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What is Europe?

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Introduction

'Europe' is a key issue of contemporary political debate and provides one of the most contentious questions facing party leaders and the voters of more than one country. But what is the nature of the issue, and what does it actually involve? What are the precise questions that contemporary Europe poses? Europe is in flux, and many of the key reference points of a traditional Europe have weakened or disappeared altogether. One of the key aspects of the present situation, therefore, is that of rapid change and a thoroughgoing transformation of Europe from the years of the Cold War and the World War that preceded it. This course focuses on the different understandings of Europe that underlie the debates and disputes over the development of Europe.

This OpenLearn course provides a sample of Level 1 study in Geography.

Learning Outcomes

After studying this course, you will be able to:

- appreciate the historical development of 'Europe' as a political and economic entity
- understand the rationale for the emergence of the idea of 'Europe' in policy making
- understand the contested nature of the idea of Europe
- understand that 'Europe' is not coterminous with the European Union
- appreciate the challenges facing the EU as it expands.

What is Europe?

1 Europe in the twenty-first century

Europe is changing, but so is the way in which it is governed. The beginning of the twenty-first century sees a new Europe emerging that is in many ways different from that which previously existed. Europe is less divided than it has been for most of its history, and certainly less than it was for the war-torn first half of the twentieth century or most of the ideologically divided decades of the second half. It is incomparably richer than at any other stage of its development, and seems to enjoy unparalleled prospects for concerted growth and harmonious economic development. Nevertheless, the nature of this new Europe remains ambiguous, its mode of governance uncertain, and the views taken of its future development highly contested.

     Wednesday 13 November 2019

Europe in the year 2005

Figure 1: Europe in the year 2005

Two main complex paths of development led to the emergence of this new Europe. One was reflected in the reinvigorated, dynamic and increasingly confident European Community of the 1980s. This powerful vision of a modern, autonomous and more intensively governed Western Europe was formally drawn up in the Maastricht Treaty of 1991 (signed in 1992). Ambitious plans for further integration were adopted, and far-reaching proposals endorsed to expand the association beyond the 334 million people it currently embraced.

At the same time, another vision of Europe emerged with the sudden lifting of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and the abrupt ending of communist rule in the former satellite countries of the Soviet Union. The eyes of these countries were firmly fixed on the autonomous and strikingly dynamic social and economic community that had been constructed in the West, which seemed to offer hopes of a shared European future. There were also powerful, if more distant and abstract, conceptions of a common European heritage in terms of culture, religion and far-reaching historical links. It opened up perspectives on a broader Europe of a less well-defined character, but at least one that was unconstrained by structures of superpower control. The independence of the reconstructed eastern Europe

and the severing of Russian links throughout the area was confirmed with the dissolution of the Soviet Union a couple of weeks after the Maastricht meeting. The newly independent eastern countries constituted a major community in their own right and, excluding Russia, contained 213 million people. Much of Russia's population (about 120 million people) lived in its European territory – and, at 333 million, this gave post-communist Europe a population virtually identical with that of the Maastricht countries.

Prospects of an enlarged core Europe and one more fully integrated on a continental basis emerged with two further decisions. One was the commitment made in 1997 to incorporate some of the post-communist countries into the European mainstream and begin the process that led to eight post-communist countries joining the European Union in 2004. (See Figure 2.) The second arose from the objective endorsed at Maastricht of closer integration through eventual monetary union and the birth of a European Single Currency (ESC) in 1999. Both of these developments took place against a background of considerable conflict and growing doubt and uncertainty about the nature of the Europe that was in prospect.

In the early 1990s the economic impetus underlying the developments of the previous decade within the EU was considerably weakened (Dinan, 1994, pp. 15 7–8). Added to this downturn were the enormous costs of German unification and the pressure this exerted on the country's economy. The process of further economic integration soon began to seem considerably more problematic than had appeared at the outset. In 1999 the entire European Commission resigned amid charges of incompetence and corruption. Relations between Germany and France, the two major players in the EU, continued to evolve and seemed to lose their former balance; the implications of this change had been sharpened by the death of former French President Francois Mitterand and the retirement of Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Germany. The generation of leaders with personal memories of the decisive military conflict that ultimately forged closer European relations had now passed. In the former communist region the more advanced countries continued to grow closer to the West, but others showed few signs of democratic development or economic growth – and in some cases, such as the former Yugoslavia and southern Russia, fell into open conflict, thereby putting the whole idea of overall stable European development in a more precarious light.
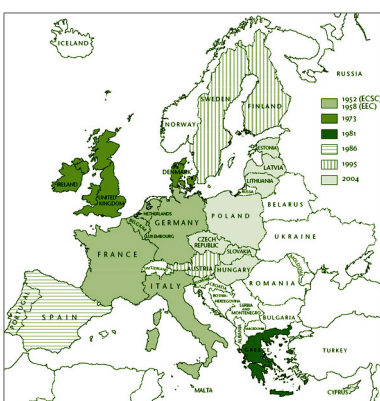
Figure 2: Growing EU membership

Any idea of an inclusive new Europe created on the basis of events after 1989, therefore, also contains its own conflicts and contradictions, and major tensions can be detected in any model of contemporary European development. If not in terms of overt conflict (at least for the west-central core of the European area), Europe as an idea, a sphere of

governance, and a model for development, continues to be driven by contradictions and contrasting expectations. Two kinds of issues arise:

- the precise nature of the new forms of European organisation and governance that are being proposed, and how those already established actually function at the beginning of the twenty-first century;
- more established questions of what is being referred to in any discussion of Europe itself, and the concept of Europe as a whole.

The second issue points to the broad historical processes that underlie contemporary European dilemmas and the particular questions they raise. Inherent in the contemporary conflicts and ongoing debates about the character of the region are different under-standings of Europe and contrasting conceptions of what being European involves. They throw light on the context in which a new Europe has emerged and the nature of the influences that bear upon it. This course is designed to explore that wider context, its implications for contemporary processes of European development, as well as the nature of the new Europe that has emerged and the principles on which it is organised.

Your work on these issues begins with a supplementary reading. It is a classic statement on the nature of modern Europe. The short extract by Hugh Seton-Watson raises two basic questions. What is Europe? Where is Europe? Professor Seton-Watson was an eminent historian and directed the London School of Slavonic and East European Studies; thus he approaches European issues from the vantage point of the east, paying particular attention to the ambiguous role of Russia. His discussion touches four major tensions in European developments and the contrasts that continue to play a leading part in contemporary Europe. They emerge as major themes in the course as a whole, and can be summed up in terms of:

- unity and diversity,
- consensus and conflict,
- transformation and tradition,
- inclusion and exclusion.

Activity 1

Click to view 'What is Europe, Where is Europe?' (Reading A) by Hugh Seton-Watson

Do not worry about some of the names and places he mentions with which you might not be familiar, but see if you can identify:

- the basic line of argument he is pursuing;
- how he treats the four contrasts listed above in his account of modern Europe;
- the answers he provides to the questions in the title – what Europe is and where its boundaries lie.

How far do Seton-Watson's views correspond with your ideas?

One vision of Europe directs particular attention to cultural *unity*, how it came to flower towards the end of the nineteenth century, and its degeneration into nationalist fanaticism, unlimited class hatred and the blood-bath of the twentieth. Cultural unity is thus counterposed not just to *diversity* or disunity but to extremes of *conflict* on a military and class base. After 1945, though, a new European *consensus* began to emerge in response

to the awareness of a common Soviet threat and American encouragement of European unity, in reaction to 'the destructive nationalism of the Age of Fascism', and to facilitate economic recovery and further material progress. But it is the cultural underpinnings of European unity, in Seton-Watson's (1985) view, that take precedence over the administrative incrementalism of the EU bureaucrats. He noted the importance for Europe of the 'infidels beyond the Lubeck-Trieste line' (by which he means the central and east Europeans then subject to communist rule beyond the Iron Curtain), and emphasised that they should not be neglected nor the idea of a broader Europe lost sight of.

The disappearance of the Iron Curtain four years after this article was published casts the issue of European unity in a different light and raises questions about the relationship between different parts of Europe. Europe has thus undergone a further major transformation since Seton-Watson wrote the article, and much of European history has been characterised by far-reaching and relatively rapid change. But elements of continuity and tradition have not been lacking, and they figure prominently in contemporary debates over Europe in Britain and elsewhere. Seton-Watson's stress on the role of European cultural unity, and its particular appeal both to the citizens of the defeated fascist states and the inhabitants of the then communist countries, also suggest that solidly established European traditions have carried enormous influence in twentieth-century Europe. His sceptical comments about the Brussels Eurocrats also reinforce the conviction that a properly European identity has to be based on a principle of *inclusion* rather than the acceptance of practices of *exclusion*, such as those that once wrote off Christians living under Muslim rule (referring to the Ottoman rule in much of the Balkans, which only ended in the early twentieth century) or, more recently, those that consigned much of central and eastern Europe to communist rule.

These different themes are, of course, intimately related and the further transformation of central and eastern Europe that began with the collapse of communist rule in the period 1989–1991 opens up radically new perspectives on the possibility of a more inclusive Europe. Such recent developments have, I think, definitely reinforced Seton-Watson's view of what 'Europe' really is – a conclusion that is, of course, inseparably bound up with what Europe should be. His preference for the cultural unity of a more traditional Europe and a broad inclusiveness also emerges quite clearly, as does his lack of enthusiasm for the *politique* of the Brussels Eurocrats. His answer to where Europe is remains quite vague, although it is quite clearly not just restricted to 'the west'. These are questions that we shall now go on to examine in more detail.

2 Defining Europe

Preamble

It is important to distinguish between the different dimensions of European identity, and we shall begin by identifying some of the different ways in which 'Europe' has been understood. Basic distinctions can be drawn between a number of quite different conceptions. These involve ideas of Europe as a geographical entity, Europe as a sequence of ideas, and – following the near destruction of Europe as a project – something that had to be created anew if it was to exist at all. In this section we focus on Europe defined in terms of its geography and the different ideas it has been understood to embody.

2.1 Europe as a geographical area

From a British point of view, judging from frequently heard expressions, Europe is something 'out there' (or perhaps, in the sense of EU- or Brussels-inspired regulation, 'up there'). 'Britain' and 'Europe' are generally understood to be distinct entities rather than overlapping categories. When they 'go to Europe' most British people leave Britain behind – at least in the physical sense. In conventional geographical terms the situation is rather different. Europe is generally understood to be the western portion of the Eurasian landmass, together with a number of islands not far from the mainland (Corsica, Crete, Malta, Sardinia, Sicily, Ireland and Iceland, as well as Great Britain) (see Figure 3). But that does not provide a clear-cut idea of where Asia stops and Europe begins.

Precisely where the division between Europe and Asia lies is still a matter of some debate. Europe was first spoken of in ancient Greece, and the Greeks generally thought of a water-bound Europe whose borders lay on the Black Sea and its northern extension, the Sea of Azov, as far as the banks of the River Don. Early modern conceptions pushed the European frontier further east in Russian territory. With the construction of the Volga-Don canal in the twentieth century, it became possible to think of Europe's easterly borders following a larger waterway and resting mostly on the Volga, a great river that embraces much of what is regarded as European Russia and which had considerable historical significance in delimiting an historic Muscovite heartland.

Figure 3: Europe as it is conventionally mapped and understood

From the eighteenth century, though, Europe has often been understood to end (or begin) with the Ural Mountains and the river that takes its name from them and flows south into the Caspian Sea. This idea carries its own ambiguities. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 it leaves the Transcaucasus and newly independent states of Armenia, Azerbaidjan and Georgia in an uncertain relation with regard to Europe, while Turkey (currently identified – controversially – as a potential EU member) also lies to the west of the Urals. Turkey, or Asia Minor as it was known in ancient times, has long stood in an uncertain relationship with Europe and became a major antagonist of early Christian Europe with the Ottoman invasions of the fourteenth century. For centuries it dominated south-eastern Europe and remained a major force there until the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913. Alien or not, Turkey was certainly a major European presence for several centuries. Following the revolution of Kemal Attaturk in the 1920s, a modern Turkey emerged with a quite different outlook, and it can now be claimed that the country 'is not only Western, it is wholly European' (Moïsi, 1999, p.47). Turkey belongs to the Council of Europe and first applied for membership of the EU in 1987, an initiative that was not received with much enthusiasm, and Turkey has only recently begun to participate in formal accession procedures.

A geographical Europe is not difficult to define in broad terms, then, but consideration of the status of its bordering areas leads directly to further questions about the nature of European identity. A description of Europe, or any other territory, as being 'just a

geographical expression' invariably implies a diminished status and the absence of more elevated claims associated with the embodiment of some general values. The development of modern Europe has certainly not been devoid of such broad cultural associations. Even those who, like Tony Judt (1996, p.141), are sceptical about the future of a unified Europe and strongly aware of its mythic properties would accept that Europe is more than simply a geographical notion.

2.2 Europe as a sequence of ideas

Europe has also often been defined in terms of the ideas it is believed to represent and the particular system of values it is understood to embody. In different historical periods, therefore, Europe has been identified as the realm of Christianity and later as the home of science and progress. Different ideas of Europe prevailed during different periods, but they have also left their mark on contemporary conceptions. Europe has often been defined, then, in terms of a sequence of ideas, and not just with reference to what it is now, but also to what it has been in the past.

For the ancient Greeks 'Europe' was indeed little more than a geographical expression, and it was the principles of Hellenic civilization extending around the eastern Mediterranean that were paramount. The world of the Romans, too, was a Mediterranean one and the values of Roman citizenship had no need of any 'European' gloss. The civilization that began to emerge within Europe after the Middle Ages was emphatically Christian, and it was out of the realm of Christendom that an early 'new Europe' began to emerge, although the short-lived empire formed by

Frankish emperor Charlemagne in the late eighth century had also been called 'European'. Christendom sustained a spirit of unity in the face of conflict with Muslim Arabs and Turks, and it was Pope Pius II – in the fifteenth century – who was the first to use the term 'Europe', in the title of a book (Neumann, 1999, p.44). It could hardly claim a single identity after the Reformation and the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for although Europeans remained mostly Christian they no longer shared quite the same faith.

The emergence of a modern Europe

It was towards the end of the seventeenth century and, particularly, during the eighteenth century that a consciously European identity came to the fore. By 1751 Voltaire could describe Europe as 'a kind of great republic divided into several states, some monarchical, the others mixed … but all corresponding to one another'. A little later Edmund Burke, often understood to be a spokesman for modern conservatism and the prime embodiment of sturdy British values, affirmed the idea of a common home and maintained that 'No European can be a complete exile in any part of Europe' (Davies, 1996, pp.7–8). This stronger *European* consciousness remained primarily Christian but was now associated with other values, and particularly those of civilization which a rapidly developing Europe of the modernising west was now understood to embody. This in turn evoked principles of freedom (explored by Montesquieu), humanism (in its early sense of shared values formed by a common classical education) and the growing ideas of material progress associated with Adam Smith's discussion of the 'wealth of nations' (den Boer, 1995, pp.58–65).

A general idea of progress associated with the mainstream of European development soon began to prevail over the cultural elitism implied by the emphasis on civilization. It took a specific political form in the democratic explosion of the French Revolution and the emergence of a new conception of citizenship. Napoleon's dissemination of revolutionary

ideals throughout the European mainland with the aid of a highly effective mass conscript army also led to the formation of a remarkable, if short-lived, European political entity; this was in the form of the Continental System which, for a time, embraced most continental nations (being joined briefly by Russia and supported by marriage ties with the powerful Habsburg dynasty in Austria). Napoleon's brief achievement and subsequent defeat was followed by strengthened emphasis on a broad European identity, but also one that became increasingly politicised and diverse. The conservative alliance that dominated Europe for the first decades of the post-Napoleonic period promoted a reactionary and romantic view of the region rooted in an idyllic mediaeval stability, while the growing group of liberals and democrats directed attention to European dynamism, its diversity and the increasing salience of national cultures.

Europe as an association of states

Political diversity in modern Europe was increasingly expressed in the form of the territorial state, and at a far earlier stage than it did anywhere else in the world (Calvocoressi, 1991, p.244). The close proximity of a number of such sovereign states within a relatively small geographical area stimulated the emergence of an increasingly complex framework for the regulation of relations between them. The idea of a balance of power between the major European competitors thus became dominant in the second half of the sixteenth century in the context of sharpening conflict between the Spanish Habsburgs and French Bourbons for overall European supremacy.

It was more precisely formulated in the Peace of Westphalia, which in 1648 brought to an end the Thirty Years War between the major powers and the internecine conflict between German Catholics and Protestants that devastated the central part of the European continent. The Westphalian order – built on the four main principles of territoriality, sovereignty, autonomy and legality – proved sufficiently durable to sustain the basic form of the European state order for the next three centuries (McGrew, 1997, p.3).

After the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, however, the international framework was increasingly threatened by the political consequences of the accelerating pace of social change in key areas of Europe. In the second half of the nineteenth century, after the revolutions of 1848 (although their impact on Britain was more limited than that on the continent), a growing European consciousness based on profound faith in progress and common European superiority was, somewhat paradoxically, linked with strength-ening nationalism and intensifying political tensions.

These two tendencies were held in precarious balance by the enormous expansion of European power throughout the globe and the rich field this offered for the great variety of its peoples' energies, and the failure of most emerging nationalities in this period to gain control over the territory they inhabited and to construct their own state. The old European empires, although weakening and subject to growing internal strain (particularly in the case of Ottoman Turkey, but also affecting Austria and Russia), held together until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. This delayed the onset of a spate of new state formation throughout Europe until after their combined defeat in 1918. The success of the Prussian state in harnessing the power of growing nationalism to create an extended German empire in 1871 was a striking exception to this rule and, indeed, made a distinct contribution to the growing destabilisation of the European political system throughout this period.

The fragile balance that had held through much of the nineteenth century gave way with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 and a massive struggle between the European empires and their diverse nationalities. On the basis of the extensive conflicts

and multiple tragedies of the first half of the twentieth century, it is not difficult to conclude that nationalism gained the upper hand for a lengthy period and 'Europeanness' underwent a strong recession (Bugge, 1995, p.146). In the face of the burgeoning totalitarianisms of the 1930s, little progress was made by any alternative responses such as variations on more traditional European values (like a heroism of reason' or 'militant European humanism') proposed by some of central Europe's leading writers and philosophers.

But twentieth-century nationalism and its domination was not just a contradiction of Europeanness. Nationalism grew directly out of the new ideas of modern democracy that arose with the French Revolution (Malia, 1997, p.16), and it was part and parcel of the general tradition of modern European thought as it had developed after the break-up of a relatively united western Christendom at the end of the Middle Ages. Although reflecting the deep divisions that ran through the continent, it also demonstrated a major dualism within the set of European values as a whole that had emerged during the nineteenth century.

Furthermore, early general ideas of European civilization and patterns of social development were not as universal or even pan-European as the thinkers of the eighteenth century had liked to claim. The First World War was also a conflict between different conceptions of what it meant to be European. The civilization that was associated with early ideas of a modern European identity was very much a French construct, and never had quite the same resonance in British society. German views also increasingly differentiated between 'civilization' and 'culture', the latter being more closely linked with socially unique qualities and national values but also firmly rooted in established patterns of European experience. The First World War was certainly a confrontation between different national interests or military machines, but it was also construed as a conflict between German 'Kultur' and the liberal-capitalist 'civilization' of the West. (This view is by no means restricted to militarists and aggressive politicians; it is also underpinned by arguments developed by the German philosopher Max Scheler.) At the same time, the war was understood to represent a conflict between Russia and specifically European values represented by Germany and Austria. Apologists for Hitlerism during the Second World War would make a similar case, though less convincingly and at a cruder level.

2.2 Europe as a sequence of ideas (continued)

Europe and political extremism after the First World War

After the long period of relative peace during the nineteenth century, the First World War was a traumatic shock to Europe as a whole and offered a fundamental challenge to what had been regarded as its core values (Waever, 1995, p.151). The guiding principle adopted towards the end of the war by the victorious allies (led by US President Woodrow Wilson) in terms of national self-determination was intended to create democratic stability throughout the continent. But the conviction that European stability would be achieved through the satisfaction of national aspirations contained the seeds of further major conflict, not least because the defeated Germans were not fully covered by its provisions for self-determination. Nationality was an unpromising principle on which to base European peace or processes of stable recovery. Nationalist values in themselves had not been discredited; it was the means by which they were pursued that were most deplored.

The monumental barbarity of industrialised warfare had indeed shaken most established values of European civilization, but there remained a conviction (among many of those on

whom the solution embodied in the provisions of the post-war Versailles Treaty was imposed) that existing goals could be achieved by new, modern means. In the eyes of many Germans, defeat in 1918 did not occur on the battlefield but on the home front, through various forms of betrayal. Fascism, first formulated in an equally disillusioned Italy, and Hitler's Nazi movement embodied new principles of leadership that gained strong support in Germany and many other countries as a means of pursuing what were understood to be traditional European values. Fascism, too, was by no means the same thing as nationalism and was in part itself a pan-European movement responding to the decline of the traditional nation state. The main consequence of both movements was the development of yet further disasters for Europe as a whole in the context of the Second World War.

Whatever the views now taken of Nazism and the near-universal condemnation of its actions, it remains an uncomfortable fact that not only did it emerge in Europe but also that it was closely associated with values of superiority, progress and a certain kind of civilization that were highly European. At the same time, Nazism resurrected practices such as slavery (in terms of labour camps and the general treatment of the subjugated nations of the east) that modern Europe had turned its back on and which (like the mass murder of European Jewry) were profoundly shocking to those imbued with the values of western civilization. In this sense it represented a reversion to barbarism and the abandonment of what had come to be understood as European values. But, as reflected in the title of his book *(Dark Continent)* and argued by Mark Mazower (1998, pp.xii, 405) in a recent history, it is also highly misleading to regard 'Europe' as a repository of all good things and imbued with unimpeachable values. Whatever the contradictions and underlying complexities involved, there can be little doubt that nationalism dominated as a fundamentally divisive force and often as an agent of widespread destruction, and prevailed over other European values for much of the first part of the twentieth century. The way in which such strands of European thought were worked out, and their physical consequences, led to the destruction of many millions of European lives, and came close to undermining any idea of Europe itself. It might well be concluded on this basis that if modern 'Europe' was best understood as a system of values, it was one that was inherently self-destructive and hence, perhaps, did not have any lasting meaning.

Such a pessimistic conclusion appears less convincing at the end of the twentieth century. It nevertheless took two world wars (and, arguably, a Cold War) to work out the major contradictions in the value-structure evolved in Europe during the nineteenth century. The Cold War was rooted in the superpower rivalry that grew in intensity from 1946 and lasted in some form until the end of Soviet claims over eastern Europe in 1989. While less aggressive in relation to the west European nations, the form of totalitarianism that developed in Russia appeared as a further threat to peaceful European development, and its final collapse was another condition of the new Europe that emerged in the 1990s.

Soviet communism had also emerged out of the defeat of one of the old European empires during the First World War. The collapse of Russia in 1917 (then led by a western-oriented Provisional Government) could credibly be attributed to its socio-economic backwardness as much as to military weakness, and for this the country's new Bolshevik rulers worked out a ready answer. Under Lenin's leadership, this involved the establishment of a powerful Communist Party and the adoption of a programme of action to accelerate (supposedly established and scientifically validated) processes of progress. It was a prospect that attracted many adherents in Russia and elsewhere. While different from fascism and the German Nazi movement, communism also had its roots in early modern European values and sought to develop the belief in scientific progress that emerged in the Enlightenment as a movement of contemporary social transformation.

Its outcome was ultimately no more successful than that of inter-war fascism. It took the eventual defeat or collapse of both Nazi and Soviet totalitarian orders erected on such premises to produce a perspective on some form of coherent European development free from these ideological preconceptions. It was claimed that the combined outcomes of the Second World War, the Cold War and the eventual collapse of European communism were to dissipate virtually all faith in ideological solutions and overtly irrational forms of political action (Stokes, 1991). The actions of the Nazis created fundamental doubts about the existence of any meaningful European values and led directly to the establishment of universal human rights at an international level. The record of Stalin's Russia was little different with respect to such values, but the Soviet Union emerged in 1945 as one of the victorious Allies and much could be condoned on that basis, leaving it some forty or so years to work out the contradictions implicit in the principles by which it operated. It was only a few years prior to the eventual demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 that the countries conquered by Stalin in the 1940s could contemplate their 'return to Europe', and the Russian leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, could with some conviction look forward to his country becoming fully anchored in a 'common European home'. When something like this common home emerged in 2004 with the yet further enlargement of the EU, though, it was not one that lacked an ideological framework. This time it was the dogma of the free market that had come to prevail (in association, of course, with the global supremacy of the United States), and in a situation where considerable numbers within Europe itself expressed disquiet at the development.

Activity 2

I suggest you take a breather here, and see how far you have got in terms of 'defining Europe'. What progress have you made towards constructing an answer to this deceptively simple question? Look back over the discussion of Europe as a geographical area, as a sequence of ideas, association of states and set of values and see if you can reach any general conclusion.

You may well have decided that it is not really possible to reach any definitive conclusion as to what Europe 'really' is. Geographical boundaries to the east and, to some extent, the south have been fluid and remain so at the current time. Ideas of Europe as the homeland of civilization and progress also received a decisive check in the twentieth century with the breakdown of the traditional balance-of-power system, massive military conflict and experience of widespread social repression. It was only after the defeat of Nazism and collapse of communism that a new, and more hopeful Europe, reappeared as an inclusive concept. The apparent primacy of the idea of Europe by the end of the 1980s, and the emergence of a new (western) Europe in the form of a strengthened EU during the 1980s (examined in greater detail in Section 3), nevertheless took place in a situation of continuing confusion and uncertainty about the values any such Europe represented. We shall now turn to examine what these values might involve.

2.2 Europe as a sequence of ideas (continued)

Europe after the Cold War

The 'Europe' of the second half of the twentieth century (limited for much of that period to the countries of the democratic West, and then not to all of them) had been founded on values of peace and mutual security; this was in full recognition of the dire consequences

of established patterns of European nationalism and nationality-based politics more generally. After 1989 this feature spread to the east, such that the 'defining characteristic of Europe today is democracy on a continental scale' (Rose, 1996, p.5). The observation that major changes in European value-structures since 1945 have indeed been identified tends to support the view that a new, more inclusive Europe emerged towards the end of the twentieth century (Therborn, 1995, pp.278–9). The very success of this transformation and relative stability in the character of the values promulgated over this period, however, carried its own drawbacks.

The ready acceptance of more peaceful values during the decades that followed 1945, and the strength of the European movement that developed on that basis, meant that younger generations were now less conscious of the direct relevance of those values and perhaps less committed to them as practical principles for the conduct of European affairs. The promotion of human rights on an international basis within the United Nations also tended to weaken any specific European connotation. What were once European values had now become globalised, although the European human rights regime is still distinctive in international terms as it is incorporated into the legal systems of the individual European states.

The principles of capitalism and liberal democracy that dominated the 1990s in the new spirit of post-communist triumph were also not exclusively European and in many ways were sharply criticised from specifically European viewpoints. The ideas associated with the much discussed 'end of history' (that is, no clear alternatives to capitalist democracy were present on the global agenda) accurately reflected this relative void in negative terms, although it was in fact the positive victory of free-market capitalism and liberal democracy that was being proclaimed. An 'end of history' was identified only in this context. It was nevertheless appropriate that one of the progenitors of this line of thought – the French Hegelian Alexandre Kojeve – went on to declare an equivalent end to philosophy and took up employment in the administration of the EU (Fukuyama, 1992, p.67).

The identity of Europe as the embodiment of a particular system of values at the end of the twentieth century thus remained somewhat problematic. There is also a clear continuing contrast between Europe's strengthening institutional structures and more intensive processes of governance (at least so far as the EU is concerned) on the one hand, and the relative weakness and uncertainty of the values that underpin it on the other. To this extent, organisation has tended to substitute for value. Europeans can now accept democracy (Mazower, 1998, p.404) because they no longer believe in politics. Indeed, one prominent tendency for much of the post-1945 period and during the Cold War division of the continent was the increasing appropriation of the 'European' title by the countries of a growing EU as representatives of a supranational organisation that spoke on behalf of Europe as a whole including the more modernised west. It is a claim that gained further conviction as the process of enlargement advanced and the EU came to include formally excluded countries, leaving a diminishing (but hardly insignificant) number of countries on the margin in the 'other' Europe.

Although the European Union as a legal entity only came into being after the agreements reached at Maastricht in 1991, we shall use the term EU more generally to refer to the association as it developed throughout the post-war period.

But this idea of a core Europe led by the countries of the developed west was rooted in the realities of the Cold War (see Judt, 1996). This view will be examined in greater detail in Section 4 of this course. It has become more problematic with the changes of 1989–1991 and the disappearance of a Soviet Union committed to keeping the two parts of Europe

separate. In the absence of a repressed, Sovietised Europe to buttress the idea of a free and autonomously developing west, the basis of any common identity remains uncertain and the claims of the EU in terms of values that much more fragile.

Attempts to redefine a contemporary Europe in terms of its values have not been lacking. The standpoint of Romano Prodi, installed as President of the European Commission in September 1999, represents one such effort and refers to a 'Europe of the spirit' characterised by a number of related 'basic values' which include:

> the dignity of the human being,
>
> the central role of the family,
>
> education, and the freedom of thought and speech,
>
> the legal protection of individuals and groups,
>
> the collaboration of all for the common good,
>
> work as a personal and social good,
>
> state authority subject to the law of reason and limited by basic rights.

The concept has not attracted great attention in any 'debate over Europe'. Furthermore, Prodi's particular contribution was sharply attacked for its lack of credibility and the number of contradictions it contained (Times Higher Education Supplement, 15 October 1999). More important, it also expressed a profoundly Catholic outlook which, at the outset of the twenty-first century, might be judged either divisive in relation to a notional European whole or irrelevant to its largely secular society. The very attempt to outline a system of values in contemporary European terms is itself significant, though, as is the general lack of public interest such an attempt attracts. While ideas of European values and the notion of a regional identity are claimed to occupy a major place on the current agenda, they fail to attract much public attention. Greater passions have been evoked by debate over what Europe is not and, like many identities, that of Europe has often been more strongly defined in relation to a non-European 'other' whose values are judged to be alien.

2.3 Europe as a 'non-other'

The idea of 'otherness' has always been a strong component in the formation of any European identity and it is a division that has, paradoxically, run as much through geographical Europe and its societies as it has demarcated Europe from supposedly alien, external civilizations. 'Europeanness', like other collective identities, has faced two kinds of others: those fully external to it and those located within. One of the problems surrounding the development of a modern European identity may be that the external other has often been distant and relatively weak, so directing attention to internal differences and encouraging tendencies to conflict within the European whole (Therborn, 1995, p.243). Definitions of Europe in terms of its system of values too, have rarely identified the same group of countries or geographical area. Peoples close to others on the continent, and even direct neighbours, have often been excluded from the European community because of an alien identity that has been projected on to them. Successive values have, indeed, been promoted as much to exclude certain regions, countries or powers – as well as certain groups within them – as to include others.

Early Europe as Christendom already contained significant religious minorities (Jews and Muslims) – and barely included the rural masses whose peasant status was closely linked with a 'pagan' (and thus non-Christian) outlook which presented a constant challenge to the consolidation of any regional Christian realm (Fletcher, 1998, Chapter 2). It could well

be argued that the existence of such 'others' strengthened the emerging 'European' identity of an articulate elite and may well, indeed, have been a precondition for its development. The roots of modern sentiments of European superiority and colonial racism seem to lie deep in the early development of any common identity and were already linked at an early stage with the dealings of a Latin core with a greater European periphery (Bartlett, 1994, p.313). The strongly differentiated and historically rooted character of any European identity may well be one of its major features, and thus a prime source of the difficulties encountered in defining any contemporary system of European values. The fundamental nature of Europe over the long term may best be defined less by any commonality of values than by the persistence of division and conflict as sources of creative change (Malia, 1997, p.20).

The core area of European identity has also shifted over the centuries, and this has been linked with changing perceptions of who were the critical outsiders and major antagonists. For much of the early period the realm of Christian faith had been based on Constantinople and the eastern part of the Roman Empire rather than on the distant reaches of the west and north. The empire had already been divided into two parts for ease of administration in the third century AD as Goths and other 'barbarians' intensified their attacks. It was the eastern part, ruled from the capital founded by Emperor Constantine at the ancient settlement of Byzantium (and later transformed into modern Istanbul), that proved to be more stable and defensible than the portion ruled from Rome itself. But subsequent developments tended to identify the western variants of Catholicism and Protestantism as more authentically 'European' than the Orthodox faiths of the east and south.

The heartland of Latin Christendom was certainly more 'European' in its dynamism and capacity for sustained material and cultural development (Malia, 1997, pp.6–8). Russia in particular, although a Christian power for most of its five-hundred year existence as a state, has been distinguished for its persistent 'otherness' from a more authentic Europe. Russia was invariably portrayed as just having been tamed and civilized, and almost (yet never completely) ready for full participation in the European project. This has been the case once again since the collapse of communism and the end of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Neumann, 1999, p. 110). Similar tendencies were present in the values of the European civilization of the eighteenth century, as the nations of the developed west increasingly premised their superiority on the backwardness of other regions and 'invented' a barbaric eastern Europe to substantiate their claims (Wolff, 1994). In more recent times, after the Second World War, the Europe of the west (although strongly underwritten by the USA) was clearly regarded as more 'European' than the Soviet-dominated east, a view that supported the special role played by the EU and its predecessors in the region as a whole. Its economic success, sustained democracy and overall stability all strengthened the conception.

It is a view that clearly prevails in post-communist Europe and is one reason why, following the removal of the Iron Curtain, it still remains difficult to conceive of a broader-based European identity or a set of values that might sustain it. 'Europe' has become identified with the affluent stability of the western community, and the long-established traditions of violence and instability now seem distinctly un-European. It is a dimension of the new Europe of the 1990s that has been strongly reinforced by the successive conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. In the context of the 1999 Kosovo conflict, a new definition of Europe as 'the place where tragedies don't take place' was pertinently advanced by Susan Sontag (Observer, 16 May 1999). Developments in more than one of the former communist countries of eastern Europe constituted a major practical problem for EU leaders, as well as posing a challenge to any definition of Europe in terms of a coherent

system of values (the problems involved in governing diversity are the subject of Module 4). Relations within Europe as a whole and between its constituent parts continue to create new fields of conflict as well as forging constructive links. War could be waged on Serbia precisely because 'European values' were being infringed in Europe itself, but it was also the importation of values of nationalism and ethnic collectivism into the Balkan peninsula and the very recent encouragement of national separatism throughout the former Yugoslavia in the name of democracy (a policy surely discredited enough by developments throughout Europe in the inter-war decades) that created the conditions under which such abuses could flourish.

Measures designed to achieve monetary union were, moreover, simultaneously being pushed through in the 'core Europe' of the EU precisely to strengthen the internal cohesion of the centre and protect it from surrounding instabilities. Non-EU countries were, of course, not part of this development, and the Balkans and large parts of post-Soviet Europe continue to remain both within and outside 'Europe'. Such divisions and the particular uses made of formally 'European' values place further doubts on the idea of Europe as an inclusive value system of any sort. It has, therefore, been argued that any new Europe has to be imagined afresh in the context of the particular problems and challenges it faces at any one time, and constructed as a conscious plan of action rather than deduced from existing values. The idea of such 'projects for Europe' is not a new one, and similar proposals have been prominent in discussions about the future of the region since the shattering of so many European illusions in the First World War.

Summary

- 'Europe' clearly refers to a definite geographical area (although with some uncertainty around the edges), but as a broader idea Europe has also meant considerably more than this.
- Uncertainties about the precise parameters of geographical Europe have been closely linked with important cultural contrasts and differences in social values.
- A European identity emerged on the basis of the relatively unified Christendom of the late Middle Ages, and this became more explicitly 'European' as Christianity itself became more diverse.
- An increasingly secular structure of values associated with civilization and various conceptions of progress became more differentiated in the nineteenth century; they gave rise to powerful nationalist currents and increasing rivalry between Europe's nation states.
- The destructive outcome of nationalism in Europe and the increasingly violent political movements it engendered left doubts about the existence of any authentically European values.
- As it has throughout history, modern European identity continues to be defined to a large extent by reference to non-European others, either internal or external, and the contemporary formation of a unified homogeneous 'idea of Europe' continues to emerge as a problematic process.

3 Europe as a project

Plans to refashion Europe or create it anew had been known in earlier times, although specific projects for Europe have been more characteristic of the modern period. Napoleon's attempt to create an 'association européene' was the first such explicit initiative, but it succeeded in the long term only in bringing into being a conservative alliance representing existing imperial and monarchical interests opposed to any alternative and more modern conceptions of European identity. There was particular resistance to the idea of a single European system imposed by one dominant power, and the concept of a balance of power continued to exercise a significant influence. Dominant for the rest of the nineteenth century, too, was the idea of progress on an international scale and strategies for European expansion were pursued throughout the globe, thus diverting many political ambitions from the European mainland. Conflicts involving the major European states broke out mostly around the margins, and particularly concerned the weakening of Ottoman power. The main exception was the transformation of Prussia into a German empire, and the pursuit of national values that brought it into conflict with first Austria and then France. It was the later outcomes of nationalism in the aftermath of the First World War that provided more fertile ground for the elaboration of broader projects for Europe as a whole.

One of the key principles applied to post-1918 Europe in the attempt to defuse the tensions that had produced world war was that of national self-determination, given concrete form by the creation of a number of new nation states (mostly from parts of the former Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires – the European part of the Ottoman Empire having been mostly dismembered in the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913). A supranational framework for the new pattern of states this produced was also created in the form of the League of Nations, although the USA never joined the organisation and the League's objectives were never fully realised. A more specific project for European integration was launched in 1923 with the creation of a 'Pan-European Union' by one Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi. His objectives lay primarily in the realm of security, with the creation of a system of mutual defence pacts, as well as with the European economy, for which he envisaged a system of self-sufficiency. Both Russia and Britain were excluded from this project, the latter because of its strong international position which had led to it having 'grown out' of Europe.

Apart from establishing its own branches throughout Europe, the Pan-European Union attracted support from French politicians Edouard Herriot and Aristide Briand. In 1929 Briand, as French prime minister, was asked by the League of Nations to prepare an initiative in this area, but he came up with little more than proposals for a moral union and a series of meetings (Bugge, 1995, p.104). Moreover, he was convinced of the need for effective British cooperation if any European security organisation was to succeed – and this was certainly not forthcoming. Both the League of Nations and such tentative moves towards a project for joint European security remained quite powerless in the face of German rearmament and growing Hitlerite aggression.

It was only in 1945, with the complete defeat of the Axis regimes and the exhaustion of their nationalist traditions, that further projects for Europe not only returned to the political agenda but now appeared as a prime necessity if the idea of Europe was to retain any meaning or offer some hope for the future. If all traditional European values now appeared to be at least partially compromised, it was only in action towards a specific European project that former values might be restored or new values created. Europe in 1945 had little incentive to look back to its past; it was in redefining Europe as a new project that any

contemporary political meaning could now be found for the region. As Jean Monnet, a French economist and leading proponent of the post-war European idea, wrote in 1950: 'Europe has never existed. It is not the addition of sovereign nations met together in councils that makes an entity of them. We must genuinely create Europe' (see Reading D). By 1945 the prime European value had become that of survival and the avoidance of further wars. The core of the European project had become the creation of a continent of relative security and sufficient mutual tolerance between states and their citizens to maintain that security. Monnet headed a commission to prepare for the restoration and modernisation of French industry after 1945 and in 1952, appropriately enough in terms of prime anti-militarist principles of post-war Europe, became president of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

The growth of European integration and the launching of the 'project' was by no means straightforward or uncontested as a process. The UK was relatively active in this context although, in line with traditional perspectives, it sought to restrain federal initiatives and press for more limited forms of association (as occurred in 1949 with the formation of the Council of Europe). As its imperial base contracted, Britain placed growing emphasis on relations with the USA, although the USA itself was making strong efforts to integrate western Europe as a whole. In addition, Britain did not suffer the traumas of defeat experienced by most other countries of Europe during the Second World War, an experience that prepared them for participation in a radically new European project. Britain still had an extensive overseas empire which enabled it to link perceptions of its weakened contemporary position directly with the global supremacy it had enjoyed in the nineteenth century. It lacked the push of such factors for participation in the new European project as well as the pull of any prior strong continental commitment, having traditionally – and with much success – based its European relations on a detached insular position.

Among eminent Britons Winston Churchill did, indeed, argue in his famous Zurich speech of 1946 for a United States of Europe (Churchill, 1946). But the UK was never meant to be included in this continental association, and Europe was clearly understood to be composed of countries on the mainland. Britain remained in a different category and was still seen as a global, imperial power (Ponting, 1996, p.40). The then Labour government, like Churchill and the Conservatives, was equally unwilling to participate in any supranational European project. Britain thus pressed for a low level of integration and a high level of discretion to be left with individual states as the Council of Europe was founded in 1949. When the first supranational body was formed as the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, it involved France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg and the Netherlands – but not the UK and other countries less enthusiastic about European integration. The major objective was the political one of strengthening the prospects of a lasting peace between France and Germany, but also of making the waging of another war impossible in material terms. Further steps towards this goal were taken with the formation of Euratom and the European Economic Community in 1958, as well as the merger of the various organisations to form a single European Community in 1967. With some difficulty a Common Agricultural Policy was formulated and came into full operation in 1968.

Activity 3

Read

Click to view Winston Churchill's 'Zurich Speech' (Reading B), and Jean Monnet's 1945 extract from Memoirs and 1950 Memorandum (Readings C and D). What kind of

projects for Europe do they propose? What major differences and similarities can you detect between them?

Churchill's main idea in 1946 was to 'recreate the European Family', and 'provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom'. Although he made the 'astonishing proposal' that a partnership between France and Germany was necessary for the recreation of the 'European family' and the establishment of a 'United States of Europe', he later makes it clear that this initiative would be led by France and Germany and should attract the support – rather than the active participation – of Britain, America and Soviet Russia. The first step, he said, was to establish a Council of Europe although, it soon turned out (predominantly under the pressure of British influence), this was to develop very much as a deliberative intergovernmental organisation rather than one with independent powers of its own.

In 1945 Jean Monnet (one of the 'founding fathers' of the European Union), too, argued for a federation of the 'States of Europe' or a 'European entity' to secure prosperity and social progress. He was fearful of the restoration of national sovereignty, which was likely to encourage the return of 'prestige policies and economic protectionism' with further consequences in terms of armed conflict. Particularly interesting was his recognition that the British continued to occupy a special position and, like the Americans and Russians, had a 'world of their own into which they could temporarily withdraw … England had to be brought in' somehow, however, and the revival of nationalism was to be prevented by a joint initiative. But precisely how this was to be achieved remained unclear. Monnet's Memorandum of 1950 continued to emphasise the salience of Franco-German relations – and by this stage it was assumed that the future of Britain lay in it being drawn closer and closer to the USA. It was in this context that Monnet emphasised that Europe did not exist but had to be created – and that France was the only country with the motivation and capacity to bring it into being. In this respect, it is the similarity of the views of Churchill and Monnet, particularly with their appraisal of the roles of Britain and France, that is as interesting as any differences. But the fate of the British turned out to be less divergent from 'Europe' than either thought, and you should consider why this turned out to be the case.

Europe as a project (continued)

The UK finally joined the EU in 1973 (with Denmark and Ireland), and was followed by Greece in 1981, and Spain and Portugal in 1986. The original plan to weaken the capacity for the expression of Franco-German enmity had slowly taken on the form of a more credible *European* community, particularly with the accession of the UK (as the third major European power), the inclusion of Greece with its overtones of ancient democracy, and Spain as a major actor during centuries of European history and global expansion (Waever, 1995, p.171). Despite the unprecedented level of integration achieved in the half-century after 1945 by the various European communities and – eventually – the Union which was launched in 1993, the precise nature of the post-war European project contained major elements of diversity and the forces driving it were subject to quite different interpretations. After three decades of development in various forms, several enlargements from the original small group that had created it, and major changes in the international environment in which it operated, considerable differences emerged between the European partners about where the community was going.

Activity 4

Click to view Margaret Thatcher's 1988 'Bruges Speech' (Reading E) and that of Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission, to the 1988 TUC Congress (Reading F). What is Thatcher's vision of Europe and Britain's place within it? What is that of Delors and how do the two compare?

In her famous 'Bruges speech' of 1988 (Thatcher, 1988) Margaret Thatcher describes Britain's place in Europe in the broadest of terms, in a discussion that extends back to Roman times but takes little account of the specifics of the post-1945 situation. The British 'special contribution' refers to the commitment to preventing Europe 'from falling under the dominance of a single power', and implicitly refers to the balance of power whose effectiveness turned out to be exhausted by the twentieth century. She refers both to a broader European identity that extends beyond the European Community (thus including countries on the other side of the old Iron Curtain) and to the reliance of the USA on 'European values'. Her argument stresses the special role played by sovereignty and nationhood, and appeals to principles of European diversity. She stresses that Europe should be united in ways that preserve different national traditions. Interestingly, Jacques Delors also concludes his speech with an appeal to European diversity (Delors, 1988), but argues that it must be effectively managed if it is to survive. His argument highlights: the need to pool resources in order to preserve both the autonomy of Europe and its identity; the importance of cooperation and trade union solidarity across Europe (particularly in order to combat unemployment); and the role of the 'social dimension' as a vital element to complement the free play of economic forces. It is the latter factor that provides a main differentiating point from the views of Thatcher – both on Europe and more generally. In fact both stress the need for cooperation, although for Thatcher this should primarily be among independent sovereign states and for Delors between the national trade union movements and civil associations more generally.

Major differences in views about the future of Europe were thus apparent in the 1980s. Underlying the numerous debates about strategy and tactics was also a profound uncertainty about what the EU was actually for now. Originally designed to defuse the established enmity between Germany and France, and thus prevent further internecine European warfare, the very success of the European project in these terms made peace less satisfying as a value in itself. Anyone who had participated in the Second World War as a young adult was at least seventy by the end of the century and war, if not organised violence more generally, was a personal experience only for a very small minority of contemporary Europeans. There were clearly different conceptions of Europe and the association it now formed among the different countries of Europe, and differing levels of commitment to the European idea between governing circles and elites on the one hand, and at least some national publics on the other. Europe as a project had been increasingly sold as an economic enterprise, particularly to some of the countries traditionally less inclined to European cooperation, such as Britain. This avoided the more contentious political issues that underlay the original initiative and fitted in with the outlook of secular materialism that prevailed in most modern societies. It clearly appealed to the mass of relatively affluent Europeans, but hardly fostered the growth of a distinctive European identity. Europe increasingly took on the appearance of a continental shopping mall, with a notional capital appropriately situated just outside Calais in a Cité d'Europe.

Differences thus became evident in the mid 1980s about how far strengthening the EU was an end in itself; that is, how far there was a European project *per se*, further to the particular benefits to be gained from specific aspects of international cooperation (Wallace

and Ridley, 1985, p.7). By the end of the 1990s the nature of the post-1945 project was problematised precisely by the length of time it had existed, the degree of evolution it had undergone and the very level of achievement actually attained. A survey of Europe in 1999 thus identified five fundamental shifts in the structure of contemporary Europe and its international relations that prompted major questions both about its future and contemporary status *(Economist*, 23 October 1999):

- Having recovered both from material devastation and war-guilt, Germany has also, since the breaching of the Berlin Wall, become both a 'normal' European country and its leading power; this has brought about a major change in the position of France, whose position within Europe up to then had been pre-eminent.

- Leading EU countries have developed a strong sense that they should possess a capacity for collective military action and an identity separate from that of NATO, whose leadership dominated in the Kosovo conflict of 1999.

- The introduction of a common currency at the beginning of 1999 provided further impetus for the formation of a single European economy, and raised further questions about the development of an identifiable single 'European interest'.

- The European Commission has been weakened not just by the mass resignation of 1999, but also by a more general process of decline since the end of Jacques Delors's presidency of the European Commission in 1994, a change that has brought the influence of national govern ments back into greater prominence. The European Parliament has also become a vigorous political body, as President-elect Barroso found to his cost when he struggled to get it to endorse his initial group of commissioners in October 2004.

- The removal of the Iron Curtain in 1989 opened up the prospect of extensive enlargement, a prospect that promised to turn the EU into a Union that would decisively embrace the greater part of Europe. A major step in this direction was taken with the accession of ten new members in 2004. Apart from Cyprus and Malta, they included the formerly communist countries of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

In the late 1990s, as in the views expressed by Delors and Thatcher in the 1980s, there were major contrasts in the views expressed by leading actors and the governments of the major countries involved. Striking differences could be detected between the lines of analysis followed in defining the nature and consequences of this project, and diverse modes of conceptualising and theorising the issues involved were identified (Nugent, 1999, Chapter 18). Some judgements placed in question the existence of any European project as a political force in its own right. There were strong arguments that in so far as a distinct European project did exist, it was one governed as much by pragmatism and state interest as by the spirit of a more autonomous vision (Moravcsik, 1998; McCarthy, 1999). Conflicts also continued to break out over the desirability of some federal structure for Europe and the future of the nation state.

In any judgement on the fate of Europe overall, though, and in terms of the pursuit of a positive European identity, it could at least be concluded that the integration project pursued in the second half of the twentieth century was a dramatic improvement on the bitter conflicts and losses of the first.

Summary

- A modern 'project for Europe' was launched after the First World War but, like the League of Nations, made little headway against established state interests.

- More concerted efforts for European integration were made after the Second World War to create structures that would effectively preserve peace and maintain regional security.

- The very length of time the post-1945 European project had been in operation produced different perceptions of what was involved, although it also demonstrated the fundamental strength of the overall project.

4 Debates on the development of Europe

Not unlike that of earlier conceptions, the new Europe of the early twenty-first century involves a somewhat loose idea of Europe as a geographical entity and a project of European development based on the pursuit and expansion of core values. Early Christian Europe had developed a self-awareness in terms of fundamental religious beliefs and pursued them within and beyond its original territorial base in a series of crusades and related initiatives; the more secular Europe that followed fostered a culture of multi-faceted superiority that transformed the face of the entire globe. The closely linked, though somewhat diverse, projects of post-1945 Europe have all involved the attempt to confront and transcend the tendencies of militarist nationalism that emerged in the nineteenth century. They differ from earlier visions in that they are primarily concerned with the nature of Europe itself and the inner dynamics of its future development. Modern ideas of Europe have increasingly been concerned with the development of conceptions of democratic coordination that will be both effective and sufficiently broad to encompass the wide range of national traditions and political preferences that are expressed in the countries involved.

The considerable success that the EU achieved by the end of the 1980s in securing these objectives within its restricted western territory has now been followed by the challenge of defining and organising a broader, new Europe in which the post-communist countries of the east are again active members. The new global context and general dominance of liberal-democratic values represent a further dimension of this new European identity. The geographical dimensions of this new Europe have been in one way self-evident, in that the end of the Cold War division of the continent placed an older idea of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals back on the agenda. But at the same time an even broader conception that took account of the realities of a more integrated world-system gained currency, in which a European system was understood to extend from Vancouver to Vladivostok (Story, 1993, p.509). It reflected the understanding that the civilization of North America stemmed directly from that of an older Europe, and had been carried forward in large part by people who had come directly from the old continent. Russia, too, reaffirmed a basic European identity as it embraced Western values and turned away from the communist mind-set that had placed it in direct opposition to the capitalist West.

Europe in this sense, defined once more with prime reference to its liberal and democratic values, could again be understood to embrace a large part of the entire globe – its two branches apparently meeting somewhere in the north Pacific. This, however, meant little more than the globalisation of European values and the spread of the respect for core

human rights that had evolved over the centuries – a process by no means without severe setbacks – in the cultural centres of western civilization. A recognition of such values was already embodied in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued soon after the UN's foundation. The end of communist rule in Europe and throughout the rest of the Soviet Union certainly extended the possibilities for political freedom in some European countries, but it hardly spelled the emergence of any new European civilization in a broader sense. As the problems of coordinating and developing the more traditional 'regional' Europe – now politically liberated but only partly democratised – have come to the surface and become more pressing, less is heard of this global Europe.

Continuing uncertainty within Europe as to what it stands for and who the institutions of the EU actually represent create major contemporary difficulties of definition. One of the fundamental problems in defining the contemporary new Europe has remained the lack of any shared identity, the absence of an agreed understanding of what Europe represents and what it exists for – in short, the weakness of Europe as a system of values. By the end of the 1990s few German, British or French people saw themselves as being primarily European, more (16 per cent) being found in France than in the other two countries. Substantial numbers in most countries saw themselves being European after a primary identification as citizens of the appropriate nation state. But a majority of Britons and Danes still did not acknowledge any European identity at all after twenty-six years' formal membership of a European community. Satisfaction with EU membership, or its expectations, actually declined between 1973 and 1998 in the region as a whole, and fewer than half of all Britons and Italians believed that European integration had achieved much at all in the post-war period (Moïsi, 1999, pp.49–52).

Support for European integration and what were generally termed western values was, on the other hand, strong throughout former communist Europe and particularly in the more developed countries of east-central Europe that envisaged a rapid and relatively smooth passage into the EU. But commitment to such values began to decline in the post-communist area during the mid-1990s, too, as accession negotiations began to place major demands on the newly liberated countries. On the eastern margins of geographical Europe, Russia has traditionally been divided in its attitude to Europe between Westernisers and Slavophiles (Neumann, 1996, p.28). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 this was reflected in an equivalent distinction between Atlanticist and Eurasianist perspectives. Opinion polls conducted in 1993 showed majority support in all groups making up the Russian elite for the Eurasianist perspective. As some analysts emphasised, this by no means represented a rejection of western perspectives (these were more firmly rooted in a 'neo-anti-imperialist perspective'), but rather an eclectic outlook characteristic of an emerging centrist position (Zagorski, 1994, p.71). Never-theless, they hardly indicated the flowering of any full European consciousness or the acceptance of overtly European values.

Views 'from the Atlantic to the Urals' tend to suggest, then, a widespread hesitancy and highly qualified commitment within the new Europe to anything that could be identified as a commonly agreed vision of Europe. This by no means erected any major obstacle to the pursuit of the project that has underpinned the new Europe of the 1990s:

- a 'deepening' of the original west European Union in the pursuit of European Monetary Union; and
- its 'widening' to include, in 2004, eight post-communist countries in east-central Europe, as well as Cyprus and Malta.

But the project remains subject to qualifications on both counts. Internal resistance to the extension of monetary union persists in the case of the UK and a few other countries, and there is no conviction that the structures of the EU can be extended to include the whole of geographical Europe in the foreseeable future.

The uncertainties that accompany the continuing pursuit of the project cannot be regarded with much surprise. The dismantling of the Iron Curtain and the end of a division of Europe enforced by global superpower rivalry could hardly have led in itself to the sudden emergence of any conceivable single or unified Europe in a meaningful sense. Indeed it has led to a delineation or resurgence of several traditional and diverse Europes in place of the increasingly unified western Europe that the Cold War division of the continent had allowed, to present itself as the modern variant of Europe *tout court*. In this sense the new Europe of the 1990s emerged less as one that is just one stage on from the modern, post-1945 capitalist democratic Europe of the west than a region that is more differentiated and reminiscent of earlier conceptions of coexisting and multiple Europes (Malia, 1997, p.10). It also harks back to the three historical regions of Europe – the west, east and an 'intermediate' eastern-central (see Szucs, 1988).

Debates on the development of Europe (continued)

Activity 5

Alongside the evident diversity in contemporary Europe itself there are clearly different views expressed on how Europe is developing and the kind of Europe we can expect to see emerging in coming years. The pieces by Dominique Moïsi, 'Dreaming of Europe' (Reading G), and Tony Judt, 'Goodbye to all that?' (Reading H), reflect such contrasting views of European development. Evidence from a recent *Eurobarometer* survey (Reading I) throws further light on some of the topics they discuss.

Now click here to read the three pieces. Try to identify the main points they make. What are the three 'fundamental challenges' that Moïsi identifies, how does he see relations between the major states developing – and what sense do you make of his judgement? What are the more sceptical conclusions reached by Judt, and what precisely do you think Europe might or might not be saying goodbye to?

What do more recent survey results contribute to an understanding of the issues they raise? You can use the *Eurobarometer* material to develop your skills in understanding and analysing statistical, graphic and tabular data to test the generalisations and suggestions made by Moïsi and Judt in the light of recent EU developments. See if you can find evidence, for example:

- to support the contention of Moïsi that a spectacular change in British attitudes to Europe was taking place during Tony Blair's tenure as prime minister;
- to see if the UK population has developed any marked appreciation of British membership of the EU or enthusiasm for the proposed Constitution in comparative terms;
- to evaluate the developing nature of the Franco-German relationship in terms of defence and security preferences and their support for common EU initiatives.

The fundamental challenges identified by Moïsi (1999) for the Europe of the 1990's are those of sovereignty, space and identity. Traditional notions of sovereignty have remained ambiguous in the wake of the Kosovo war, in that the sense of European 'space' is still problematic with the traditional questions about Russia and Turkey now raised in contemporary terms, while the idea of a common European identity seems to make some progress despite undoubted obstacles. Whether the 'dream of Europe' presents a convincing vision is, and will remain, debatable. To my mind, it seems to involve some questionable assumptions. Clearly some important changes have occurred, but it becomes increasingly difficult to share the view that a 'spectacular change in attitudes and policy toward Europe has taken place in Tony Blair's Great Britain' in the way suggested by Moïsi. Evidence presented in the article itself in terms of opinion surveys shows that the development of a European identity in Britain has been very limited. Furthermore, from the evidence gathered in 2004, the changes in British perceptions of the EU appear to be quite minimal. If 37 per cent of Britons thought that EU membership was a good thing in 1998, the percentage had risen by just one point to 38 in 2004 (European Commission, 2004). The British also perceived few benefits from EU membership, were mistrustful of its core institutions and showed scant enthusiasm for its proposed Constitution, coming just about last on all these scales.

Judt (1996) directs attention to the particular importance of the consequences of the end of communist rule in eastern Europe and the critical evolution in Franco-German relations that has taken place. He sees 1989 as bringing to an end a unique period in France's diplomatic history and facing Germany with rather too many problems in terms of European enlargement. Problems of economic growth, unemployment, immigration and a weakening welfare state all raise – in Judt's view – major problems for concerted European development and the growth of any broader European identity. 'Europe', he suggests, remains too large and too nebulous a concept to forge much of a convincing human community, and the traditional prominence of the European nation state in fact shows little sign of diminishing. It is time, in this view, to say goodbye to the strong idea of 'Europe' as a unified entity, which was able to take root and develop between 1945 and 1989 due to the conjunction of a particular set of conditions.

But here, too, recent developments might suggest a rather different perspective. If Moïsi may be over-optimistic about British sentiments for Europe, Judt may see too many problems inherent in the changing Franco-German relationship. With the launch of the euro in 1999, it can certainly be argued that relations between France and Germany have strengthened and a growing consensus seems to be emerging between their leaders about the future of the developing European framework. The common position taken by the two countries on the Iraq war has also strengthened their alliance within the EU. Public sentiments have also undergone a radical shift, and in a rather different direction from that seen in the UK. In 1992, just after the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, only 45 per cent of a French sample declared themselves in favour of rapid European integration; in 2000 as many as 70 per cent opted for an equivalent policy, and 59 per cent were enthusiastic or favourable to further EU development compared with 41 per cent opposed to it or sceptical (Liberation, 26 June 2000). Support for a common defence and security policy has been quite high, at 78 per cent, within the EU as a whole, but it is particularly high in Germany (87 per cent in 2004) and 81 per cent in France, in contrast to 60 per cent in the UK (European Commission, 2004).

Precisely how Europe is best defined at the beginning of the twentieth-first century, and what prospects it has for further development, must therefore remain the subject of considerable debate. Traditional uncertainties about the geographical extent of Europe, the core values it may be understood to embody, and doubts about the commitment of

many of the individuals, groups and nations that live there to any shared identity, remain. As the various European Communities founded in the 1950s developed and expanded to form a broader European Union in the 1990s, they have increasingly echoed these traditional uncertainties about what and where Europe is. This course will provide you with extensive material to explore these issues further and help you develop and clarify your own opinions.

We can nevertheless at least begin with certain observations about post-1945 Europe and the major developments that have occurred. Clear residues of the new project for Europe evolved in the middle of the twentieth century have remained, and certain achievements have held firm. There is still little dissension from the original post-1945 project for a Europe no longer led into war by Franco-German enmity or more general national rivalries.

Activity 6

It is now time to study 'Europe in the Twenty-First Century'. The contributors are:

Robert Bideleux, Reader in Politics, University of Swansea

Mark Pittaway, Lecturer in European Studies, Open University

Hugh Starkey, Staff Tutor for Languages, Open University.

The programme is designed to explore three different areas:

- questions of European identity;
- ideas of what Europe currently is and what it might become; and
- the relationship of different ideas of Europe to the evolving EU.

Spend some time considering (or reconsidering) these issues yourself, and jot down some answers to the questions they raise. Then listen to the discussion by clicking on the links below.

Audio content is not available in this format.
Audio 1

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Audio 2

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Audio 3

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Audio 4

Audio content is not available in this format.
Audio 5

I introduce the discussion by asking contributors to give their own answer to the question posed by Seton-Watson and discussed at the beginning of this course: What is Europe? Where is Europe? You may like to use this opportunity to *confirm* and *consolidate* your understanding of the material you have studied in this course so far by *constructing your own answer* to these fundamental questions. Now compare your answer with those of the contributors on the audio files. How do their answers differ? How do they compare with your views on the nature of twenty-first century Europe? The contributors go on to raise questions about the conditions for European unity and current prospects for the 'European project' as originally conceived in the years immediately following 1945.

At least part of any project for Europe at the beginning of the twenty-first century will be to manage the conflicts and diversity of modern Europe in ways that are equally successful in avoiding general warfare. Although significantly differentiated, much of the new Europe is also involved in a broad project of integration for which the main points of reference are to be found in the process of EU enlargement, as well as the changing framework and processes of evolution within the EU itself. A whole range of perspectives and opinions have been brought to bear on these processes. This leaves the new Europe of the early twenty-first century defined as much by what differentiates it, as by any principle of integration. But it does at least suggest some perspective of coordinated development that maintains the principle of peaceful evolution on which the growing community of Europe has been based since 1945.

Summary

- Earlier forms of European identity were characterised by sets of values and projects which involved their promotion beyond the European homeland.
- The focus of developments in contemporary Europe is more inner-directed and places greater emphasis on relations between its constituent parts.
- The new Europe of the early twenty-first century is less sure of any shared identity and requires greater acceptance of a more differentiated region committed to the avoidance of military and other forms of violent conflict.

5 Themes in European development

5.1 Unity and diversity

The development of a new Europe in the early twenty-first century relates to four main themes that were introduced at the beginning of this course: unity and diversity, conflict and consensus, tradition and transformation, and inclusion and exclusion.

The striking differences that emerged within Europe (cultural, linguistic, political) have long been associated with the existence of a common framework within which the different parts of Europe were able to develop productively and sustain a broad European civilization that, in the nineteenth century, took on global proportions. One summary thus refers to 'political diversity within a common cultural inheritance, with the diversity

outranking the commonality' (Calvocoressi, 1991, p.1). It was a diversity that was increasingly associated with currents of nationalism and expressed in the development of a system of nation states. From the seventeenth century this was regulated by principles first articulated in the Peace of Westphalia which contributed to the maintenance of a rough balance of power that held in Europe until the cataclysm of the Second World War. The Westphalian state tradition was, of course, not unbroken, nor were its principles unchallenged, but its essentials persisted for much of the life of what we regard as modern Europe. It provided a unified framework capable for most of the time of holding the divisive tendencies of a rapidly modernising and increasingly dynamic Europe in check.

The spread of a more intense nationalism that gained the capacity to mobilise whole societies – or, more accurately, the emerging industrial states and their rapidly growing citizenry – produced conflicts that this order could no longer contain, although it took the two world wars to destroy it completely. Within the framework of Cold War Europe a new form of European unity began to develop in the form of the successive communities and markets, although it remained partial and restricted to the developed capitalist west. European diversity has also increased, both with the emergence of an independent eastern Europe and the expansion of the EU, which has been accompanied by growing disagreement within the latter over its principles of operation and the form its future development should take. The new Europe that has emerged has, therefore, considerably greater possibilities for unity than for most of the period since 1945, but also increasingly powerful pressures for diversity that raise serious questions about how such ideas of unity might be realised.

5.2 Conflict and consensus

The diverse forms of conflict that have marked long periods of European history hardly require further emphasis here. The first half of the twentieth century, in particular, was clearly dominated by what many have described as a European civil war. Since 1945, in marked contrast, the western part of the continent has been increasingly dominated by a growing number of freely associated countries in the name of a newly constituted 'Europe'. It has been remarkably successful in developing mechanisms of consensus both within the majority of the nations engaged in processes of post-war reconstruction and development, and throughout the west European community as a whole. In this process it has steadily enlarged its sphere of influence and depth of commitment to a common project of integration.

Much of the internal consensus that prevailed was sustained by state-dominated processes of post-war economic recovery and a common commitment to the growth of various forms of welfare state. The continued existence across the Iron Curtain of the 'other', communist Europe, held in common subjugation by the Soviet Union, was also a major factor in sustaining western Europe as a political and security-conscious community, factors that had always played some part in its development despite its formal and undoubtedly prior identity as an economic association. The east/west divide thus produced a 'permissive consensus' that helped support (west) European cooperation (Wallace, 1994, p.21).

The military commitments this entailed further strengthened the role of the state in west European economic development and had clear implications for patterns of state expenditure. All this began to change, first with the strengthening commitment to liberal, free-market practices from the end of the 1970s and then with the end of the Cold War at the close of the following decade. While readily recognised as a stimulant to major change

in central and eastern Europe, the removal of the Iron Curtain was a catalyst for greater turbulence in western Europe as well (Wallace, 1994, pp.19–20). The strengthening of neo-liberal currents in the global economy during the 1990s and early years of the new century placed the activity of the welfare state under greater pressure and prompted dissension within the EU (not least in discussions of the proposed Constitution) about the kind of guarantees that collective social and economic rights should receive.

While the elements of consensus in post-1945 western Europe should not be overestimated (the upheavals of 1968, continuing elements of ethnic conflict, the violence implicit in the partial democracy of post-war Italy, as well as the repressive elements of rule in authoritarian Spain, Portugal and Greece cannot be discounted), the significant progress made in creating the EU rested on substantial agreement, both at international level and within the states concerned. Although the elements of conflict implicit in the new, post-Cold War Europe (at least in its western portion) should not be overemphasized, there has undoubtedly been a stronger malaise and general uncertainty about the whole European project which has given rise to a range of social tensions and political antagonisms. Sharp disagreements developed within the EU and its potential members over US policy towards Iraq. Developments in eastern Europe, after the original liberation and restoration of national independence, were less positive overall in terms of conflict development, although violent clashes of any size have been avoided in many countries. But war and civil disturbance were prominent features during the 1990s in Russia, the Transcaucasus and, above all, the Balkans – where most EU members became involved in the conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo/Serbia by virtue of commitment to NATO operations.

5.3 Tradition and transformation

Identification of specifically European traditions, such as that of a European system of values, is no easy task. Europe arrogated the Christian faith to itself, but it was hardly in Europe that it originated and the practice of Christianity has never been restricted just to Europe. Modern Europe also identified itself with traditions of civilization, progress and a general superiority over other cultures and peoples, although European practice and the ends to which its growing power was put suggested that any superiority it possessed did not reside in any particular morality, culture or form of social organisation. Rather, what was notable in the development of modern Europe was the dynamism of its growth, the attention it paid to science and technology as a motor for development and the capacity it showed for the rapid accumulation of power and its intensive use both within and beyond the societies of Europe. In this sense a dominant European tradition has been that of change, and the transformations of urbanisation, industrialisation, and intensive economic development have been at the core of the European experience. Such processes contributed to the rapid pace of European modernisation, the expansion of its power and global reach, and the strong material base of the civilisation it came to develop.

In terms of politics and the patterns of state organisation, European traditions have equally tended to emphasize – as outlined in discussion of the two themes above – diversity rather than unity, and conflict rather than consensus. In consequence of this, and in relation to the primary focus of this course, one of the main features of European development has been the lack of any tradition of overall governance and the growing prominence from the seventeenth century of a balance of power as the major means for keeping conflict tendencies under control. Under the growing pressure of modern nationalism and the strong competitive tendencies inherent in modern state organisation this balance was increasingly disrupted and the mechanism finally broke down. Two world wars demonstrated the failure of this balance of power and led to the overall collapse of

the European state system. Europe survived after 1945 with the support of the structures of global governance erected by the two superpowers.

By 1991 one of these, the Soviet Union, had disappeared, by which time at least part of Europe had developed new structures of political coordination and novel forms of self-regulation in some key areas. As the remaining superpower, the US continued to exercise an influence on the EU that was broadly supportive but also played a part in promoting elements of dissension that pointed to further elements of transformation. The distinction made by Donald Rumsfeld between 'old' and 'new' Europe (the latter generally referring to a number of east-central European countries), and the preference he stated for the latter in terms of its support for the US-British invasion of Iraq in 2003, cast a different light on the integration process that EU enlargement generally represented. But such views were by no means uncontested in the United States itself and there is clearly no such thing as a single American vision of Europe (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2004, p.76).

It is in this context that the question can be posed of whether current transformations point to the eventual emergence of new and effective forms of governance for Europe on a lasting basis and, indeed, whether they can eventually be extended to apply to the European continent as a whole. If so, this will indeed mark a significant change. Europe and the societies it has formed have been defined far more by division and conflict as sources of creative change than by any commonality of values, shared vision or, even less, common form of rule or political allegiance. The emergence of what Martin Malia (1997, p.20) has called a 'unity within integration' would indeed represent a profound change and a development never seen on any inclusive European basis. If the illusions both of nationalism and communist ideology could be dispensed with, a new law-governed community might emerge throughout Europe as a whole. Such a fundamental transformation would, in this view, reflect the emergence of a modern new Europe comparable to, but quite different in nature from, that of mediaeval Christendom and the later secular formation of the early modern period, whose early democratic principles – given concrete form in the French Revolution – soon led to the disasters of political nationalism and the aberrant forms of twentieth-century totalitarianism.

5.4 Inclusion and exclusion

Contemporary Europe is, like that of earlier times, divided on several counts and reflects the continuing existence of several major identities. Individuals and groups invariably have several, overlapping or nested, identities at the same time. But there is also a *hierarchy* of different identities, with some groups having preferential access to particular European values and resources and others being partly or wholly excluded from them. Contemporary patterns of inclusion and exclusion refer partly to physical location, but elements of social ranking are also closely involved. Any geographical definition of Europe obviously excludes territories that lie outside its designated area. Africa and Asia have been distinguished from Europe since ancient times, but were 'excluded' only in the sense that they and their peoples belonged somewhere else. Geographical marginality with regard to contemporary Europe now has strong economic, political and social connotations as well. Ambiguities currently exist in this sense with particular regard to a number of Europe's border areas such as Turkey and north Africa, whose development in recent times has been closely bound up with that of the European continent and with whom economic and security links have been particularly strong. The inhabitants of such border-lands are also represented within Europe by major immigrant communities. Yet more have sought entry and residential rights and feel excluded when these are denied, although this is a status shared with many other potential immigrants from other parts of

the globe. Turkey, in particular, has long sought admission to the EU and asserted a national claim to membership and European identity, and its refusal has provided a basis for growing sentiments of exclusion. In fact, decisions taken at the Helsinki EU Conference in December 1999 endorsed Turkey's long-term aims for membership and its application has been taken far more seriously in recent years.

But far more is involved here than the exclusion of border areas and the people who live in them by drawing boundaries around a geographical Europe. At issue is also the definition of a European identity by reference to certain values (in so far as they can be agreed upon), an area in which religious attitudes and racism often play a major part. Perhaps even more important is the question of who has access to Europe's diverse resources and the material advantages associated with its well-developed social and economic infrastructure. Lines of inclusion and exclusion also exist within Europe and may be drawn between different regions, national, ethnic and socio-economic groups – and on such bases often exclude numerous categories on all these counts at the same time. This has long been part of the European experience. The core Europe of the north-west of the continent has traditionally been distinct from a poorer south and east, which was subject to contrasting cultural influences and held a different religious faith or form of organisation. Distinct ethnic, socio-economic or class groups occupied different positions in this respect – as, indeed, they also did within the area of any 'core Europe' itself.

To this extent the idea of a fully inclusive Europe may be an illusion, in the sense that any game played to the end also involves both winners and losers. An emphasis on the different status of minority groups within a greater European whole may be a major mechanism that helps confirm the identity of the majority and strengthen the integration of Europe as the regional whole. Such examples range from the early persecution of Jews and Muslims in early modern Europe (at the same time as a distinctly European identity began to emerge) to the affirmation of distinctively 'European' values in the context of the NATO war on Serbia in association with the Kosovo crisis. But some developments also point to the possible emergence of a new situation in this sense. One important characteristic of the new situation with the end of the Cold War is that Europe as a whole is now more open to a stronger flow of internal influences and diverse forms of communication, and thus a stronger pull from an increasingly integrated EU core.

The more intensively governed EU, but one formally organised on inclusive rather than exclusive principles, is better suited for operating as a stable centre for the region. It may exercise an overall integrative pull and moderate, if not abolish, at least some aspects of exclusion. The further development of the EU's 'cosmopolitan' legal order may have distinct advantages in this respect over the nation-based provisions of established state legislation (Bideleux, 1999, p.33). Rather than developing as an exclusive European union, the EU also has the capacity to evolve as a Union of Europe, a prospect that may give more substance to the claim accepted and publicised by the *Economist* (23 October 1999) that it is no longer propagandist or even contentious 'to speak of the European Union as synonymous with its continent'.

Summary

In this section we have reiterated and developed our main themes in relation to recent European developments:

- unity and diversity
- conflict and consensus

- tradition and transformation
- inclusion and exclusion.

6 Conclusion

The major thematic contrasts of European development in terms of unity and diversity, and conflict and consensus, thus persist at the beginning of the twenty-first century, although aspects of unity and consensus had tended to prevail following the relaunching of the European project after 1945. Although this represented something of a break with tradition for modern Europe, it was by no means clear that this represented a full-scale transformation or pointed to the emergence of a Europe that was both inclusive and more intensively governed.

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Seton-Watson, H. (1985) 'What is Europe, where is Europe? From mystique to politique,' *Encounter*, Vol. LXV, No. 2, July/August 1985, Encounter Ltd; Churchill, W. S. (1946) 'The tragedy of Europe', *Speeches of Winston Churchill*, Cassell. Reproduced with permission of Curtis Brown Ltd, London, on behalf of the Estate of Sir Winston S. Churchill. Copyright Winston Churchill 1945; Monnet, J. (1978) in Mayne, R. (trans) *Memoirs*, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd. Copyright © Jean Monnet, reproduced by permission of Librairie Artheme; Delors, J. (1988) 'Extracts from a speech', *TUC Congress Report, 1988*, Trades Union Congress; *Foreign Policy*, 115, Summer 1999; Judt, T. (1996) 'Goodbye To All That?' (excerpts), *A Grand Illusion? An Essay on Europe*, Hill and Wang, a division of Farrar, Straus and Giraux. Copyright © 1996 Tony Judt. Text and tables from Eurobarometer No. 62 (2004). Copyright © European Communities.

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