldvrede', *De Negentiende Eeuw* 29/2 (2005), 134–46; 'How God Disappeared from Europe: Visions of a United Europe from Erasmus to Kant', *The European Legacy* 13/4 (2008), 401–11.

Jan Ifversen is Associate Professor of European Studies and Head of the Department of History and Area Studies in the Faculty of Arts, Aarhus University, Denmark; his main research interests are in the history of European democracy and nationalism, the history of modern key concepts of European self-presentation and theories of conceptual history. He has published on such themes as nationalism, conceptual history, European civilization and globalization, including *Om magt, demokrati og diskurs* [On Power, Democracy and Discourse] (1997); 'The Crisis of

European Civilization', in *Ideas of Europe since 1914: the Legacy of the First World War* (2002); 'Europe and European Culture: a Conceptual Analysis', *European Societies* 4/1 (2002), 1–26; *Civilisation and Barbarism* (Lancaster, Institute for Advanced Studies in Social and Management Sciences, 2005).

Henk van der Liet studied at the Universities of Groningen and Copenhagen. He has taught at Groningen, Odense and Berlin (FU) universities; since 1998 he has held the chair in Scandinavian Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He is the author of numerous articles in the field of Scandinavian literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a special emphasis on Danish literature. He is editor of the Dutch–Flemish scholarly journal *Tijdschrift voor Skandinavistiek*, and editor-in-chief of *Amsterdam Contributions to Scandinavian Studies*. Recent publications include 'Engendering a Memorable Place – Holger Drachmann as travel-writer', in Marie Wells (ed.), *The Discovery of Nineteenth-Century Scandinavia* (Norwich, 2008); 'Über die Grenze – Identität und Identitätsverlust bei Claus Beck-Nielsen', in Wolfgang Behschnitt and Elisabeth Herrmann (eds), *Über Grenzen. Grenzgänge der Skandinavistik* (Würzburg, 2007); 'Martin A. Hansens Hereticabreve i international belysning', in Anders Thyrring Andersen (ed.), *PS. Om Martin A. Hansens korrespondance med kredsen omkring Heretica* (Copenhagen, 2005).

Manet van Montfrans was until 2009 a Lecturer in Modern European and French Literature in the Department of European Studies of the University of Amsterdam, and is now a research fellow in the Department. She co-edits the literary journal *Marcel Proust Aujourd'hui*; her research focuses on the perception of the First and Second World Wars and on the renewed interest in regional and rural matters in French literary prose and in contemporary European novels. Her publications include *Georges Perec. La contrainte du réel* (1999); 'Pacifism and the European Idea: War and Inner Conflict in the Work of Léon Werth', in M.J. Wintle and M. Spiering (eds), *Ideas of Europe since 1914. The Legacy of the First World War* (2002); 'La réception de Primo Levi aux Pays-Bas', in Ph. Mesnard and Y. Tanassekos (eds), *Primo Levi à l'oeuvre. La Réception de l'oeuvre de Primo Levi dans le monde* (2007); 'Dante chez Modiano: une divine comédie à Paris', in E. Jongeneel et al., *Relief (revue électronique de littérature française), Paris, lieu de mémoire*, no. 2, 2008.

Helle Porsdam holds a chair of American Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She received a Master's in English from the University

of Copenhagen and subsequently also an MA and a PhD in American Studies from Yale University. She was a Liberal Arts Fellow at the Harvard Law School in 1992–3 and again in 2000–1. Her main areas of teaching are American history in the twentieth century, human rights and law and literature, and her research has focused for the past ten years on the role of law in American culture and history. Among her publications are *Legally Speaking: Contemporary American Culture and the Law* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1999); *Folkways and Law Ways: Law in American Studies* (Odense, 2001); *Copyright and Other Fairy Tales: Hans Christian Andersen and the Commodification of Creativity* (Edward Elgar, 2006); *Human Rights and Copyrights: Transatlantic Dialogues on Law and Literature* (Edward Elgar, 2009).

Wolfgang Schmale holds the chair of Modern and Contemporary History at Vienna University. His fields of research are general European history, French history, the social history of law and the history of masculinities. He is on the advisory committees of the European Forum Alpbach and the Institute for European History (Mainz), and is President of the Austrian Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies. His main books are *Geschichte und Zukunft der Europäischen Identität* (Stuttgart, 2008); *Europa-Historiker. Ein biographisches Handbuch*, 3 vols (Göttingen, 2006–7); *Geschichte Frankreichs* (Stuttgart, 2000); *Human Rights and Cultural Diversity* (1993).

Hagen Schulz-Forberg is Associate Professor of Global and European History at Aarhus University, Denmark. He has worked on European history in a variety of ways, applying different theoretical and methodological perspectives to his empirical work. His main interest is in the modern period from the Enlightenment until today, where questions of legitimacy and modernity, as well as the role of the idea of Europe in history, frame his research. His recent publications include ‘The European Public Sphere and the Transnational History of the Notion of Europe since 1945’, in José M. Faraldo *et al.*, *Europe in the Eastern Block* (Böhlau, 2008); ‘Cosmopolitanism or Ethnic Homogeneity? Roma Identity, European Integration and the European Public Sphere’, in Cristiano Bee and Emanuela Bozzini (eds), *Developing the European Public Sphere: Institutions, Media, Civil Society* (Ashgate, 2009); ‘The Berlin Wall Crisis: Global Cold War and the Role of Europe’, in Ruth Wodak *et al.* (eds), *Europe in Crisis: The ‘European Public Sphere’* (Palgrave, 2009).

Karen-Margrethe L. Simonsen is Associate Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature at Aarhus University, Denmark. She is

Director of the Nordic Network for Law and Literature, a member of Hermes Consortium for Literary and Cultural Studies and director of the research group on 'Aesthetics, Society and Politics' at the Institute of Aesthetics, Aarhus University. Her research interests lie in law and the concept of justice in literature, literature and politics, relations between individual and collective memory, world literature and literary historiography. Recent publications include *World Literature and World Culture*, with J. Stougaard (Aarhus UP, 2008); *Æstetik og politik. Politiske potentialer i samtidskunsten*, with H.K. Nielsen (Klim, 2008); *Reinventions of the Novel*, with M.R. Thomsen and M.P. Huang (Rodopi, 2004).

Ricardo Gil Soeiro is a researcher at the Centre for Comparative Studies at the University of Lisbon, where he also teaches the courses 'Memory and Literature in a Globalized Culture' and 'Contemporary Portuguese Literature'. He obtained his PhD in Literary Studies in 2009 with a dissertation on George Steiner, and his interests include contemporary Portuguese poetry, Holocaust studies, philosophy of language, ethics, hermeneutics and memory studies. He is also columnist for *Revista Autor* and a member of the Editorial Board of *Gewebe – Grupo de Estudos Walter Benjamin*. His publications include *O pensamento tornado dança: Estudos em torno de George Steiner* (Roma Editora, 2009); *Gramática da Esperança: Da Hermenêutica da Transcendência à Hermenêutica Radical* (Vega Editora, 2009); *Iminência do Encontro: George Steiner e a Leitura Responsável* (Roma Editora, 2009); *A Alegria do Sim na Tristeza do Finito* (Apenas Livros, 2009).

Menno Spiering is Lecturer in the Department of European Studies at the University of Amsterdam, Director of the MA in European Studies and series editor of *European Studies: A Journal of European Culture, History and Politics*. He took his PhD in English literature in 1993 at the University of Amsterdam and has held visiting lectureships at the Universities of Hull, UK and Minnesota. His publications include *Englishness: Images of National Identity in Post-War Literature* (1993); 'National Identity and European Unity', in M. Wintle (ed.), *Culture and Identity in Europe* (1996); 'The Future of National Identity in the European Union', *National Identities* 1/2 (1999); *Ideas of Europe since 1914: the Legacy of the First World War*, with M. Wintle (Palgrave, 2002).

Wendy Webster studied at the University of Cambridge, taking her BA and PhD there and is now Professor of Contemporary British History at the University of Central Lancashire. She is on the editorial board

of *Women's History Review* and is a member of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Her publications include 'Transnational Journeys and Domestic Histories', *Journal of Social History*, 39/3 (2006), 651–66; *Englishness and Empire, 1939–1965* (Oxford UP, 2005); 'Britain and the Refugees of Europe 1939–50', in Louise Ryan and Wendy Webster (eds), *Gendering Migration: Masculinity, Femininity and Ethnicity in Post-War Britain* (Ashgate, 2008); 'Europe against the Germans: the British Resistance Narrative, 1940–50', *Journal of British Studies* (2009).

Jay Winter, Charles J. Stille Professor of History, joined the faculty of Yale University in 2001. He taught at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem from 1970 to 1973, and at the University of Warwick from 1973 to 1979. From 1979 to 2001, he was Reader in Modern History and Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge. He holds PhD and DLitt from Cambridge. He is the author of *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge UP, 1995), and editor of a collection of essays published by Cambridge UP entitled *America and the Armenian Genocide*. In 2005 he published *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present*, written with Antoine Prost. In 1997, he received an Emmy award for the best documentary series of the year as co-producer and co-writer of 'The Great War and the shaping of the twentieth century', an eight-hour series broadcast on PBS and the BBC, and shown subsequently in twenty-eight countries. He is one of the founders and a member of the *comité directeur* of the research centre of the Historial de la Grande Guerre, the international museum of the Great War, in Péronne, Somme, France.

Michael Wintle studied at Cambridge, Ghent and Hull Universities taking his BA, MA and PhD respectively, and now holds the chair of European History at the University of Amsterdam, where he helps direct the degree programmes in European Studies. Prior to 2002, he was Professor of European History at the University of Hull, UK, where he had taught since 1980. His current research interests are in European identity and especially the visual representation of Europe, cultural aspects of European integration, European industrialization and the modern social and economic history of the Low Countries. He has published widely on Dutch and European history, including the following recent books: *An Economic and Social History of the Netherlands* (Cambridge UP, 2000); *Ideas of Europe since 1914* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); *Imagining Europe* (Peter Lang, 2008); *The Image of Europe* (Cambridge UP, 2009).

Irene Zwiep studied Classics and Semitic philology in Amsterdam and Jerusalem. Following her PhD in 1995, she was Frances Yates fellow at the Warburg Institute, London. Since 1997 she has held the chair in Hebrew and Jewish studies at the University of Amsterdam. Her research concentrates on Jewish intellectual history of the medieval and early modern periods, with a special focus on the history of Hebrew and Jewish scholarship. Recent publications include *Sepharad in Ashkenaz. Medieval Knowledge and Eighteenth-Century Enlightened Jewish Discourse*, with R. Fontaine and A. Schatz (Amsterdam, 2007); *Epigonism and the Dynamic of Jewish Culture*, with S. Berger (Louvain, 2008).

Editor's Introduction

Ideals, Identity and War: the Idea of Europe, 1939–70

Michael Wintle

This book has two concepts at its centre: Europe and the Second World War. Both are constantly changing in the public perception: now, many decades after the end of World War II, 'Europe' is an even more contested idea than it has ever been, struggling with the consequences of enlargement to the east, and with the confrontation with its 'Others' in various forms. The book seeks to inform the current discourse about European identity, about what Europe should aspire to in terms of its institutions and its values; it does so by means of a targeted historical but multidisciplinary analysis of Europe's reaction to the tragedy, heroism and disgrace of the Second World War. For in that post-war period lie many of the origins of Europeans' current attitudes to and about the continent.

The general premise for this collection is that the Second World War generated changes in the way Europe imagined itself, which therefore affected European identity. If in the nineteenth century, and indeed for parts of the first half of the twentieth, Europe had been rather self-satisfied, events such as the Holocaust, the second extended civil war in Europe in a quarter of a century, and the splitting of the continent into East and West took the edge off that satisfaction, forcing a reassessment of assumptions about Europe's place in the world. World War II also spawned new ideas about integration between the nations, new cultural movements and new directions, many of which are the subject of the deliberations in this book.

For most people over the age of thirty, 'the War' still means the Second World War, though the numbers of first-hand witnesses are rapidly dwindling. It still casts a shadow over Europe: the German record is still a sensitive issue, and perhaps the most uncontroversially positive

achievement of European institutional integration has been the avoidance of another pan-European war. This link is crucial: the fear of Europe's propensity for infighting has been one of the main driving forces behind the move for integration in Europe. That was as true for the wartime resistance movements drawing up their plans for a brave new post-war world as it was for the idealistic but pragmatic founders of the 1950s and 1960s. Even now, in the next millennium, war is still remembered as an underlying cause for European cooperation, and there is, rightly, an increased emphasis on war trauma and Holocaust memory as essential elements in European identity.

This book contains no theoretical study of the subject of collective identity, whether at local, national or European level. That is not because we view the topic as unimportant, but because we believe that enough has been said and agreed, for now, for us to take as given that a European identity exists. This allows us to explore various aspects of that 'identity' without becoming over-involved with the theoretical aspects of definition.¹ We acknowledge that 'ideas of Europe' and 'European identity' are often confused with each other; analytically they can perhaps be separated as ways in which Europe might be organized ('ideas') and European self-perceptions of their collective characteristics, nature and strengths ('identity'). In recent decades the two have tended to elide, not least because the European Commission and others believe that a strong European identity would provide legitimation for the latest (and most successful) example of the 'idea' of Europe: the European Union. But European identity is not only about the European integration that has led to the EU and the other E-institutions. Such bodies have loomed large in the last sixty years, but there has been a European identity of sorts for at least a thousand years. It consists of feelings of Europeanness, of what it is like to be European, for example *vis-à-vis* Africans, Asians or Americans. What have been the perceived essential characteristics of Europeans; what have been the European values; what has 'European civilization' consisted of? The answers to such questions have changed over time: often they have been positive and Eurocentric, proclaiming European ideals, and even European superiority. On other occasions, the responses have been negative, pessimistic, even ashamed.

These ideas, positive and negative, about what it meant to be European during World War II and in its aftermath are the focus of this book. They do not necessarily coincide with the official forms of European identity now sponsored by the EU. Such official master-narratives of Europe were largely absent in 1939 or 1945, but there did exist ideas of Europe as self-perceptions or images of identity in that period.

It is important to locate these post-war developments in thinking about Europe within a temporal context – at least that of the twentieth century as a whole. The period immediately preceding the war, the later 1930s, was overshadowed still by the disasters of the First World War (Adas 2004; Spiering and Wintle 2002), by the instability of the Roaring Twenties and by the horrors of the Great Depression in the early 1930s. These were chastening memories when it came to thinking about European identity and civilization. On the other hand, the later 1930s, with their economic recovery, also saw a more assertive European mood, even a partial return to the Eurocentrism and arrogance of the decades of New Imperialism preceding World War I. Two manifestations of this Euro-assertiveness in the later 1930s will make the point. First there was the gross Eurocentrism of fascism, which was often racially based, and which affected virtually every country in Europe, with support for a bombastic celebration of alleged European characteristics and the superiority of its civilization over and above everything else: the Nazi New Order was only one example. The other Eurocentric development that demands attention is what would now be called the ‘autumn’ of imperialism: the last heyday of the European colonial empires before the period of war and decolonization. At the time, after economic deprivation in the European colonies during the Depression, the later 1930s saw an imperial revival which must have seemed like a return to halcyon days: it was the Golden Age of the colonial administrator and army officer, the highpoint of ‘European’ society and solidarity in the tropics, and indeed of the White Man’s Burden. That it would all crumble into ignominy after 1945 was by no means always apparent at the time. So the immediate prelude to the subject matter of this book, the pre-war period, was one of Euro-optimism and Euro-assertion, often of a rather repellent sort.

Then came the War itself, which, with the early and devastating successes of the Axis powers, saw military failures in all theatres, reliance on or submission to Asian forces, dependence on the US, and universal disaster in Europe. By 1944–5 there was a general humility about the Europe ideal, and very little talk of European civilization, except a determination among many groups to adopt policies after the war that would forever prevent another of those disastrous internecine European civil wars, which had characterized the cursed continent for centuries. There was still idealism, in places, which eventually would contribute to setting up the first institutions of European integration. But in the post-war gloom Europe was not on the list of positive topics for discussion, and had little to offer the rest of the world any more, except in terms of a salutary lesson about how not to conduct affairs.

This phase of post-war negativity about Europe continued for some years with the privations of monetary reorganizations, ration books, drab fashions, painful reconstruction, handouts from America, and the advent of what would become the Cold War, driving a wedge through Europe. Even incipient plans for European integration grew out of an almost totally negative fear that, if nothing were done, Europe would be tearing itself apart again in another civil war within a few years: a kind of preventive federalism seemed the only answer. The world was certainly not about to take any more sermons from Europe about higher morals. That gloom continued to permeate the ritual humiliation of decolonization, as, one after the other, Europe's global empires gave up their treasured symbols of economic, political, military and moral superiority. There was a feeling among the publics of the old imperial nations, Britain and then France, but others too (the Dutch are a very good example), that their colonies were being removed from their grasp against their will, and that this was being inflicted upon the countries that had resisted and finally triumphed against the Nazi, fascist aggressor. This added to the general ignominy of the European self-view. It caused considerable indignation, and even some strenuous fighting back: witness the brutal decolonization wars fought by all the imperialist nations in the post-war period (see e.g. Martin *et al.* 2008), for example the ferocious military campaigns conducted by the Dutch in the East Indies in 1947 and 1949 (the *Politioele Acties*). The eventual removal of much of the colonial empires, with US and UN approval, was symptomatic and even emblematic of Europeans having to accept that their role in the world had changed radically, and then for the worse in terms of power politics.

However, at some point in the later 1950s or 1960s, almost incredibly, even the Holocaust could eventually be put into perspective. The truly amazing economic recovery of Western Europe, which grew faster in the 1950s and 1960s than anywhere else in the world, including America, generated a re-emerging feeling of European self-assertion. The boom lasted more than twenty years, well into the 1970s, when the dollar crisis of 1971 and the oil crises of 1973 and 1978 slowed everything down again. Feelings of Euro-assertion or even Eurocentrism were repressed by the effects of the Second World War and the Holocaust, but, when the economic prosperity of the 1950s and 1960s was accompanied by peace and the absence or postponement of nuclear Armageddon, it was hardly surprising that an element of self-satisfaction and assertion crept back into the European self-image.

There was a new European confidence in those years; many people alive today were there to witness it. Shame for Europe was either forgotten in the celebration of prosperity ('You've never had it so good!'), suppressed as unspeakable, or unacknowledged by the emerging youth culture. The beginnings of European integration began to be institutionalized, in the Council of Europe, the European Coal and Steel Community, Euratom, the European Economic Community, the European Free Trade Association, and so on. The increased trade and the general long-wave economic ascendancy assured steadily increasing prosperity, while welfare legislation generated the trickle-down of new wealth into all layers of European society, heralding a consumer boom, which further prolonged the good times and ushered in a modernist, plenteous, throw-away society in Europe, certainly in the West. In the East, too, the period of the 1960s and early 1970s was of considerable economic prosperity. However, in terms of thoughts about the nature of Europe, about Europeanness, about European identity, this period can be seen as one of chastened or moderated Euro-assertion. There was no longer the arrogant self-assurance of the Edwardian period before the First World War, when it never occurred to Europeans that there was the slightest doubt about European superiority in every way; and many of the racial assumptions of the fascist-influenced 1930s were not revived, or not as virulently.

Wolfgang Schmale demonstrates here in this volume (in Chapter 11) that assumption of European superiority had not entirely left the discourse of integration before the later 1970s; nonetheless, clearly the United States was politically, militarily and economically a much greater power in the world than the individual or even the potentially united European states, and then there was the looming presence of the Soviet Union and later China, with their totally alien economic and political systems. Japan's economic performance became a challenge to Europe, and others would follow in its wake. So Europe did not rule the world any longer, but at the same time Europe did not need to feel so ashamed of itself any more, and might even begin to think how a united European front might make it a third force in the world, between the two superpowers. Cultural optimism, economic confidence and political rehabilitation were the order of the day by the close of the 1960s.

There was something of a rollercoaster, then, of feelings about European identity in much of the twentieth century: overbearing arrogance, despair at World War I and the Depression, recovery in the 1930s and horror at the effects of the Second World War and the Holocaust, only to be followed by yet another revival in the 1950s and

1960s; thereafter the positive bent of Europeanism began to ebb away again with the effects of the 1970s economic crises and 1980s recession, despite the energetic attempts of the European Commission to instil a European identity into its citizens (Wintle 2009, Chapter 8). This, then, is the chronological backdrop of the waxing and waning of ideas and perceptions of Europe in the period under scrutiny here between the late 1930s and the early 1970s. It provides the principal rationale for the timescale of the present collection, between 1939 and 1970. The Second World War, from 1939 to 1945, is the focal and starting point for our investigations, but we are most interested in reactions to that war, in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The economic setbacks of the 1970s and 1980s, increasingly dominated by a generation of young people who had not directly experienced the war (baby boomers), are not part of the analysis here. Nonetheless, the reactions to war experienced in those post-war decades naturally continued to shape the contours of European identity, and indeed they still do so today.

The structure of the book

Here the changing ideas of Europeanness, or what it meant to be European, are grouped into four main areas for investigation, corresponding to the four sections of the book. The initial section takes a view of the war as the gestation period for a distinctive European articulation of human rights, not least in defence against the pretensions of governments and states. It is argued here that since that time, and in their continued evolution, human rights have been a unique component of European identity. The two central sections of the book then manifest the interdisciplinary nature of this collection, not least through the wide variety of source material that is employed. In Part II, we review the way in which thinkers of all stripes looked back, reflecting on the role played by Europe in the world and in the war, and the implications for their views of the essence or identity of Europe. The authors range through historiography, literature, philosophy and the political press, searching for the effects of this unprecedented war on ideas of European civilization. Most of those effects were, of course, negative. Europeans felt stunned and even ashamed. Next, in Part III, the focus falls on emerging visions of the future of Europe that grew out of the war, and of how its more positive aspects might be harnessed in order simultaneously to build a future together and to eliminate chances of a return to internecine conflict: a mixture of damage limitation and elated utopianism. Finally, in Part IV, we pay brief attention

to what proves to be and remains the core of the matter: the problems for European identity generated by the Holocaust. The function of literary works in assuaging the trauma of the Shoah, the views of surviving Jewish leaders and intellectuals about their role in Europe and Europe's role in their future, and the agonies of memory as mediated in the work of George Steiner, are chosen as threads to follow this process of identity destruction, mediation and regeneration.

One of the few things that unite most Europeans, and of which they seem to be proud, is human rights. In the first chapter Helle Porsdam argues that that Europeans are currently attempting to develop a human rights vocabulary. European intellectuals, EU politicians and policy professionals are talking about the need to construct 'European narratives' that will emphasize a political but also a cultural vision for a multi-ethnic and more cosmopolitan Europe. Porsdam maintains that these narratives evolve around human rights, partly because their authors hope that they may function as a kind of cultural glue in an increasingly multi-ethnic Europe, and partly because they are intimately connected with that part of Enlightenment thinking that sought to promote democracy and the rule of law. More directly addressing the themes of this volume, she argues that modern Europe is built on a conscious wish to learn from the terrible mistakes of the past, especially the Second World War, which also makes human rights central. Human rights are developing into a discourse of atonement as well as of hope for Europeans. The attempt to create a common European identity around human rights began after World War II, and owes much to the activities of the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights, which Porsdam tracks in some detail. The judges of the two courts have helped turn respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law into founding principles of the European Union, and an indispensable prerequisite for the Union's legitimacy. They have, furthermore, helped remind Europeans that one way to avoid repeating past episodes of military and intellectual mobilization against each other is to develop new supranational forms of cooperation and governance.

Hagen Schulz-Forberg takes this elevation of human rights still further in Chapter 2, focusing on the Congress of Europe debates and the minutes from the early Council of Europe Ministers' meetings in 1948 and 1949, and shows that human rights emerged as the key concept for European integration after the war. He points out that the major preoccupations of European enthusiasts have altered and evolved over the decades: self-determination was the European desideratum before

the war; human rights were critical in the post-war years; the Cold War then began to dominate matters; and integration and citizenship were the European watchwords later on in the 1970s and 1980s. Before the integration of Western Europe became Europe's conceptual signpost, Europe defined its future under the regime of human rights, as one part of a global organization. With an eye to the subtleties of the persisting post-war Eurocentrism noted by Wolfgang Schmale in Chapter 11, it is important to register, with Schulz-Forberg, that even this discourse on human rights retained some of its arrogance and sense of European superiority.

Jay Winter then takes the particular example of René Cassin, whose career he continues to research intensively, as an eloquent empirical case study of the way in which human rights became the distinctive discourse in Europe after the war (Chapter 3). Cassin spent most of the Second World War in England, as part of the inner circle of *France Libre*. In that capacity, he contributed to the emergence of Allied war aims which embraced a commitment to human rights as a bulwark of the future international order, to be built after the end of the war. That is why he was able to join other colleagues in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations assembled in Paris on 10 December 1948. This was a document about liberation, allowing the Second World War to be seen as the moment when the current human rights regime was born, which has been, Winter argues, an essential and unique characteristic of European identity ever since.

In Part II we move to consider the way in which Europeans attempted to digest the events of 1939–45, and to produce new narratives of Europe that would allow the construction of a future for the beleaguered continent. Jan Ifversen, in Chapter 4, puts the case for the professional historians as myth-makers. He suggests that during and after World War II the idea of a united Europe was introduced as an answer to Europe's problems, and it included a myth of a new order being created out of the ruins of the war. Myth-making is part of an ideological construction to justify a political order, and the professional historians played a strong role in that process. Some, like Lucien Febvre, lecturing in 1944–5 on the genesis of European civilization, saw a united Europe as the only true expression of that civilization. Friedrich Meinecke, reflecting in 1946 on 'the German catastrophe', could only see a future for Germany (and Europe) in a European federation. The question posed by Ifversen is about the extent to which historians contributed to a master narrative supporting a myth of Europe. He examines European histories written in the period from 1945 to 1960 for their major patterns,

and especially for how the historians approached the fate of Europe in the light of World War II. Many, especially in Germany, were concerned with rationalizing the catastrophe of the war into a European historical narrative, as were many contemporary politicians and philosophers alike. Most explained the mid-century disgraces in terms of a decline generated by the European state system, and especially by nationalism. A degree of European unity was the remedy chosen in order to salvage the remnants of the nobility of the 'European spirit'. This was also the tenor of the idealistic deliberations of Churchill in his Zurich speech of 1946, and of those at The Hague Congress in May 1948. The 1960s were to see an intensification of this teleological tendency to foreground European unity as the answer to problems caused by interstate rivalry.

In the first of three national case studies of the modification of views on Europe as a result of the war, Wendy Webster examines the British version of 'Europe' in the post-war years (Chapter 5). There has been considerable historiographical consensus on this question, which identifies 1940 as a defining moment, strengthening Britain's island identity and a sense of detachment from the continent, which persisted in the post-war period in what has been called the 'enduring *mentalité* of 1940'. Webster digs deeper into British views of the continent, manifested in popular media and especially film, and argues that the consensus needs revision. In wartime a dominant British narrative focused on brave resistance to Nazi Germany, and told of a united and civilized continent: one in which Germans were 'not European'. It was only in the context of Allied victory that the idea of a divided continent emerged. There was an interplay between three narratives about Europe in the British mainstream media in the late 1940s and 1950s. The first, developed in the immediate aftermath of war, focused on the Nazi legacy, producing an image of a suffering continent that was also divided, chaotic and corrupt. Germany was central to this image, as ideas about Germany and Europe increasingly converged. Secondly, by the end of the 1940s memories of the Second World War, particularly evident in a prolific cycle of feature films, celebrated Britain's own wartime record largely as a masculine military conflict with Germany, making few references to Nazi war crimes. Thirdly, an emergent Cold War narrative made Germany the symbolic centre of a divided continent. In considering the meanings these differing versions assigned to the continent and to British relations with it, Webster explores their common themes – the continent as dark, difficult and menacing, where Germany had a central place – and argues that they were at least as significant for British post-war attitudes as the '*mentalité* of 1940'.

In Chapter 6, Henk van der Liet looks at the view of Europe from Scandinavia in the light of World War II, in particular from literary Denmark in the late 1940s, and finds it to have been very critical indeed. The word 'Europe' had been so thoroughly exploited in Nazi propaganda that it could only be used with great reserve once the war was over. 'Europe' had become so discredited that it was hardly regarded as an appropriate term for any kind of democratic discourse about a joint political future for the European countries or for new concepts of identity. Van der Liet examines the Danish political and cultural debate in the 1940s, the absence of the idea of 'Europe' in Danish literature and, in particular, Martin A. Hansen's 1948 collection of essays *Tanker i en Skorsten* [Thoughts in a Chimney]. Hansen was one of the leading Danish post-war writers, and a member of a group of authors who established a common platform in the short-lived but highly influential journal *Heretica*, published from 1948 until 1953. Despite the broad and international cultural ambitions of the journal, the intellectual and artistic orientation of Hansen and other authors clearly did not favour French, German, Anglo-Saxon or – for that matter – Soviet culture. Instead they focused mainly on Scandinavia, and on their own regional identity and heritage, both as an artistic point of departure and as a perspective for their own future as citizens. These authors obviously wished to turn away from the 'old' cultural centres of Europe, with their recent record of chaos and barbarism.

Manet van Montfrans then examines post-war attitudes to Europe in France, in particular through the lens of the work of Albert Camus (Chapter 7). From August 1944 to June 1947 he was the editor of *Combat*, an authoritative daily paper whose origins lay in the French Resistance movement. In his many editorials and articles Camus expressed his views on the political and moral issues dominating post-war France, and unfolded his vision of a Europe in which the various states would operate internationally as 'the United States of Europe', thus overcoming their differences. It would not only achieve economic unity, but also lay the groundwork for a socially just society in which human rights were to be scrupulously respected; it is interesting to remark once again how important human rights were to the imagining of post-war Europe. There remains the question of how representative Camus' ideas about the post-war Europe were among his countrymen. Thanks to his role in the Resistance and the success of his literary work, Camus was held in high esteem among French intellectuals during the first few years after the war, although most of them, for different reasons, felt unable to share his ideas about a united Europe. In other respects, too, Camus

proved to be an outsider, which resulted in his being ostracized by the sectarian left-oriented Parisian intelligentsia soon after 1947. In some of his wartime work, Camus could wax lyrical about the spiritual ideal of Europe, especially in contrast to what the Nazis were doing, but in his articulations in *Combat* after the war he became rather less idealistic.

In Part III, four more chapters examine various future-oriented scenarios for Europe as conditioned by the events of 1939–45. One of the most famous blueprints for a new Europe is the Ventotene Manifesto, written by Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi during their confinement by the Mussolini regime in internal exile during the early years of the war, and completed in June 1941. It represents some of the most innovative of all writings on nationalism and federalism, and became one of the intellectual foundations of federalist movements across Western Europe. Matthew D'Auria follows the practical and ideological genesis of this document on the island of Ventotene off the Naples coast (Chapter 8). Many of the principles contained in Spinelli and Rossi's pamphlet, such as the need to create a European democracy that was not merely the fusion of national democracies, and the need for a constitutional movement led by a transnational political elite, are still of fundamental importance for today's European integration process. The manifesto was hardly a success in practical terms: it grossly underestimated the strength of nationalism, and was written too early to allow an understanding of the significance of the role to be played in Europe by the US and the Soviet Union, eventually in the form of the Cold War. But it remains important to this day because of its inspirational role in the federalist movement in Europe, and, in terms of the views of their continent held by left-wing European intellectuals, it was one of the first statements to condemn the European state system roundly for its propensity to cause war. The existence of sovereign and independent states in Europe, each free to determine its political existence, had led to the inevitability of war between them, which in the future had to be solved by pooling some of that sovereignty. In the view of Rossi and Spinelli, the mechanism of that pooling had to be federalism.

In Chapter 9, Annemarie van Heerikhuizen examines the vision of Max Kohnstamm for the future of Europe in the years following the Second World War. Kohnstamm was an important Dutch official and diplomat, and became one of Jean Monnet's most trusted assistants and colleagues over several decades. He was Secretary to the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community in the 1950s, and before that had been a private secretary to the Dutch Queen. He was, therefore, at the practical centre of early moves towards European economic

integration; more than most, he was profoundly influenced by his admiration for the United States, and in particular for the way in which the US had integrated its economy, not least in the New Deal. Van Heerikhuizen examines Kohnstamm's writings to uncover the extent of American influence on this founding father's vision for Europe, and reveals that Kohnstamm's writings show that he had in mind a Europe of enduring peace, unity, international cooperation and openness to the world. By the end of the 1950s his ideas were further stimulated by a prodigious new technology: atomic energy. His view was that European joint action was necessary to embrace and develop this new force, but that Europe should take that joint action together with the Americans. This Americanism in his Europeanism was also shown in quite a different way, when his enthusiasm for the sectoral integration of the European Coal and Steel Community showed a desire for a supranational, federal form of organization derived from the American experience.

Chapter 10, by Menno Spiering, continues with the atomic theme for a future Europe, examining the vision for Europe behind the propaganda surrounding the 'Atomic Age'. For many, the enormous energy unleashed by the first nuclear bombs in 1945 marked the birth not just of new weaponry, but also of a new era: the Atomic Age. The early, post-war references to this age were altogether negative. The years ahead would spell disaster for the world, and for Europe in particular, for this continent would surely furnish the arena for the imminent nuclear clash of the superstates. In the early 1950s, however, the Atomic Age rapidly began to acquire positive connotations. It was to be a wondrous time, bringing unlimited energy, prosperity and peace to all, not least the Europeans. At the 1958 World Exhibition in Brussels the impending age of European cooperation (marked a year earlier by the signing of the Treaty of Rome) was celebrated with the same ebullience as the coming of the Atomic Age, whose wonderful promises were on show in almost all the pavilions. Spiering examines the similarities between the pro-Europe and pro-atomic movements of the 1950s, suggesting that the 1953 American 'Atoms for Peace' propaganda initiative provided the pro-Europeans with irresistible ideas and images of hope, progress and prosperity. The effects of the Marshall Plan on European cooperation have been the subject of intense scholarly scrutiny, and perhaps the interrelation between the Atoms for Peace programme and post-war ideas of Europe deserves a similar degree of attention. It was, in any event, an extremely positive take on Europe's future, in contrast with the gloom of the immediate post-war years.

Finally, in the section on post-war plans and dreams for a future Europe, Wolfgang Schmale explores the continuance of the rhetoric of imperialism in the early stages of European integration (Chapter 11). Trawling through source material from the Resistance movements, official E-institution documentation, and the federalist movements of the 1950s, he finds no lack of evidence for a very strong presence of White Man's Burden sentiment underlying European identity right up to the 1960s. In its relations with the rest of the world, Europe's cultural and moral superiority was a *leitmotif* in its discourse on European unity and European identity. There was a deep conviction that European civilization was superior, and the most developed in the world. The European post-war discourse merged traditional patterns of colonial or imperialist thinking with the concept of Europe as a third force between the US and the Soviet Union. There was a clear understanding of what the world and mankind owed to Europe: Europe had contributed to making the world more noble and more human, and would continue to do so. Europe's mission in the world, the world's debt to Europe, European civilization and its diffusion around the world: these things were seen as the foundation for European unity. As late as 1961, in his *Vingt-huit siècles d'Europe*, Denis de Rougemont was still putting out the message, and such convictions were widely held until the 1970s. Only in the 1980s was European international identity based on new foundations. The eventual transformation was due not only to decolonization, but also to what might be called the beginning of self-reflexivity in the European Communities. A quest began for the individual citizen and his/her role in European identity. Before that, however, the language employed to talk of European identity and Europe's role in the world was one of imperialist condescension and a civilizational Eurocentrism, despite the enormous blows suffered to Europe's reputation in World War II and the Holocaust.

The final section of the book ventures into the difficult but core terrain of reactions to the Holocaust, in thinking about the form Europe would take in the post-war decades, and, indeed, the role it should adopt in the world. This is, of course, an extremely broad and intense subject, and our approach in this book is necessarily selective, choosing particular approaches which interface with the other sections in the collection. In Chapter 12, Karen-Margrethe Simonsen tries to estimate the role of Holocaust literature in shaping European identity after the Second World War. In the wake of post-Holocaust theory, attempts have been made to create out of the devastating experiences in the concentration camps a point of departure for a common European spirit (Ulrich Beck) and