The London School of Economics and Political Science

The political discourse of the European Parliament, enlargement, and the construction of a European identity, 1962 - 2004.

Emma De Angelis

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

Abstract

This thesis explores the European Parliament's construction of European identity in enlargement discourse between 1962 and 2004. It focuses on the idea of "Europe" as constructed by the European Parliament over the past fifty years, analysing both the way in which MEPs discuss the idea of Europe and European identity and also looking through this lens at the development of what has so far been a largely neglected institution in the historiography of European integration. The European Parliament is a common subject of political science studies, which often focus on the dynamics of party politics and elections. European identity is also a ubiquitous subject of many political science, sociological, and historical works. Historians of European integration, however, have dedicated little attention to either. This work thus places itself at the intersection of the literature on the idea of European identity, the European Parliament, and European enlargement.

The thesis makes a contribution to the understanding of the historical development of a European identity discourse within the enlargement context, showing how one amongst the Community institutions attempted to legitimise the expansion and continuation of the process of European integration through the discursive construction of a European idea. It traces the main themes that emerge over the years out of this construction, from political identity to historical narratives and cultural elements, analysing how MEPs develop these different bases of identity in different enlargement contexts. It then looks at Turkey as a special case study of an enlargement that is still underway and explores the identity themes that emerge from the discourse surrounding this open-ended process.

Ultimately, the thesis also shows that the European Parliament, thus far overlooked in the historiography of European integration, is in fact worthy of closer scrutiny as an institution in its own right.

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My friends outside the PhD programme helped to keep things in perspective by never actually understanding what on earth it was all about, and refusing to ever

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Today we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the European Community, the greatest project in European history to promote peace and democracy. Fifty years of stability, prosperity and progress in the free part of our continent, which until 1989 was divided. European unification has created prospects for the citizens of the European Union which our parents and grandparents could not imagine in this form […]. We are linked through our shared values - human dignity, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and the social market economy. In the world of the 21st century, we can only defend these values through our joint efforts. That makes European unification a necessity.

Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the European Parliament, 25 March 2007, Address by the President of the European Parliament on the 50th anniversary of the signature of the Treaties of Rome

This thesis explores the European Parliament's construction of European identity in enlargement discourse between 1962 and 2004. Its primary aim is to shed light on the idea of "Europe" as constructed by the European Parliament over the past fifty years, thus also hoping to contribute some insights into the development of what is perhaps the most neglected institution in the historiography of European integration. It therefore places itself at the intersection of the literature on the idea of European identity, the European Parliament, and European enlargement.

The idea of Europe is of course a concept that goes well beyond the process of integration that has taken place over the past 50 years. However, since 1957 if not before, both the idea of Europe and the question of whether there is such a thing as a European identity have been among the most debated issues of European politics, lying at the heart of the integration process initiated when the six founding signatories of the Treaties of Rome undertook to work towards 'ever closer union'. Ever since then, politicians, academics, and functionaries of the common institutions have debated the question of what Europe actually is, what constitutes its political, cultural, and social identity, and, above all, what is the ultimate purpose of European integration –

something that could be simplistically reduced to the opposition between a 'United States of Europe' and a free market area, and all that lies in between. The high political relevance of the concept of Europe can thus hardly be denied, especially in light of the phenomenon of institutional, economic and political integration that, as pointed out by Risse and Brewer, has allowed the now European Union to successfully appropriate the discursive space of European identity for itself[1].

European identity is an issue that re-emerges every time a new aspiring member state lodges its application to enter 'Europe'. Ever since Britain's first ill-fated application in 1961, the question of enlargement has been intrinsically linked to the question of European identity: deciding which countries had the right to become members of the EC/EU, and on what basis, played a crucial role in the emergence and evolution of the self-understanding of the existing organisation. The issue of identity and self-definition has constantly run through the history of European integration, often sidelined and overshadowed by economic and power-political considerations, but nonetheless always inevitably present as the constant undercurrent that re-emerged, in different forms but with similar content, at all key junctures.

Ever since the signature of the Treaties of Rome, the EEC/EC[2] member states, the Commission, and the European Parliament in turn felt the need to address this issue more or less explicitly: it insistently re-surfaced in the 1960s (albeit in a largely implicit manner, as an underlying issue in the first enlargement discussions), in December 1973 with the 'Declaration on European Identity' by the foreign ministers of the Nine, in the 1980s underlying the 'relaunch' with the Single European Act, and then again with the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and the establishment of European Union. The early 2000s debate about a 'Constitution for Europe' was testament that European identity remained a controversial yet topical issue in political debates at national and European level – and to date stands unresolved, and likely insoluble. If a definition of Europe and European identity remained an unattainable feature of European politics throughout the history of European integration, the debate certainly found its focal points whenever the question

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[1] See for instance Richard Hermann, Thomas Risse-Kappen and Marilynn Brewer, *Transnational Identities–becoming European in the EU*, (New York: Rowan and Littlefield, 2004).
[2] Multiple names were used to indicate the European integrated institutions over the various decades since 1957, changing from the European Economic Community (EEC), to the European Community (EC) to the European Union (EU). This thesis will use the conventional EC/EU when making general observations spanning several decades.

of EC/EU enlargement surfaced over the years. Any enlargement necessarily entailed a measure of soul-searching on the part of both the candidates and the member states: any club will ask aspiring new members their motivations for joining, and will in turn need to define its own purposes, mission, goals, and rules. Even more explicitly, however, the question of European identity was at the heart of the enlargements to the newly-emerged democracies of Greece in 1981 and Portugal and Spain in 1986, and came to the forefront of European political discourse after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the demand of Central and Eastern European Countries that they be allowed to 'rejoin Europe'[3].

The reorganisation of the continent after the end of the Cold War called into question the identification hitherto of "Europe" with Western Europe, at least in political terms, which had thus far allowed Western Europe to push forward its institutional integration without the need to define in any final terms Europe's geographical and cultural borders. Up until 1989, the Cold War division of the European continent facilitated Western Europe's claim to be the only legitimate representative of European political and cultural heritage, relegating Eastern Europe to a barbaric, non-European political, social and economic system[4]. Western Europe, and within it institutionally integrated Europe in the form of the EC, was the only real 'Europe'. This fictitious but convenient rhetorical stratagem simplified the EC's political discourse on its identity: enlargement could only be offered to Western democracies[5] and the geographical and political borders of European integration were structurally determined by the international situation. This convenient construction was shattered in 1989-1991: the new undivided Europe, and the long queue of applicants who asked to become full members of the European Union and hence re-affirm their "Europeanness", brought the issue of European identity back to

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[3] 'The countries that have returned to the fold of free nations are going to ask us a much more redoutable question: can we join your family? This means that, in our debates among ourselves, we can no longer avoid discussing the geographical limits of our Community and the architecture of Europe as a whole over the next twenty years', Alain Lamassoure, Liberal and Demcratic Reformist group, France, EP debates, Commission Statement on Eastern Europe, 17 January 1990; Lamassoure was an MEP from July 1989 until 2009 (re-elected in 2009), first as a member of the Liberal Democratic and Reformist group and then,f rom 1991, of the group of the European People's Party. The power behind the rhetoric of "rejoining Europe" played a prominent role in the interactions between the EC and the Central and Eastern European countries from the very beginning of the end of the Cold War, and contributed to shaping the debate on EU membership for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe until the enlargement of 2004. The third chapter of this thesis takes a closer look to this idea and how it featured within the European Parliament's identity discourse between 1997 and 2004.

[4] For a history of the emergence of the concept of Eastern Europe during the Enlightenment, see for instance Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: the map of civilization on the mind of the enlightenment*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[5] See Birkelbach Report, 'Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté, Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne, Documents de Séance, Doc. 122, 15 Jan 1962.

the forefront of political debate. 1989 'led to greater uncertainty as to the identity of Europe and its values', engendering an ongoing 'crisis of European identity'[6]. The recent enlargements of 2004 and 2007, repeated attempts to create a common foreign and security policy, and the failure of the French and Dutch referenda on the EU Constitutional Treaty were all events highlighting the powerful and controversial nature of the identity question in contemporary European politics – and its complex historical legacy.

The issue of European identity is, ultimately, at the very core of the process of European integration: what is the nature of this process, what are its ultimate aims, and how do the member states and institutions that are bringing forward this process understand their role and their aims within it? This is the question that politicians and observers of European integration have been asking throughout its history – and which the highest representatives of the EU member states, united in Berlin to celebrate the 50th birthday of the European Union, tried to address with a common declaration on the 'values' and 'ideals' that underpin the European 'idea'[7]. But how was the definition of the values and ideas that characterise "Europe" reached? Why are values such as 'democracy' and 'human rights' now considered to be so defining of "Europe"? How have certain ideas, and not others, come to be identified with "Europe"? Which actors have contributed to the current definition of "Europe"?

Studying European identity: ideas and institutions in the historiography of European integration

The question of European identity has so far emerged as a key subject of research in political science and European studies more prominently than in European integration history. Political scientists have recently devoted a great deal of attention to the question of European identity, intended both in terms of the identity of the EC/EU as an actor and in terms of the emergence of a mass European identity somehow comparable to the collective identity of a nation[8]. In the 1970s, for instance, international relation theorists

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[6] Gerard Delanty, 'The European Heritage from a Cosmopolitan Perspective', LSE 'Europe in Question' Paper No. 19/2010, p. 1.
[7] Declaration on the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the signature of the Treaties of Rome, official Europa website: http://europa.eu/50/docs/berlin_declaration_en.pdf accessed on 10 March 2008.
[8] See Jeffrey T. Checkel and Peter J. Katzenstein, *European Identity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Lauren McLaren, *Identity, interests and attitudes to European Integration*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave

explored European identity in relation to the potential for a common European foreign policy[9]. More recently, a number of interesting studies have explored the issue to establish whether it is possible to talk of an emerging mass European identity among Europe's citizens[10], or whether one can talk of an emerging European public sphere[11]. Similar trends towards the study of European identity formation and its cultural aspects can also be seen among sociologists – Gerard Delanty's work being perhaps the foremost example[12]. The study of collective identity which analyses of European identity often stem from is conventionally based on conceptualizations of identity formation developed by the likes of Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner in relation to the construction of national identities[13]. When analysing European identity, political scientists usually take as their starting point the concept of national identity as the product of the construction of an 'imagined community' and then move on to consider whether a European 'imagined community' with a related collective identity is emerging, and what the processes of European identity formation are. However, European identity is a clearly different beast from national identity, and it is hardly possible to merely transpose methodologies used to study the emergence of national identities to the study of European identity without making the necessary adjustments to the assumptions, methods and concepts that inform this kind of research. In this context, research on European identity usually aims to establish whether it is possible to identify the

Mamillan, 2006); Thomas Banchoff and Mitchell P. Smith, *Legitimacy and the European Union – the contested polity,* (London: Routledge, 1999); Brigid Laffan, 'The politics of identity and political order in Europe', *Journal of Common Market studies*, Vol. 34:1, pp. 81-102.

[9] See for instance Duchêne, F., 'Europe's Role in World Peace', in Mayne, R. (ed.), *Europe Tomorrow, Sixteen Europeans Look Ahead*, (London: Collins Publishers, 1972) 32-47, Galtung, J, *The European Community: A Superpower in the Making*, (London, George Allen & Unwin,1973) Bull, Hedley, 'Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1982, Vol. 21:1/2, p. 149.

[10] See for instance Michael Bruter's Citizens of Europe?: his study addresses European identity formation (not the equivalent of support for European integration, which is correlated but distinct) as the result of a conscious effort at nation-building by European institutions, but also nation building/European identity formation as the result of media coverage of European issues. He looks at European integration as a unique system trying to foster its own values and European citizenship and identity from the 1980s onwards: Michael Bruter, *Citizens of Europe? The emergence of a mass European identity*, (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), and Michael Bruter, 'Winning hearts and minds for Europe: the impact of news and symbols on civil and cultural European identity', *Comparative Political Studies*, 2003, Vol. 36:10, pp. 1148-1179; also, Richard Robyn's *The changing face of European identity*, (London, New York: Routledge, 2005), an edited collection of essays on whether it is possible for people to acquire an identity with a new political institution.

[11] Hartmut Kaelble, 'The Historical Rise of a European Public Sphere?', *Journal of European Integration History*, 2002, Vol. 8:2.

[12] See for instance Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: idea, identity, reality* (London: Macmillan, 1995).

[13] Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, Rev. ed., (London: Verso, 2006), Ernest Gellner, *Nations and nationalism*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

emergence of a European demos able to provide democratic legitimacy for the European Union[14].

Historians working on the history of ideas, on identity formation and collective memory, have also devoted a great deal of research to the 'idea of Europe', starting as early as 1943-44 with reflections such as Federico Chabod's *Storia dell'Idea d'Europa*[15]. Medieval historian Jacques le Goff recently published a book on *The Birth of Europe* in which he identified the ideational as well as political, social and economic factors that emerged in the Middle Ages to identify the specificity of "Europe", referring time and again to the contemporary claims and realities of European integration and its observers[16]. The edited volume by Malborg and Strath, on the other hand, is an example of historians of contemporary Europe analysing the historical roots and contemporary developments of a European identity in EU member states – although very interesting and in many ways innovative for its comparative perspective and comparison between different ideas of Europe between and within old and new members of the European Union, as well as Russia, this remains a study based on national histories and its aim is to 'shed light on the role of the idea of Europe in nation-building processes'[17], and as such it remains firmly anchored within the frame of the nation state.

Historians of European integration have, on the other hand, devoted relatively little attention to the question of European identity or to the ideas that define "Europe". This is due to a large extent to the way in which the sub-field has developed, as shown by Wolfram Kaiser's historiographical overview published in 2006[18]: early historical analyses of European integration were in fact heavily centred on ideas and explored elites' thinking on 'Europe' in the inter-war period, during the Second World War and its aftermath. However, as Daniele Pasquinucci has highlighted, much of this historiography

[14] See Lars Erik Cederman, *Nationalism and bounded integration: what it would take to construct a European demos*, EUI working papers, (San Domenico di Fiesole, Italy, European University Institute, 2000); and Lars Erik Cederman,'Nationalism and bounded integration: what it would take to construct a European Demos', *European Journal of International Relations*, 2001, Vol. 7:2, pp. 138-174; see also the special issue on 'The crisis of representation in Europe' of *West European Politics,* 1995, Vol. 18:3.
[15] Federico Chabod, *Storia dell'Idea d'Europa*, a cura di Ernesto Sestan e Armando Saitta, (Bari: Laterza 1964) – based on the lecture series on the history of the idea of Europe taught by Chabod in Milan in 1943-44 and later in Rome, 1947-48 and 1958-59.
[16] Jacques Le Goff, *The birth of Europe*, (Malden, Oxford: Blackwell , 2005).
[17] Mikael af Malborg and Bo Strath eds., *The Meaning of Europe: variety and contention within and among nations*, (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p. 4.
[18] Wolfram Kaiser, 'From state to society? The historiography of European integration', in Michelle Cini and Angela K. Bourne, *European Union Studies*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2005).

was shaped by an ideological position that favoured a federalist understanding of European integration: 'federation is written in the destiny of Europeans, and the role of scholars is to disclose the true path of history'[19]. The prime example is provided by the work of Walter Lipgens, who first started to work on European integration history in the 1960s, presented the movement towards integration as the progressive victory of a higher system of political organisation over the system of nation states that had led to the carnage of the Second World War, and as the triumph of the European ideal over aggressive nationalist impulses[20]. His work on thinking on Europe within the Resistance as a reaction to the extreme failures of the nation state interpreted European integration as the morally higher pursuit of a new system that could do away with the conflictual nature of the European nation state system. But his focus on very small groups and elites, such as resistance movements, failed to demonstrate how such ideas could actually be translated into policy, and to what extent they were representative of broader thinking about Europe after 1945. Most importantly, Lipgens' work and that of other 'federalist' historians who first worked on European integration was characterised by a normative understanding of the 'progressive' development of post-war European history towards an ideal of a 'united' Europe. Mark Gilbert has in fact identified a strong trend in the historiography of European integration based on 'a progressive rather than protean interpretation of Europe's contemporary history', leading to a historiographical corpus that shares 'a belief that integration represents a trend from which there will be no receding'[21].

The initial normative dimension to the historiography of European integration did not however continue to dominate the field. On the contrary, scholarship led by the likes of Alan Milward and Ennio di Nolfo in the 1980s was based on refuting ideational motivations as the drivers of the integration process and opened the way for a new generation of historians to show how European integration was the result of the pursuit of hard economic and political national interests by European states. This body of work reclaimed European integration from its alleged *sui generis* nature as a primarily idealistic pursuit in the face of hard-headed interest in all other political spheres and rightly

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[19] Daniele Pasquinucci, 'Between Political Commitment and Academic Research: Federalist Perspectives', in Wolfram Kaiser and Antonio Varsori eds, *European Union History: themes and debates*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[20] Ibid.
[21] Mark Gilbert, 'Narrating the Process: Questioning the Progressive Story of European Integration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2008, Vol. 46:3, pp. 641-662.

explained it as a more conventional, interest-driven historical process that should be studied as any other in objective rather than in normative and idealistic terms[22]. The historiography of the past thirty years is therefore focused on an increasingly sophisticated explanation of the economic and political interests driving the integration policies and negotiating positions of EC member states and prospective members. It is also predominantly based on national governmental sources, usually foreign ministry or cabinet sources, with little use of Community sources – the most important decisions are, after all, taken by the governments of the member states, and documentation will therefore be more likely found in governmental archives.

Recent historiography of European integration has firmly established the primacy of political and economic national interests in explaining the process. However, in rejecting the idealism of early historiography, current European integration historians seem to be running the risk of throwing the baby away with the bath water, relegating ideas to the realm of meaningless rhetoric. However, idealism and ideas are, as Kaiser points out, hardly one and the same[23]. It is important that ideas also receive attention because they too have played, and still play, a role in the history of European integration. Ideas matter even if they are not the primary motivation behind policy decisions: even at a purely rhetorical level, their existence and use contribute to the creation of a particular image of the EC/EU in the eyes of both its citizens and its external interlocutors. They thus contribute to the creation of an "ideology" of European integration that has been a prominent, if controversial, feature of political debates throughout Europe after WWII. The content of these ideas is important in terms of its ideological influences on pro-European sentiment and it underpins discussion of European policy in both the national and supranational arenas.

Historians of European integration have refrained from analysing European identity in any comprehensive or broad-ranging way, just as they have largely refrained from tackling the question of ideas after the 'realist turn' of the 1980s. This is despite the re-emergence of the question in European political debate mentioned above, and also in spite of the increased attention dedicated to this issue in other fields – reflecting some of the isolation of the European integration history field from multidisciplinary European

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[22] See the introduction to Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the origins of European Union*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[23] Ibid.

studies that Kaiser has repeatedly pointed out[24]. The analysis of ideas in the process of European integration has mainly been confined to newspaper editorials and political science studies. This, however, is slowly changing and historians are now starting to contribute to a growing body of literature on the role of ideas in European integration history. One very notable example is Wolfram Kaiser's 2007 study of the transnational network of Christian Democratic parties and the predominant role that their ideas for Europe and European integration had in shaping the history of Europe up until the 1960s. Kaiser also points out the general need to look at ideas in order to gain a broader and more comprehensive understanding of post-war European history and integration history, and to bring actors other than the foreign policy elites of member states to the fore in order to understand the many influences that create the interplay of political and social forces that characterise what political scientists call the European multi-level system of governance[25]. In recent research, Marloes Beers has looked at the 1973 Declaration on European Identity to show how this formed part of the Nine's wider efforts towards political union, and has pointed out how the declaration indicated a common European heritage and political motivation as a basis for cooperation[26]. A recent volume based on the Richie Network 2007 conference shows how a growing number of young researchers are dedicating their doctoral and post-doctoral work to the study of European identity within the European integration history framework[27].

Studies of this kind, however, are still few and far between in historical research on European integration. There have indeed been, as Strath points out in his 2002 article on the 'historical limits' of European identity, several historical studies of the origins of the concept[28], which is usually brought back to enlightenment ideas of progress, reason and democracy, to classical cultural references and to Christian values[29]. However, these studies are not put in an explicit relationship with the integration process of the past fifty years.

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[24] Wolfram Kaiser, 'From Isolation to Centrality: Contemporary History Meets European Studies', in Kaiser and Varsori, *European Union History*.

[25] Wolfram Kaiser, op.cit.

[26] Marloes Beers, *L'Identitée Européenne Declarée en 1973*, Richie Europa Newsletter n. 4, 2007.

[27] Marloes Beers and Jenny Raflik eds., *National Cultures and Common Identity – a Challenge for Europe?*, (Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2010); see also Cristina Blanco Sío-López ed., Richie Europa Newsletter, Special Issue: 'European Memories and the construction of a collective European memory', No. 8, 2010.

[28] Strath B., 'A European Identity: to the historical limits of the concept', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2002, Vol. 5, pp. 387-401, p. 388.

[29] Paul Stock has written for instance about the idea of Europe in the work views of early nineteenth century British writers: Paul Stock, *The Shelley-Byron Circle and the Idea of Europe*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Despite the apparent stark distinction between the questions on identity asked by political scientists, and the questions on interest-based policy-motivation asked by integration historians, nonetheless these two bodies of literature actually converge. This (implicit) point of convergence is on the question that historians and contemporary observers have been asking ever since the inception of the process of European integration in 1950/1957: whether and to what extent integration is ultimately linked to a political project of nation and state building that goes beyond the economic rationale of the common market and the power political relations and pursuit of the national interest of the member states. Within this context, an exploration of the concept and content of European identity as developed throughout the past fifty years of European integration can help to bring ideas back into the fold of European integration history, as the ideological and conceptual background to the political and economic interests that have been the sole focus of so much recent historical analysis.

The neglected institution: the European Parliament and European identity

The European Parliament is the least studied of European institutions in European historiography. This is likely due to the fact that it was also, for the greater part of the EC's existence, the least powerful among the four major institutions created by the Treaty of Rome, and thus hardly considered the repository of significant insights into the Community's decision-making process. After all, despite repeated efforts by MEPs to increase the policy-making weight of their institution, the European Parliament's powers fall considerably short of those of national parliaments. The European Parliament is not a full parliament with legislative powers, capable of holding the executive accountable as national parliaments are. Direct elections were only introduced in 1979, over two decades after the establishment of Community institutions, and it is the general consensus among scholars that European elections are in fact seen as 'second-order national elections' by voters and politicians alike[30]. It would take until the Single European Act of 1986, when the cooperation procedure was introduced, for treaty revisions to start enhancing the EP's role in the Community's legislative process[31]. As most historiography of European

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[30] Julie Smith, *Europe's Elected Parliament*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1999) p. 21.
[31] It was only when when the Single European Act came into force in 1987 that the European Parliament was given the formal power to assent to the ratification of an accession treaty – Richard Corbett, Francis Jacobs and Michael Shackleton, *The European Parliament* (fifth edition), (London: John Harper Publishing, 2003) p. 197.

integration has thus far concentrated on the earlier decades of the Community, when the EP had very few formal powers, it goes without saying that the least powerful institution has been overlooked: any historical investigation aimed at understanding the decision-making processes within the European Community up until the early 1980s would naturally lean towards closer scrutiny of the Council or the Commission.

In fairness, most historical studies do not focus on European institutions at all, preferring instead a national approach based on the analysis of national economic and political motivations for European policies, based on national archival sources[32]. There are of course both comparative and cross-national studies that provide a broader perspective on the multi-national dimension of European integration. However, these are mostly still based on national sources and remain predominantly in the realm of inter-state relations. Even fewer works focus on Community institutions and identity. The work that has so far emerged concentrates for the most part on the role of the European Commission in the construction of a European identity. In terms of identity policy, for instance, the Commission did, after all, make this an explicit policy goal and, unlike the European Parliament, it had from its very beginning some means to put this policy into practice – Piers Ludlow's study of the Commission's attempts to foster the emergence of a European identity through the use of its Information Service between 1958 and 1967 is a case in point[33]. Chris Shore analysed the cultural policies of the Commission in the 1980s as another deliberate attempt to foster a common European identity among the EC's citizens with the adoption of symbols such as the fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth as the European anthem, the European flag, and the development of the idea of European citizenship[34]. There are, however, nearly no historical studies of the European Parliament – in fact, most research on European integration gives the European Parliament a cursory glance at best, and few integration historians have actually spent time looking in any comprehensive way at the evolution of this institution and of its role within the European political system per se[35]. The European Parliament's status as the

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[32] For an overview, see Michael Gehler, 'At the Heart of Integration: Understanding National European Policy', in Kaiser and Varsori, *European Union History*.

[33] N. Piers Ludlow, ' Frustrated Ambitions', in Marie-Thérèse Bitsch, Raymond Poideven and Wilfried Loth, eds, *Institutions Européennees et Identités Européennes*, (Brussels: Bruylant, 1998); Lise Rye has also worked on the EC's information policy: 'The Origins of Community information policy: Educating Europeans' in Wolfram Kaiser, Brigitte Leucht and Morten Rasmussen eds., *The History of the European Union. Origins of a trans- and supranational polity 1950-72*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2008).

[34] Chris Shore, *Building Europe: the Cultural Politics of European Integration*, (London: Routledge, 2000).

[35] Julie Smith's analysis of the development of the European Parliament since the first attempts to create an assembly in 1948 is one of the few exceptions, and her *Europe's Elected Parliament* uses some archival

neglected institution of European historiography is but confirmed by Sebastian Lang Jensen's bibliographical review, which shows how for instance even such a key study such as Alan Milward's *The European Rescue of the Nation State* mentions the European Parliament a mere three times[36]. When analysed, the European Parliament is given at the most a chapter in a general book on European integration, as is for instance the case in Dinan's *Ever closer Union*, focusing on MEP's attempts to increase the power of their institution, and on technical procedures of legislation, comitology etc[37]. Discussion of the EP is thus usually swiftly dealt with in order to then focus on the 'real actors' in European politics: the nation states, the Council, and, in part at least, the Commission.

Nonetheless, the reality of the EP's lack of power within the Community's institutional make-up does not necessarily impinge on the fact that the EP and its members did in fact play a role if not in the decision-making process per se, then in the debates about broader principles and ideas that dominated the European political scene throughout the past five decades. The European Parliament does deserve closer scrutiny. As the primary locus of formal public debate, the European Parliament was at the very least an open window into the kind of ideas floating about in the European political arena. Up until the European elections of June 2004, members of the European Parliament could also hold positions in the legislatures of their respective member states: the dual mandate often meant that MEPs were also significant players in the national politics, thus providing a direct link between the European and the national domains[38]. Whilst it would be easy to dismiss the European Parliament as a powerless talking shop with no influence on the politics of European integration – and no real claim to being a representative body either, given that up until 1979 members were appointed and not elected, it was its very nature as a 'talking shop' (which is, after all, in the nature of any parliament – the primary locus

sources especially for the years 1948-1958. Also, see the article by Bruno Riondel, 'Affirmation du Parlement Européen et émergence d'une Identité Européenne, des Années Soixante à nos Jours' in Institutions Européennes et Identités Européennes, in Marie-Thérèse Bitsch, Raymond Poideven and Wilfried Loth, eds., *Institutions Européennees et Identités Européennes* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1998); Pilar Ortuño Anaya also looks at EP as part of her research in her *European Socialists and Spain – The Transition to Democracy 1959-1977*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

[36] Sebastian Lang-Jensen, *Europeanization as a Historical Process? A Historiography of the European Parliament*, Heirs Colloquium 2005.

[37] Desmond Dinan, *Ever Closer Union? An introduction to the European Community* (second edition), (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999).

[38] The possibility of the dual mandate existed until the Council decision of summer 2002 - 2002/772/EC, Euratom: Council Decision of 25 June 2002 and 23 September 2002 amending the Act concerning the election of the representatives of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, annexed to Decision 76/787/ECSC, EEC, Euratom. However, the EP had approved the Hoon Report against the possibility of a dual mandate as early as 1988: see Richard Corbett, Francis Jacobs and Michael Shackleton, *The European Parliament*, p. 20.

of public political debate) that made it a primary site for the open discussion of those very ideas that have defined "Europe" and that have disappeared from integration historiography. MEPs were in the unique position of being able to elaborate ideas about the purpose of European integration and values underpinning this process, exploring the elements of what effectively amounted to an ideology of European integration, largely unencumbered by the immediate strategic, political or diplomatic concerns that constrained other, more powerful actors such as the Council or even the Commission. Moreover, unlike Commission or Council sources, parliamentary debates provide the full record of exchanges of ideas between representatives of different national and political backgrounds and therefore paint a unique picture of how ideas were exchanged, discussed and elaborated. By debating European integration in general, MEPs collectively built what amounts to the most comprehensive body of ideas for a European ideology available for scrutiny. The European Parliament's discourse would thus be worthy of consideration even just as an unparalleled window onto the Community as a whole.

In addition, however, this thesis seeks to show that the European Parliament is worthy of closer attention in its own right. Its lack of powers did not deter Parliament's members from working towards increasing their institution's influence within the European political arena. Since its first sittings, the European Parliament as a whole showed its determination to make its voice heard in the European political arena. It did so by debating all the most controversial issues that dominated European politics, and by starting to affirm its own rights as the democratic soul of the new European system, claiming for itself the prerogative of defining the principles, values and ideas that frame the political discourse of Europe. In 1962, it decided to change its denomination from 'European Parliamentary Assembly' to 'European Parliament', to highlight the fact that it considered its role akin to that of a real Parliament and that it expected direct elections and increased powers to reflect this in the future[39]. Parliament's influence from the 1960s onwards increased in many ways: at the end of the 1970s it was directly elected for the first time, and in the 1980s and 1990s it was given an increased array of powers with the introduction first of the cooperation procedure (Single European Act, 1986) and later on the co-decision procedure (Maastricht Treaty, 1992), extended in the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997 and then again in the Nice Treaty in 2000[40].

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[39] See Bruno Riondel, op. cit.
[40] See Simon Hix, Noury Abdul and Gérard Roland, *Democratic Politics in the European Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) for a recent detailed account of Parliament's powers and

As well as pushing for the Council to fulfil in full the provisions of the Treaties of Rome by allowing for its direct election, the European Parliament claimed for itself the role of defining what "Europe" was in terms of vision, project, political identity, and cultural identity. It did not do so in a vacuum, and its influence was already felt in the 1960s, if not by the member states, at least by the Commission[41], especially on the issue of enlargement: for instance, it was the European Parliament that moved to frame enlargement as only available to pluralist democracies[42]. The democratic element remained a constant in the public discourse of Parliament throughout every round of enlargement, growing into one of the crucial elements of the EU's self-image, adopted by the other institutions and by the member states.

Parliament's influence was significant in that it largely contributed to framing the political discourse of the EC and then the EU. The EP built on the fact that for a long time its only claim to influence was its self-appointment as the "conscience" of Europe. As it came to embody one of the most debated issues of European integration: the so-called democratic deficit – a concern with the lack of democratic representation, accountability, and popular participation in the European institutional system that clearly emerges throughout the history of Parliament's life in the debates of MEPs – Parliament used this problem to repeatedly advocate the granting of stronger powers to the "most democratic" European institution. Parliament responded to its lack of legislative powers, effectively making it less than a parliament in the real sense of the word, by claiming for itself the role of democratic representative of the people of Europe – a Europe defined on the basis of an idea of what Europe should represent, not simply the largely economic cooperation organisation that is was for most of its life but a vision and a goal constructed into the public image of "Europe". This "idea" was a concept whose content was defined, changed, adjusted and developed over time through the political discourse of the European Parliament.

responsibilities.

[41] Charles Powell shows how the European Parliament was successful in influencing the Commission over the introduction of democratic conditionality over the case of Spain – see Charles Powell, 'The long road to Europe: Spain and the European Community, 1957-1986', in Julio Baquero Cruz and Carlos Closa Montero eds, *European inegegration from Rome to Berline, 1957-2007: history, law and politics*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009); see also Susanna Verney, 'Justifying the second enlargement: promoting interests, consolidating democracy or returning to the roots?, in Helene Sjursen ed., *Questioning EU enlargement: Europe in search of identity*, (London: Routledge, 2006).

[42] see Birkelbach Report, Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne, Doc. 122, 15 Jan 1962. The first chapter of this thesis is dedicated to the analysis of the European Parliament's construction of a political identity for the Community in which the democratic element had centred stage.

European Parliament discourse constructed an idea of Europe that came to include what are now largely uncontested political aspects such as representative democracy, free and fair elections, human rights, the rule of law, but also less clear-cut cultural and historical aspects with references to ancient Greece and Christianity.

The European Parliament is however not a unitary entity: as shown in many political science studies, as well as in newer historical explorations of European party networks and the formation of party groups within the EP[43], it is important to analyse the action and policies of parliamentary groups, political parties, and individual MEPs. Simon Hix has for instance led the way in quantitative research on the voting behaviours of the different political groups, showing how MEPs vote along transnational party lines rather than national lines[44]. It would therefore be a legitimate expectation for the EP's identity discourse to also show different party-political and ideological positions and potential sub-discourses giving weight to different political elements. This thesis does in fact try to show the contributions to the discourse of MEPs from different national backgrounds and political groups: interestingly, however, it will also show how most MEPs seemed in fact to converge onto a common discourse based on a large consensus over the main political and historical elements of a common European identity. It may in this sense be closer to political science analyses that have indicated a trend towards socialisation among MEPs based on how belonging to an institution can influence the attitudes and behaviours of its members[45]. It will certainly try to explore the fact that the members of the European Parliament did share a common perception of their institution's role as 'the conscience of Europe', and converged in their use of identity rhetoric in the construction of an image of Europe: reading parliamentary debates on enlargement with an eye to identity construction, it was certainly possible to discern a harmonious 'parliamentary voice' rather than a cacophony of discourses separated along party political lines. However, in order to enable the reader to draw their own conclusions, the

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[43] Kaiser's work on transnational party networks is perhaps the foremost example.
[44] Simon Hix and Christopher Lord, P*olitical Parties in the European Union*, (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1997); Simon Hix, 'Legislative Behaviour and Party Competition in the European Parliament: an Application of Nominate to the EU', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 39.4, pp. 663-88; Simon Hix, Abdul Noury and Gerard Roland, 'A 'Normal' Parliament? Party Cohesion and Competition in the European Parliament, 1979-2001', EPRG Working Paper No. 9; the European Parliament Research Group was set up in 1998 to foster research on political behaviour in the EP: http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/EPRG/Default.htm
[45] Franklin and Scarrow claim for instance that the EP 'exercises a rapid, though gentle, socialising effect on its new members': Franklin, M. N. and Scarrow, S. E., 'Making Europeans? the Socializing Power of the European Parliament' in Richard S. Katz and Bernhard Wessels, *The European Parliament, National Parliaments, and European Integration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

thesis does provide details of both party affiliation and nationality of any of the speakers quoted.

European Parliament discourse is therefore a valuable source for looking into the way ideas about Europe were used in order to construct an idea of European identity that largely corresponded to a specific institutional voice within the European arena. Parliamentary discourse showed a clear concern with the need to provide legitimacy to the process of European integration and to its enlargement to new member states, as well as a shared awareness among MEPs that this legitimating discourse needed to be adjusted to the different historical circumstances surrounding successive enlargements. MEPs participated in their institution's debates with the clear goal of putting forward the European Parliament's own interpretation of events to both their constituents and the publics and governments of those states who wished to join the European Community. Audiences within the candidate states clearly received the ideas brought forward in this discourse and incorporated them within their own rhetoric when pressing the case for membership[46]. The European Parliament's discourse on enlargement is thus an excellent source for exploring crucial ideational debates at key moments in the expansion of the European integration process.

Enlargements as the historical moments of ideational reflection on Europe

The European Parliament's role within the enlargement process was only formalised in 1987, when its assent became a requisite for enlargement as a consequence of the Single European Act[47]. Its direct influence on enlargement may have been less then considerable, yet its role in the enlargement debate was nonetheless important: the European Parliament claimed for itself a symbolic and rhetorical function in defining the purpose and nature of enlargement within a wider vision of the project of European integration based on the construction of the content of European identity. It also made a point, on several occasions, of creating ad-hoc working groups and committees for each round of enlargement, and sending groups of MEPs on official visits to applicant countries, and played a vocal, if not always concrete, role in the enlargement process.

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[46] See for instance the Central and Eastern European rhetoric about 'rejoining Europe' after 1989; Sami Mosio, 'EU Eligibility, Central Europe, and the Invention of Applicant State Narrative', *Geopolitics*, 2002, Vol. 7:3, pp. 89-116.

[47] José Ignacio Torreblanca, 'Argueing about enlargement', in Helene Sjursen ed, *Enlargement in Perspective*, (Oslo: ARENA Centre for European Studies, 2005).

European Parliament Presidents also spoke publicly about enlargement and, especially in the run-up to the 2004 enlargement to ten new Central, Eastern and Southern European countries, visited the candidate countries and spoke to their legislative assemblies about Europe and Parliament's view. The EP certainly contributed to the creation of the discourse on enlargement and on the purpose of European integration, and it also contributed heavily to the definition of the political criteria of enlargement in terms of the emerging political identity of "Europe" based on democracy and human rights.

Each enlargement was a key defining moment of the history of the integration process. The political and economic reasons for the enlargements of 1973, 1981, and 1986 have been widely analysed in the historiography – albeit primarily from the point of view of the single nation states. Taken together, the existing body of work on enlargement highlights first and foremost the economic rationale and the (geo-)political motives behind enlargement – both on the side of the applicants and on the side of the existing member states. Economic considerations are generally given the most extensive treatment, especially because the economic aspects of integration formed the bulk of the detailed and often prolonged accession negotiations between the EC and prospective member states. Furthermore, the historiography on this subject is strongly concerned with its political and geopolitical aspects – both economics and geo-politics are identified as primary causes of enlargement. Just as the economic analyses can be mainly divided into two strands focusing respectively (but not exclusively) on the rationale for membership applications by non-EC states and on the economic negotiations prior to accession, analyses of the political aspects of enlargement processes have several foci: the geopolitical considerations of applicants when deciding to apply for EC membership, including the constraints and opportunities provided by the international system during the Cold War; the domestic party political debates surrounding membership within applicant states; the political factors influencing the response of existing member states to membership requests – especially with regards to the controversial history of British accession, but also the Southern enlargement of the 1980s and the accession of neutrals after the end of the Cold War[48].

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[48] A few among many: *Journal of European Integration History*, 2005, Special issue on enlargement, Vol. 11/2; Wolfram Kaiser and Jürgen Elvert eds, European Union Enlargement: a comparative history, (London: Routledge, 2004); Christopher Preston, *Enlargement and integration in the European Union*, (London/New York: Routledge, 1997); Loukas Tsoukalis, *The European Community and its Mediterranean enlargement*, (London: Allen &Unwin, 1981); Julio Crespo Maclennan, *Spain and the process of European integration, 1957-1985*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000).

However, existing literature on enlargement provides little analysis of the Community dimension and gives scarce attention to the political-ideational discourse surrounding enlargements. This is surprising, given that in certain cases such as the accessions of Greece, Spain and Portugal political motivations are generally considered to be paramount in the decision to accept their applications. In spite of this, there are no historical studies analysing the discourse on Europe's political identity at Community level that provided the conceptual background, and legitimising tools, of these enlargements.

Discourses on Europe are sometimes explored in studies that look at EC membership applicants. For instance, E. Maxon-Brown has analysed the changes in Irish discourse on Europe from 1945 until accession, showing how the terms of reference change from a mainly cultural and human rights dimension to an economic and political one. The shift was manifest in the 1960s when Irish perceptions of Europe changed from seeing it as 'war-ravaged', 'divided' (vis-à-vis 'peaceful, neutral Ireland immune from European ideologies such as fascism and communism) to 'prosperous', 'strong', 'progressive' and 'united' (while Ireland also suffers a reverse to 'poor', 'peripheral', 'dependent' and 'divided')[49]. By the 1970s, the Irish idea of Europe was of an organisation within which the rights of small countries were protected against those of the strong and in which the resolution of disputes was resolved through consensus rather than coercion. Other national discourses on Europe are analysed in Kaiser and Elvert's edited collection on enlargement, and scholars have often found that Europe is striking for its absence in the wider political debate of future member states at national level. Elvert's conclusion is that all applicants had their own conception of Europe and what European integration was all about, which fit within each nation's discourse and hence caused 'misperceptions and misunderstandings' – each nation was, in a way, joining a different Europe from that of the other applicants or, indeed, from the Europe of the existing member states[50].

Nonetheless, Elvert concludes that accession and membership of the EC/EU did initiate a degree of political socialisation into the original and long-term objectives of the

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[49] E. Maxon Brown, 'From Isolation to Involvement', in Wolfram Kaiser and Jürgen Elvert eds, *European Union Enlargement: a comparative history*, (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 63.
[50] Jürgen Elvert, 'A fool's game or a comedy of errors?', in Wolfram Kaiser and Jürgen Elvert, *European Union enlargement*, (London: Routledge 2004).

EC/EU[51]. This interesting conclusion leads back to the question of the idea of Europe and Europe's identity: what are the 'original and long-term objectives' of European integration in the eyes of Europe itself? How is the purpose of Europe and idea of Europe understood by Europe's institutions, and in particular by the European Parliament? What is the vision of Europe that Parliament tried to project beyond the EC/EU's borders, to the new applicants? Different states, and groups within these states, have been shown to hold different images of Europe and of the purpose of European integration. At the same time, different actors at Community level also had their own images of Europe. They used these images in their political discourse, vis-à-vis other actors in the European system and also vis-à-vis future actors in the system. In the case of the European Parliament, its discourse of Europe was very much also a discourse about itself as an institution and its place within the European system of governance, its role vis-à-vis member states and applicant states, and vis-à-vis other institutions. Moreover, each enlargement brought new members to parliament with different visions of Europe derived, at least in part, from their own national discourse on Europe. The discourse of the European Parliament therefore reflected the historical changes brought about by successive enlargements and in the institutional make-up of the Community, with the marked changes in the role of parliament itself. It was a discourse on the idea of Europe, its purpose, and the role of Parliament as *the* democratic body within it.

This thesis focuses on the European Parliament's identity discourse in debates over the enlargement to Greece (1981), Spain (1986) and Portugal (1986), and the 2004 enlargement to Central, Eastern and two Southern European countries. These enlargements were particularly interesting in terms of European identity construction because of the nature of the candidate countries and the historical circumstances surrounding the enlargement process. In 1973 and 1995, the new countries were akin to the existing members in their political and economic systems. In particular, they were all established democracies whose political affinity to the values professed by the Community was undeniable – in fact, countries like the UK had longer democratic credentials than some of the founding members of the EEC. They also undeniably formed part of the Western European economic system and had done so since the end of the Second World War at the very least. The accession of Greece in 1981 and Spain and Portugal in 1986 on the other hand extended membership to countries that had just

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[51] Ibid.

emerged from decades of right-wing dictatorship – a fact that had precluded membership ever since the first Francoist overtures in the early 1960s. The parallel between this round of enlargement and the 2004 enlargement is easily apparent: the eight Central and Eastern European countries that joined the European Union in 2004 had experienced fifty years of Communist dictatorship on the opposite side of the Iron Curtain from the European Community, and had only made the leap to democratic institutions and market economics after 1989. In both instances, the Community/Union committed itself to the integration of countries whose political and social systems had until shortly before been on opposite ends of the spectrum from those of the EC member states. Parliamentary discourse revolving around these enlargements clearly showed a deep preoccupation with justifying the entry of such varied new members to European public opinion, as well as a perceived need to insert such enlargement within a wider understanding of the overall purposes, aims and stated values of European integration[52]. The thesis is thus very much an attempt to better understand the way in which MEPs developed a legitimating identity discourse for the enlarging European integration process.

Parliamentary discourse on identity and enlargement however also reflects to a large extent the internal dynamics of the European Parliament with regards to MEPs' self-perception of their role and of the role of the institution to which they belonged. This thesis thus also aims to shed light on the EP as an institution: its self-perception, the self-perception of its members in relation to one another and to their institution, and the way in which they constructed their own place within the image of Europe that they built. Moreover, Parliamentary debates represented throughout the past fifty years the public face of EC/EU politics, and constructed the image of Europe vis-à-vis its external interlocutors, especially towards potential membership applicants. This, coupled with the activities of the EP such as the formation of special committees on topical issues and official visits of groups of MEPs to external countries, constitutes an aspect of the history of European integration that remains thus far largely untold, except for a few appearances on the margins of histories focused on other, mainly national, actors. Moreover, parliamentary reports and related debates are an extremely valuable source, given that most of the actual work of the EP takes place in the Parliamentary Committees whose deliberations are then reflected in the reports.

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[52] On public opinion, European integration and enlargement, see Jürgen Maier and Berthold Rittberger, 'Shifting Europe's boundaries: mass media, public opinion and the enlargement of the EU', *European Union Politics*, 2008, Vol. 9:2, pp. 243-267.

Political scientists have focused on the role of discourse in European politics by looking at how discursive constructions can influence the development of the European Union. Frank Schimmelfennig for instance used the idea of 'rhetorical entrapment' to describe the way in which the norms, values and collective identity constructed through discourse can be used strategically by political actors to advance their interest[53]. Uli Sedelmeier reprised this analysis in his work on the European Union's Eastern Enlargement[54]. Thomas Diez goes even further, arguing in his analysis of language in the construction of the European Union that the terms used to describe the EU by politicians and academics alike are not merely descriptive, but influenced the way in which the EU developed in the first place[55]. There is therefore a general consensus in political science and European studies on the relevance of discourse in understanding ideas of Europe and European identity that exist within the European political arena[56]. This thesis uses primarily a qualitative approach to the analysis of EP identity discourse on enlargement, showing which historical, cultural and political references were commonly used by MEPs and the national backgrounds and political groups to which these MEPs belonged. Whilst some very basic quantitative analysis is also used in some instances, this is not the main method of analysis, as it is the rhetoric of MEPs that comes under scrutiny, the nuances and references used in particular contexts and as part of the exchange of ideas among politicians within parliament.

The thesis concentrates on some of the main ideational themes that emerged in the European Parliament's debates on enlargement from the discussion of the Birkelbach Report in January 1962 until the Eastern Enlargement in 2004. The analysis focuses on the EP's plenary debates, which are complemented by speeches given by the Presidents of the EP to public audiences outside plenary, and by parliamentary resolutions, when relevant. These documents are the most revealing of the type of official public discourse that MEPs engaged in during their tenure. The political affiliation and nationality of each

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[53] Frank Schimmelfennig, 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union', *International Organization*, 2001, Vol. 55:1, pp. 47-80.
[54] Ulrich Sedelmeier, *Constructing the path to Eastern enlargement: the uneven policy impact of EU identity*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).
[55] Thomas Diez, 'Speaking Europe: the politics of integration discourse', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6:4, Special Issue pp. 598-613.
[56] See also Helene Sjursen, 'Why Expand? The Question of Legitimacy and Justification in the EU's Enlargement Policy', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2002, Vol. 40:3, pp. 491-513 and Helene Sjursen, ed., *Enlargement in Perspective,* (Oslo: Arena, 2005) – an edited volume on enlargement and the motives and justifications attached to it.

speaker is indicated, as well as a short biographical note relating to their activity within the EC/EU or their national governments when they first appear. This is intended to help the reader gain a better sense of the context in which each speaker is contributing to the discourse, and draw his or her own conclusions about the discourse presented in the thesis. Political groups are indicated on the basis of their name at the time of the quotation – there is an appendix providing a breakdown of the EP's political composition for each legislature. Each debate was scrutinised in order to trace the emergence of one or ore specific themes or sets of references amounting to the potential construction of an identity for Europe. The speeches are quoted according to the official versions, published in French prior to 1973 and later in English.

The thematic rather than chronological structure reflects the fact that themes in the European Parliament discourse emerged in different guises and emphases over time, and that their development was not continuous through each round of enlargement. A thematic analysis allows the tracing of the ebbs and flows in the use of, and a meaning given to, a particular theme over time, highlighting when and how the European Parliament introduced and elaborated ideas into its enlargement discourse. It identifies three clusters of themes that emerge clearly from EP discourse: a political one revolving around ideas of democracy and human rights, which was the first to emerge and develop from 1962 and culminated in the institutionalisation of the political criteria for enlargement in 1993; a historical one, which was present sporadically in the earlier enlargement debates and then gained centre-stage in the debate over Central and Eastern Europe from the mid-1990s until 2004; and a cultural one, which was always touched upon but was never quite developed as the other two were, and remained the most fragmented and arguably least compelling element of the EP's identity discourse. Finally, the thesis ends with a case study of Turkey's open-ended accession bid: Turkey is perhaps the most challenging case of a country on the border of Europe's identity, whose European credentials are continually called into question and yet never sufficiently undermined to conclusively dismiss its claim to EU membership. It is therefore an excellent test for the identity discourse developed by the European Parliament to legitimise successful enlargements. Looking at the Turkish debate permits an exploration of the way in which themes and rhetoric used to justify enlargements that were, in the end, secured, are developed and used in the debate over an enlargement that remains to date a controversial possibility with an uncertain outcome.

Ultimately, this work hopes to make a contribution to the understanding of the historical development of a European identity discourse within the enlargement context, showing how one amongst the Community institutions attempted to legitimise the expansion and continuation of the process of European integration through the discursive construction of a European idea. It also hopes to show that the European parliament, thus far overlooked in the historiography, is in fact worthy of closer scrutiny as an institution in its own right.

Chapter one: 'Democracy', Enlargement and Europe's Political Identity in the European Parliament's Discourse 1962 – 2004

The European Parliament debated enlargement at length with every new round of applications and accessions, starting with the very first enlargement debates of the 1960s. The debates that took place on the subject within the assembly dealt as much with ideational elements as they dealt with the more technical aspects of enlarging the Community such as budgetary allocations, agricultural and industrial concerns and harmonisation. However, while the technical aspects of successive enlargement rounds have been debated at length in the literature, the ideational aspects have received much less attention. Their absence from the literature is striking when ideas were in fact the fundamental underpinning of the issue of enlargement, before and beyond haggling over milk, oranges or olive oil.

Furthermore, the European Parliament took the opportunity of each enlargement round to discuss the overarching question of the purpose of European integration and its political as well as ideological meaning: 'the debate on enlargement deals directly with the substance, nature and aims of European integration'[57]. In doing so, the European Parliament constructed an image of Europe that reflected Parliament's own understanding of the overall process of European integration and its long-term significance vis-à-vis alternative conceptions of the idea of 'Europe'. Parliament's 'image of Europe' was constructed over time not merely for its own consumption, but first and foremost for Parliament's different interlocutors: the citizens of the member states, the other European Community institutions, notably the Council and the Commission, and also, to a large extent, the interlocutors external to the Community, current and future applicant states, who would have to deal with the way Parliament conceived of the enterprise in which they wished, one day, to join.

The enlargement debates of the European Parliament led, over fifty years, to the elaboration of what was, in Parliament's view, the identity of the 'Europe' that was being

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[57] Jean François Pintat, Liberal and Democratic group, France, EP Debates, January 1979, Prospects of enlargement of the Community - discussion of Pintat report Doc 479/78. Pintat was a French MEP, member of the Union pour la France en Europe between 1974 and 1979, then the Parti républicain until July 1979 and again the Union pour la France en Europe. He was Chair of the Liberal and Democratic Group between October 1978 and July 1979, then vice-chair until 1984.

built through the integration process. This identity included ideas of shared culture, history, and geography, but it was primarily a political identity: the political aspect was not just constantly present, but it occupied more and more space within the debate and it was also the one on which representatives with different political affiliations and national backgrounds were nonetheless able to agree more broadly. This is because, as will be shown below, in the beginning this political identity revolved around one primary element, a universal principle to which an overwhelming majority within the Parliament could adhere and which increasingly acted as the underlying common ground that remained firm while other political elements (such as the social versus liberal model debate) remained more contentious. This overarching principle was democracy, which over time turned into *the* defining element of Europe's political identity.

Democracy was not always a dominant feature of European political discourse. There was no direct mention of it as a defining feature of the Community in the Treaties of Rome and, whilst all six founding members of the EEC were democratic, democracy was not their primary concern: peace, stability and prosperity within the Western camp were of much greater immediate importance. Certainly, the Western camp's definition of 'freedom' in the Cold War did in fact entail an understanding of democratic institutions as its practical expression, so that striving to preserve freedom could be interpreted as striving to preserve democracy within the Western camp. The fact remains, nonetheless, that the term 'democracy' did not appear in the Community's foundation text: the preamble of the Treaties of Rome makes general references to 'liberty' and article 237 states that any European nation 'may apply to become a member of the Community'. Nowhere in the Treaties did the Six make democracy a prerequisite for membership or even quote it as one of the fundamental values underpinning the movement towards 'closer union'[58]. In fact, Daniel Thomas has claimed in a recent article on the constitutionalisation of Europe that the omission of democracy and human rights from the Treaties was a deliberate shift away from the 'constitutionalisation of democracy and human rights' found in previous treaties such as the 1948 Brussels Treaty or the 1949 Statute of the Council of Europe. Thomas also points out that the first Commission President, Walter Hallstein, clarified in 1958 that the Community would be open to any

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[58] Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, 25 March 1957.

European state whose economies and regulatory structures were compatible with the establishment of a common market[59].

The European Parliament, however, focused on democratic principles ever since the very first sittings of the European Parliamentary Assembly: this was to a large extent due to the fact that, as a Parliament, this institution saw itself as the most democratic element of the Community's institutional set-up and it aimed, through the introduction of direct elections (first discussed in detail by the Assembly as early as 1960) and the increased attempts to exercise a true parliamentary role vis-à-vis the Commission and the Council, to enhance the democratic nature of the EEC[60]. The very decision to call itself 'European Parliament', taken in 1962, was part of the assembly's quest to embody the democratic nature of the EEC. It was in debating enlargements, however, that the EP had some of the most comprehensive opportunities to revisit its interpretation of the meaning of 'Europe' and build upon the idea of democracy to construct what it thought should be the political identity of the Community first and, from the 1990s, the European Union.

Tracing the introduction and development of the concept of democracy in European Parliament debates shows two intertwined threads: democracy as a defining feature of the national system of existing and potential member states, and hence as a criterion for membership, and democracy at the level of EC institutions and hence the question of institutional reform and of the role of Parliament as the 'democratic' representative of the peoples of Europe. Moreover, there were other themes that emerged in conjunction with democracy, such as stability, human rights, and the rule of law. These were also important at different stages of the EP's definition of the political character of the Community. In fact, the human rights theme became so entangled with the idea of Europe as represented by the EC/EU that over time it came to represent, together with democracy, the key tenet of the European political identity. The repercussions of this emphasis on a European ideal of democracy and human rights for the EP's effort of identity construction are many and will later be explored at length[61].

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[59] Daniel Thomas, 'Constitutionalisation Through Enlargement: the contested origins of the EU's democratic identity', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2006, Vol. 13:8, pp. 1190-1210, p. 1195.
[60] See Bruno Riondel, 'Affirmation du Parlement Européen et émergence d'une Identité Européenne, des Années Soixante à nos Jours' in Marie-Thérèse Bitsch, Raymond Poideven and Wilfried Loth, eds., *Institutions Européennes et Identités Européennes*, (Brussels: Bruylant, 1998).
[61] See chapter two for a further exploration of the place of human rights within the EC/EU's political identity and the EP's discourse.

This chapter focuses primarily on the idea of democracy as a value that must be shared by all European member states, and hence its institutionalisation as a requirement for membership. It will examine first how and when democracy emerged as a primary defining feature of EEC membership in the eyes of Parliament, and how the assembly transformed it into a criterion for membership[62]. It will also investigate how the idea of democracy was used in parliamentary discourse, and by whom, looking at which party groups used it at what times, and whether there was a constant cross-section of MEPs using it in a consistent way. It will also attempt to show whether there was an agreed definition of democracy and, if so, what it entailed. Finally, it will try to trace whether and how the use of this concept changed over time in discussions about European enlargement, and at what point in time democracy and enlargement came to be indissolubly linked in the European Parliament's discourse and in what ways.

In order to do so it will focus on three different periods of reflection on enlargement: the debates in the 1960s over the hypothesis of association and enlargement to new countries and over the concrete cases of authoritarian Spain and Greece, the debates from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s over the Mediterranean enlargement to post-authoritarian transition states, and the debates on the enlargement to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe from 1997 to 2004. It will thus also show the relevance of the wider Cold War context in providing the European Community with a political other in the shape of Communist Eastern Europe, and the subsequent development of the European Parliament's discourse following the collapse of the Cold War order[63].

Introducing the idea of a European political identity in the 1960s

In January 1962, the European Parliament debated for the first time the possibility of new states joining the Community in terms of the political and institutional aspects that such accessions would entail. The July 1961 British declaration of their desire to seek membership had given rise to a short debate during the session of 20 October 1961, which however had not touched upon political eligibility, focusing instead on the

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[62] Charles Powell described this as the first example of democratic conditionality. See Powell, 'The long road to Europe', Julio Baquero Cruz and Carlos Closa eds., *European integration from Rome to Berlin*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009).

[63] For a study of the uses of the other in the formation of European identity, see for instance Neumann, Iver B., *Uses of the other: "the East" in European identity formation*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998)

procedural aspects and respective competences of the Community's institutions – the resolution passed by the assembly had simply noted the 'satisfaction' of the parliamentarians at the British request[64]. The beginning of 1962, on the other hand, saw the Assembly debate the report drafted by socialist MEP Willy Birkelbach following the work of the Political Affairs Committee between November and December 1961 on the political and institutional aspects of accession (*adhésion*) or association with the Community[65]. This was the first time that the Assembly held a general debate on the principles of enlargement. The Birkelbach report appeared, however, against a dynamic background in terms of potential accession and association agreements: whilst the UK did not pose problems of principle in terms of political eligibility, Spain's increasing overtures towards the Community and open interest in associating itself with the EEC with a view to becoming a member were potentially much more problematic, as the country was still in the grips of the Francoist regime and was not even a member of the Council of Europe[66]. Moreover, in June 1961 the EEC had concluded an association agreement with Greece, the first of such agreements with a European country and hence a step which marked out Greece as a potential future member of the Community[67].

The Birkelbach report started by acknowledging that the Community remained open to states wishing to join as stated in the preamble of the Treaty of Rome. However, it continued on the basis that the Treaty needed to be interpreted and that states wishing to join would have to fulfil certain conditions, and affirmed the Assembly's intention to engage in the definition of the political and institutional aspects of accession in general terms: the aim was not to pass judgement on the specificities on any particular membership application, but to establish the general principles under which an accession

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[64] Resolution relative à la procedure à suivre pour la conclusion des accords d'adhésion, Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne , 20 October 1961

[65] Willi Birkelbach, Rapport fait au nom de la commission politique sur les aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhéesion ou de l'association a la Communauté, Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne, Documents de Séance, Doc. 122, 15 Jan 1962. Rapporteur Willi Birkelbach was a member of the German SPD and hence of the Socialist Group within the EP.

[66] For a closer look at the relationship between Spain and the EC, see Julio Crespo MacLennan, *Spain and the Process of European Integration, 1957-85*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000); Fernando Guirao, 'The European Community's role in promoting democracy in Franco's Spain, 1970- 1975', in Jan van der Harst (ed): *Beyond the Customs Union: The European Community's Quest for Deepening, Widening and Completion, 1969-1975*, (Brussels: Bruylant, 2007), pp. 163-193.

[67] The Association Agreement with Greece explicitly mentioned the possibility of future accession. For more on the Association between the EEC and Greece, see Elena Calandri, 'La CEE et les relations extérieures 1958-1960', in Antonio Varsori ed, *Inside the European Community: actors and policies in the European integration 1957-1973*, (Brussels: Bruylant, 2006) as well as Van Coufoudakis, 'The European Economic Community and the 'Freezing' of the Greek Association, 1967–1974', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1977, Vol. 16:2, pp. 114–31

should take place. It is worth noticing that this report came amidst a wider debate about whether a 'doctrine d'adhésion' should be devised. The report then briefly analysed the geographical (successful states would have to be European) and economic (the ability to participate in the construction of a common market) conditions for membership. It next addressed the political conditions for eligibility: the political regime of an applicant state should ensure that the new state would not be a 'corps étranger' among the existing states, which the report explained as the 'guarantee of the existence of a form of democratic state' as a condition for accession:

> 'la garantie de l'existence d'une forme d'état démocratique, au sens d'une organisation politique libérale, est une condition d'adhésion. Let Etats dont les gouvernements n'ont pas de légitimation démocratique et dont les peuples ne participent aux décisions du gouvernement ni directement ni par des représentants élus librement, ne peuvent prétendre être admis dans le cercle des peuples qui forment les Communautés européennes'.

It defined this democratic state as a state in which governments enjoy democratic legitimation and the people take part in decision-making either directly or through directly elected representatives[68]. Furthermore, the report stated that applicant states should be required to recognise the principles indicated by the Council of Europe as a condition for membership, especially the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms (art. 3 of the Statute of the Council of Europe)[69]. The report then went on to assess the political and institutional undertakings that acceding countries would have to adhere to, from a customs union to an agricultural policy, the establishment of the free movement of people, services and capital, as well as the institutional aspects of the integration process[70].

In presenting the report to the Assembly, Birkelbach affirmed the desire to establish guidelines ('lignes directrices') for accession and association. He highlighted the fact that democracy, in the form of the respect of fundamental rights and freedoms, was to be considered an essential requirement for Community membership:

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[68] Birkelbach Report p. 4.

[69] Birkelbach Report p. 5; for more on the Council of Europe's human rights policy, see Pamela A. Jordan, 'Does membership have its privileges? Entrance into the Council of Europe and compliance with human rights norms', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 2003, Vol. 25:3, pp. 660-688; Jonathan L. Black-Branch, 'Observing and enforcing human rights under the Council of Europe: the creation of a permanent European Court of Human Rights', *The Buffalo Journal of International Law*, 1996, Vol.3:1, pp. 1-33.

[70] Under institutional aspects, it also addressed the role of the parliamentary assembly as the embodiment of the political character of the Community whose powers would have to be increased in line with Community developments.

'Pour ce qui est des conditions politiques, nous sommes d'avis que seuls les états qui garantissent sur leur territoire des pratiques gouvernementales vraiment démocratiques et le respect des droits fondamentaux et des libertés fondamentales peuvent devenir membres de notre Communauté'[71].

He went on to affirm that, even if the Community was at the time primarily a customs union, he and the Political Affairs Committee that had drafted the report considered it to be an 'élément politique' and that any country wishing to gain membership should be made aware of the true, political nature of the Community institutions so that 'ils ne puissent plus avoir aucun doute quant à la signification de ces institutions'[72]. Finally, he also pointed out, in a brief but essential reference to the Cold War context, that 'il est aussi inconcevable qu'un état dont la politique étrangère est diamétralement opposée à la notre puisse faire partie de cette Communauté'[73]. However, the question of political principles and the democratic requirement remained only a small element of his presentation in front of the Assembly, and most of the debate focused on the other (mainly institutional) aspects of potential enlargements.

The other speakers who contributed to the debate all stated their support for the report. However, the democratic criterion did not receive a large amount of space in the debate: the Belgian Christian Democrat Jean Pierre Duvieusart, full of praise for the report, mentioned it in passing half-way through his speech, stating his support for the political criterion based on the political philosophy 'qui doit animer les démocraties avec lesquelles il nous est possible de faire union'[74] but gave it no further mention. Belgian Socialist Georges Bohy did not actually mention the democratic criterion at all, preferring to point out the political nature of the Community in general[75]. His fellow countryman and socialist Fernand Dehousse, on the other hand, called upon the Assembly to support the democratic criterion, which he mentioned alongside the economic criterion:

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[71] Willi Birkelbach, Socialist, Germany, Débats, Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté, 23 January 1962.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Jean Pierre Duvieusart, Débats, Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté, 23 January 1962. Jean Pierre Duvieusart was a member of the Christian Democrat group, and would be President of the European Parliament between 1964 and 1965.
[75] Georges Bohy, Socialist, Belgium, Débats, 23 January 1962, Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté. Georges Bohy had been founding president of the European Parliamentary Union in 1947, and President of the Parliamentary Council of the European Movement, was a member of the Common Assembly from June 1957 to March 1958 and then a member of the European Parliamentary Assembly.

'en ce qui concerne l'adhésion, c'est-à-dire la participation à la vie des Communautés avec des droits et des devoirs pleins et entiers, deux critères doivent être retenus: premièrement, il faut qu'il s'agisse d'états qui présentent, au point de vue économique, une texture que l'on puisse considérer comme suffisamment homogène par rapport aux Communautés; deuxièmement et je veux croire que l'Assemblée souscrira à ma thèse il faut qu'il s'agisse d'états démocratiques'[76].

Moreover, Dehousse also proceeded to give a definition of democracy, intended within the context of eligibility for Community membership:

'je dirai simplement que dans les organisations européennes, on a jusqu'à présent décidé de considérer comme des états démocratiques ceux qui professent et ceux qui organisent chez eux le respect des droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales pour tous, sans aucune espèce de discrimination[77]'.

Democracy was hence defined as the respect of human rights and of fundamental freedoms, without discrimination – recalling the values endorsed by the Council of Europe and explicitly referred to in the Birkelbach report itself.

Therefore, although most speakers did not focus on the democratic element as a membership requirement, almost all of them focused on the larger issue of political aspects by stressing the fact that the Community was intended as a political union and that this should be not only acknowledged but also shared by potential new member states: German Socialist Ludwig Metzger spoke of the possibility of enlarging the Community to include all European democracies[78], and Italian Christian Democrat Emilio Battista supported the idea of the Community as a political enterprise based on shared values which should constitute the 'philosophie' that should shape the Community's approach to demands of membership and association[79]. The report was

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[76] Fernand Dehousse, Socialist, Belgium, Débats, 23 January 1962, Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté. Fernand Dehousse was a Belgian politician and member of the Socialist group of the European Parliament, of which he was a member until 1971.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Ludwig Metzger, Socialist, Germany, Débats, 23 January 1962, Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté. Metzger was a German SPD politician and a member of the EP.

[79] Emilio Battista, Christian Democrat, Italy, Débats, 23 January 1962, Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté. Battista was an Italian Christian Democrat whose name was associated early on with the work of the Political Committee on direct elections and political union – see for instance Vers l'élection directe de l'Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne, Political Committee, 1960 Towards Political Union – a selection of documents with a foreword by Mr Emilio Battista, Political Committee, January 1964, General Directorate of Parliamentary Documentation and Information.

unanimously approved for transmission to the Council on 25 January 1962, as a contribution to the elaboration of a doctrine of accession and association[80].

The Birkelbach report was therefore the first instance in which the Parliamentary Assembly discussed the Community's political identity in relation to enlargement and entry requirements in the form of democratic institutions within the applicant states. However, in January 1962 the debate was still a largely hypothetical one, especially in terms of democracy, as Spain, which would have been the most controversial candidate for membership, had not yet launched any formal initiative to institutionalise its relationship with the Community. Nonetheless, the approval of the Birkelbach report with its clear reference to a democratic requirement and focus on the political nature of the Community was already a new step towards a definition of Europe's democratic political identity by the European Parliament. It was also a step that had no contemporary equivalent amongst the other Community institutions. Whilst the debate on the Birkelbach report did not therefore provide an exact definition of what constituted the Community's political identity beyond a general commitment to 'democracy', the debate's significance largely lay in introducing the idea of a political identity itself. The following decades would witness a continued focus on the political principles at the basis of the integration process, as MEPs from all political sides searched for the definition of what 'Europe' meant.

The hypothetical problem of being faced with an association or membership application quickly turned into reality when Spain made a formal request for talks in February 1962, showing the intention to seek association with a view to membership[81]. Clearly undeterred by the Assembly's discussion of the democratic criterion, the Spanish government put forward a request for talks with the EEC to negotiate association and eventual integration into the Community[82]. Willy Birkelbach's response on behalf of the socialist group in the Parliamentary Assembly came in the form of the first oral question to the Council ever asked by a representative of the parliament: after asking whether the Council and the Commission would find it appropriate to consider such an application,

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[80] Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne, Résolution du 25 Janvier 1962, Documents de Séance, 25 Jan 1962 p. 186.
[81] Charles Powell, 'The long road to Europe', Julio Baquero Cruz and Carlos Closa eds., *European integration from Rome to Berlin*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009).
[82] Daniel Thomas, 'Constitutionalisation Through Enlargement: the contested origins of the EU's democratic identity', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2006, Vol. 13:8, pp. 1190-1210.

coming from a country whose 'political philosophy' and 'economic practice' were in complete opposition to the 'conceptions and structures' of the EEC, Birkelbach continued by quoting the reference to 'freedom' in the Preamble of the Rome Treaties and linking it directly (at a considerable stretch) with human rights and fundamental democratic liberties, giving an interpretation based on the values shared by the Six and that it would be hard for them to reject[83]. Birkelbach's argument was based on his interpretation of the text of the Preamble 'Résolus à affirmer, par la constitution de cet ensemble de ressources, les sauvegardes de la paix et de la liberté, et appelant les autres peuples de l'Europe qui partagent leur idéal à s'associer à leur effort', and specifically the word 'liberté', as a requirement for democratic political structures[84]. He was explicitly espousing the interpretation of these words that had already been given by trade unions across the Six, who emphasised the 'caractère non-démocratique' of the Spanish government as 'en contradiction avec les principes fondamentaux de la Communauté'[85]. He also said:

> 'La Communauté Économique Européenne cesserait d'être digne de confiance si elle envisageait de nouer avec le régime de Madrid un lien étroit sous la forme de l'association ou même d'une adhésion complète. [...] nous ne pouvons que refuser catégoriquement toute sorte d'aide à un régime ennemi de la liberté'[86].

Birkelbach's question placed the Commission and the Council on the back foot. The Council's written reply simply stated that it was, for the time being, unable to provide an answer. Commissioner Jean Rey, responsible for external relations and thus a key actor in the multiple applications, provided a rather vague reply during the debate of 29 March: while stating that the preoccupations of Parliament were important and that the Commission had debated the Birkelbach report with interest, and that the Commission aimed to devise some 'general principles' on association and enlargement that would enjoy Parliament's consent, he would not go any further in his assessment of Spain's political eligibility[87]. Such answers were not, needless to say, to the satisfaction of Parliament's Socialist group.

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Willi Birkelbach, Socialist, Germany, Débats, Aspects politiques et institutionnels de l'adhésion ou de l'association à la Communauté, 23 January 1962.
[85] Willi Birkelbach, Socialist, Germany, Débats, Question orale sur l'ouverture de négociations avec l'Espagne, 29 March 1962.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Jean Rey, Commission, Débats, Question orale sur l'ouverture de négociations avec l'Espagne, 29 March 1962. Belgian Liberal Jean Rey was responsible for external relations in the Hallstein Commission, and

The European Parliament, however, was not the only political actor pressing in this direction: as shown by Thomas and Ortuno Anaya in their article and book respectively, trade unions and transnational political movements across Europe were also vocal in their opposition to the eventuality of a Spanish accession[88]. The EP thus served as the main conduit into the European Community's institutional system of concerns that existed quite widely within European society, but may likely have been ignored by both the Council and the European Commission, in which the political left amongst which such sentiments were most acute, was much less well represented than in the EP. Eventually, the potential impasse between the EP and its fellow institutions lost its immediate relevance once the first enlargement talks came to a premature halt in early 1963.

The debate on the role of democracy within the political identity of the Community came back to the fore in 1967 when the Colonels' coup in Greece gave rise to a new problem: how was the Community to react to such developments in the first European state to have signed an association agreement with the EEC? The European Parliament first debated the Greek developments on 8 May 1967, when Edoardo Martino, chairman of the Political Affairs Committee, addressed an oral question to the Council expressing the committee's anxiety about the suspension of civil and political rights in Greece and its incompatibility with the principles at the basis of the Community, which also formed the basis of the association agreement. He also affirmed that Parliament considered itself the 'democratic guarantor' of freedom in Europe, and that it would do everything in its power to facilitate the return of democratic legality in Greece:

> 'Dans ce Parlement, qui constitue le garant démocratique des libertés
> européennes, nous savons qu'aujourd'hui, notre tache, notre devoir, consiste à
> dénoncer l'extrême gravité de la situation née du coup d'état[…] à favoriser tous
> les moyens dont nous disposons le retour à la légalité démocratique de ce pays
> ami. La Grèce ne peut pas ne pas retourner à cette légalité si elle désire vraiment
> poursuivre avec nous le chemin qui mène à l'unité européenne'[89].

President of the European Commission between July 1967 and July 1970.

[88] Thomas, op. cit. See also Pilar Ortuño Anaya, *European Socialists and Spain – The Transition to Democracy 1959-1977*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

[89] Edoardo Martino, Christian Democrat, Italy, Débats, Question orale n. 4/67 avec débat relative a l'association CEE-Grèce, 8 May 1967. Martino, a former partisan and a member of the European Parliament since 1958, was Chair of the Political Committee between 1964 and 1967, and would then be

In the ensuing debate, the president of the Committee of association with Greece, Dutch Christian Democrat Wilhelmus Schuijt, explicitly asked for the freezing of the association agreement with Greece until parliamentary democracy was restored:

> 'la Commission n'éstime-t-elle pas qu'on devrait interrompre toute activité des institutions prévues par l'accord d'association entre la Grèce et la Communauté? […] N'estime-t-elle pas, en effet, que la simple participation autour d'une même table des représentants des Communautés avec des représentants du gouvernement hellénique actuelle comporterait une reconnaissance implicite de la légitimité de ce gouvernement?'.[90]

In justifying this request, Schuijt referred to the political nature of the association agreement with Greece and claimed that the joint parliamentary commission between the European Parliament and the Greek Parliament represented the embodiment of this political relationship. Based on this understanding of the association agreement as a political one, Schuijt argued that the suspension of the powers of the Greek parliament by the military regime and the consequent suspension of the joint commission denied the nature of the agreement: depriving the Greek parliament of its crucial role as the representative of the people also deprived the association agreement of its 'most important political element'[91]. The Socialist speaker Walter Faller and the Liberal speaker, Cornelis Berkhouwer, both agreed with this interpretation of events, asking for the freezing of the association agreement until the reestablishment of parliamentary democracy[92]. Berkhouwer also insisted upon the idea of the European Parliament as a guarantor of European democracy introduced by Schuijt:

> 'Nous, qui voulons être les représentants de nos peuples au niveau d'une démocratie parlementaire européenne, ne devons pas rester indifférents aux

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Commission for external affairs in the Rey Commission.

[90] Wilhelmus Schuijt, Christian Democrat, Netherlands, Débats, Question orale n. 4/67 avec débat relative a l'association CEE-Gréce, 8 May 1967.

[91] Schuijt said: 'C'était justement pour affirmer et souligner le contenu politique de l'accord d'association entre la Gréce et la Communauté qu'une commission parlementaire mixte avait été crée immédiatement après l'entrée en vigueur de l'accord. Elle représentait, dans le cadre institutionnel de l'association, l'élément le plus important au point de vue politique, qui permet de ne pas considérer cet accord comme un simple traité de commerce. [...] nous estimons que l'association entre la Communauté et la Grèce ne peut ni produire ses effets normaux ni se développer en l'absence d'une institution parlementaire, seule habilitée à représenter la volonté des peuples, Question orale n. 4/67 avec débat relative a l'association CEE-Grèce, 8 May 1967.

[92] Walter Faller was a German member of the Socialist group. Cornelis Berkhouver was a Dutch member of the European Parliament from 1964 to 1984. A member of the Dutch Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy), he was chair of the Liberal and Democratic group from February 1970 to march 1973 and President of the EP between March 1973 and March 1975.

événements qui se déroulent dans les pays de l'Europe occidentale. Notre cause peut être en jeu'[93].

Parliament's position was strengthened by the fact that Greece was a clear candidate for future membership of the Community and the democratic criterion had already been established in the Birkelbach report. Following this debate, on 11 May 1967 Parliament approved a resolution in which it asserted that the Association Agreement could only be applied once Greece re-established its 'structures démocratiques et les libertés politiques et syndicales', effectively demanding that the Association be suspended until democracy were re-established[94]. The resolution received unanimous approval by all party groups (Christian Democrat, Socialist, Liberal and the Democratic Union for Europe), showing once again the cross-party consensus on the idea of democracy as a condition for membership.[95]

Initially, the Commission and the Council both gave cautious responses to Parliament's pressures. Eventually, pressed on the issue by German Socialist Ludwig Metzger in a general debate in September 1967, new Commission President Jean Rey clarified the Commission's position, stating that, while it would maintain the daily management of the agreement, the Community would not negotiate on new issues (agricultural harmonisation and a new financial agreement) as originally envisaged[96]. In November, President-in-Office of the Council, Karl Schiller replied to another oral question by Schuijt[97] and also confirmed that, while the agreement remained in place, the Council would not pursue further negotiations until the 'plein rétablissement de garanties démocratiques et constitutionnelles'[98]. The association agreement with Greece would remain frozen until the end of the Greek dictatorship in 1974.

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[93] Cornelis Berkhouwer, Liberal and Democratic Group, Netherlands, Débats. Question orale n. 4/67 avec débat relative à l'association CEE- Grèce, 8 May 1967.

[94] Résolution sur l'association entre la C.E.E. et la Grèce, Débats, 11 May 1967, Association C.E.E.- Gréce The resolution was approved by all party groups.

[95] The Council of Europe also considered suspending Greece. In January 1968, the Consultative Assembly recommended to the Committee of Ministers that Greece should be either suspended or expelled if parliamentary democracy had not been restored by Spring 1969 (Resolution 361 (1968) of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe (31 January 1968)). The Committee of Ministers discussed the issue in December 1969: the Greek foreign minister left the meeting before the Committee of Ministers could come to a vote, and the rest of the Committee deemed this exit to mean that Greece would absent itself from the Council's activities. No vote was actually taken. See *The Council of Europe fights for democracy in Greece, 1967-1969*, Andreas G. Papandreou Foundation, Historical Series No.1.

[96] See Jean Rey, Débats, 20 September 1967, Débat sur la déclaration de M. le President de la Commission des Communautés Européennes.

[97] Question Orale n. 9/67 avec ébat: Association C.E.E.-Grèce, Débats, 28 November 1967.

[98] Karl Schiller, Council, Débats, Question Orale n. 9/67 avec débat: Association C.E.E.-Gréce, 28 November 1967. At the time, Karl Schiller was President-in-office of the Council and German Minister of

The debates on the freezing of the association with Greece enhanced the idea of the European Community as a community of values with both the right and the duty to uphold democracy within the European continent. Martino identified the unification process with the pursuit of a 'united and democratic Europe', as did Schuijit and Berkhouwer. This idea of the European Community as a guarantor of democracy and of the European Parliament, in its turn, as the keeper of the democratic values of Europe above and beyond the borders of the Community was a novel one: it tied in with the democratic criterion established by the Assembly in 1962, but it was based on an interpretation of the Treaties of Rome that had to be constructed over time. The speakers continually referred to the idea of 'liberté' in the Preamble to the Treaty, and interpreted this as parliamentary democracy, the rule of law and individual civil and political rights along the lines of the Council of Europe. It was, in fact, an interpretation that reflected very much the nature of the institution that was putting it forward. As an appointed assembly with a consultative role and no real powers over the Community executive bodies, the Assembly deliberately interpreted its own existence as the embodiment of a commitment to the creation of a democratic supranational Europe and hence of democracy as a defining value of the Community's political identity. It was on the basis of this self-image that the European Parliament appointed itself as the champion of democracy within Europe and that it took the opportunity to advance this concept by publicly shifting the enlargement debate to the field of political values. In claiming democracy as a defining element of the political identity of the Community in its discussions of the Spanish and Greek cases, the European Parliament appealed to the one value that no member within its assembly could reasonably object to and that no Council member or Commission could refute.

The socialist representatives were the first to focus on the issue within the assembly and call for democratic conditionality: Birkelbach highlighted it in his role as *rapporteur* in January 1962, but he reinforced it in March in his oral question to the Council and Commission on behalf of the Socialist group. Dehousse reiterated this again in June 1964 when, in a debate on the talks between the EEC and Spain, he claimed that 'the whole philosophy of the Treaties is essentially democratic' and that the very way in which the Community was designed implied the need for all member states to be democratic:

Economic Affairs.

'Or, toute la philosophie de nos traités est essentiellement démocratique. Le préambule du traité du Marché commun, dans lequel les états membres s'expriment de la manière suivante: "résolus à affermir, par la constitution de cet ensemble de ressources, les sauvegardes de la paix et de la liberté, et appelant les autres peuples de l'Europe qui partagent leur idées à s'associer a leur effort" [...] en vertu de la technique des traités eux-mêmes, le fonctionnement des Communautés implique l'existence, dans tous les états membres, ou dans tous ceux qui sont amenés à participer à nos travaux (même sous la forme d'une association) d'un certain nombre de libertés fondamentales, libertés sans lesquelles le fonctionnement des Communautés n'est même pas pensable. Je cite: la liberté d'opinion, la liberté d'expression, la liberté d'accéder aux sources d'information et enfin la liberté syndicale[....] que trouvons-nous dans le communiqué qui a clôturé la réunion du Conseil du 2 Juin? Tout d'abord une allusion vraiment sibylline à la "politique constante" du Conseil [...] le texte qui suit est extrêmement ambigu: la Commission [...] est chargée d'ouvrir des conversations avec le gouvernement espagnol. Que signifie ce texte? […]. Le jour où [l'Espagne] sera libérée de la tyrannie qu'elle subit actuellement, alors nous lui ouvrirons largement les bras[...]. Mais à la dictature, à la dictature sanglante que l'Espagne connait depuis un quart de siècle, nous socialistes, nous répondrons inébranlablement: non!'[99].

In 1967, Faller asked explicitly for the freezing of the association with Greece. However, even if at first they were more cautious, representatives from the other two main groups, the Christian Democrats and the Liberals, also agreed on the interpretation of the political nature of the Community's identity: the Birkelbach report received universal approval within the assembly and in 1967 the idea that the European Parliament was the representative of democracy in Europe and had a duty to speak on behalf of shared democratic values was upheld by non-socialist members of the assembly too. The general principle of a democratic political identity as the primary basis for the existence of the European Community was therefore put forward by the European Parliament as an institution, and not just by individual MEPs or by a specific party.

The European Parliament's engagement with enlargement in the 1960s outlined an image of the European Community based on a political understanding of the nature of the

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[99] Fernand Dehousse, Socialist, Belgium, Débats, Conversations avec le gouvernement espagnol, 18 June 1964.

integration process and shaped by a marked focus on the democratic values and aspirations of the Community. European parliamentarians took enlargement as an opportunity to define the political nature of Europe and the values that it did and should represent in their opinion. The Spanish dictatorship's attempts to start negotiations acted as a catalyst for the supporters of a political understanding of Europe based on the values of democracy, the rule of law and civil and political rights to bring their interpretation to the core of the political debate within the Parliamentary Assembly.

As Thomas shows in his work on the constitutionalisation of democracy through enlargement, in 1962 the Parliamentary Assembly was successful in shaping the public debate on the Spanish request to the extent of making it nearly impossible for the Council, initially positively inclined, to accept the Spanish candidature under Franco's dictatorial regime[100]. This was the first institutionalisation of democracy as a criterion for membership, and it confirms that even at this stage, with no formal powers beyond the right to consultation, Parliament had the rhetorical power to shape the debate over Europe's values. However, the construction of the image of Europe continued in 1967, when Parliament reacted to the suspension of democratic politics in Greece by asking for the freezing of the association agreement, on the grounds that it was in the Community's nature to uphold and guarantee democracy in Europe, especially in states that were likely one day to become Community members. The idea of democracy as a requirement for membership was thus reinforced. However, the image of a democratic Community was expanded with the introduction of the idea that the EC would also act as the 'guarantor' of democracy in Europe. This concept was to be the primary element in the European Parliament's enlargement discourse in the 1970s.

The EC as the guarantor of European democracy

The issue of enlargement arose again in 1970, when the Six finally defined conditions for entry for the new applicants: the UK, Ireland, Denmark and Norway. The question of democracy however did not feature prominently and was not a focus of attention for the European Parliament throughout the first round of enlargement: the democratic credentials of the applicant states could hardly be questioned. The European Parliament's

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[100] Daniel Thomas, 'Constitutionalisation Through Enlargement: the contested origins of the EU's democratic identity', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2006, Vol. 13:8, pp. 1190-1210; see also Pilar Ortuño Anaya, *European Socialists and Spain – The Transition to Democracy 1959-1977*, (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

enlargement debates of the 1970s and early 1980s that significantly contributed to the reinforcement of the political identity introduced in the 1960s were the ones on the membership applications of three post-authoritarian Mediterranean states: Greece, Spain and Portugal. Parliamentary discourse on enlargement continued to focus on the concept of democracy, and picked up on the idea of the Community as a 'guarantor of democracy' to develop it further into a primary feature of its political identity.

The idea of enlargement as a way of anchoring the new Mediterranean democracies to democratic Western Europe has already been analysed in the existing literature. Many studies of the applicant states show that they themselves interpreted accession to the European Community as a confirmation of their successful transition to democracy and an official acceptance back into the fold of the 'true' Europe. Tsoukalis shows how there was a widespread consensus among the Spanish political elites, and indeed its population at large, on EC membership as a way of stabilising the volatile political situation[101] while in Greece the pro-membership elite saw membership as a way to consolidate democracy and referred to the freezing of the Association Agreement and the EC's denunciation of Greece's military regime to support this argument[102]. Moreover, the Community's focus on democracy stood in marked contrast with the attitude of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) and the United States, who had not denounced the dictatorship in the same way[103]. This strengthened the claim that by joining the Community, Greece would be joining a pole of democracy. De la Guardia[104] also identifies Spanish motivations for entry with the consensus between Spanish political and social forces on the necessity of European integration to engineer the socio-economic modernisation and full democratisation of the country after the collapse of Franco's dictatorship. This consensus was shared by Spanish public opinion, which was based on an idealistic, and rather vague, understanding of 'Europe' coupled with the desire for international

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[101] Loukas Tsoukalis, *The European Community and its Mediterranean enlargement*, (London: Allen &Unwin, 1981), p. 122.
[102] Tsoukalis, ibid.
[103] James Edward Miller, *The United States and the Making of Modern Greece: History and Power, 1950-1974*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009) and Konstantina, Maragkou, 'The Wilson Government's Responses to 'The Rape of Greek Democracy'', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2010, Vol. 45:1, pp. 162-180.
[104] De La Guardia, R., 'In search of lost Europe', in Wolfram Kaiser and Jürgen Elvert, *European Union Enlargement,* London 2004.

recognition[105]. Charles Powell also focused on the idea of democracy as an essential aspect of Spain's desire to join the EC[106].

This perception of the EC as a champion of democracy makes it all the more compelling to ask how the idea of the European Community as an anchor of democracy affirmed itself in the first place, and what this actually meant in the eyes of Community actors. After all, the democratic aspect of integration was still being greatly overlooked in the practical functioning of the EC: at the time of the Mediterranean applications, the actual democratic credentials of the Community remained vague, the European Parliament was not yet directly elected and talk of the democratic deficit was beginning to emerge, and the accessions of 1973 had had no impact on the idea of democracy. And yet the image of Europe as a champion of democracy not only persisted from the stances taken in the 1960s, but it grew to become the defining element of the EC's political identity as it was perceived by the outsiders who were seeking to join. In fact, the Council recognised it in its 1973 declaration on European identity, in which the Nine declared that:

> 'sharing as they do the same attitudes to life, based on a determination to build a society which measures up to the needs of the individual, they are determined to defend the principles of representative democracy, of the rule of law, of social justice — which is the ultimate goal of economic progress — and of respect for human rights. All of these are fundamental elements of the European Identity'[107].

The rhetoric of the executive bodies and the rhetoric of Parliament were therefore already converging in the early 1970s[108]. However, parliamentary debates allowed for a much greater scope in the elaboration of the idea of democracy as the basis of the Community's political identity. The European Parliament worked hard on the consolidation and expansion of this democratic image of the Community. Parliamentary rhetoric started more and more to equate the Community with Europe, intended as the

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[105] Ibid.

[106] Charles Powell, 'The long road to Europe', Julio Baquero Cruz and Carlos Closa eds., *European integration from Rome to Berlin*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009). See also Matthieu Trouvé, *L'Espagne et l'Europe – De la dictature de Franco à l'Union européenne*, (Brussels: PIE – Peter Lang, Series: Euroclio, Etudes et Documents, 2009); see also Mario Del Pero, Víctor Gavín, Fernando Guirao and Antonio Varsori, *Democrazie. L'Europa meridionale e la fine delle dittature*, (Milano: Le Monnier, 2010).

[107] Declaration on European Identity, in Bulletin of the European Communities, December 1973, No 12. See also Marloes Beers, L'Identitée Européenne Declarée en 1973, Richie Europa Newsletter n. 4, March 2007.

[108] See also Eirini Karamouzi, 'Enlargement policy and identity formation – a reciprocal relationship', in Marloes Beers and Jenny Raflik eds., *National Cultures and Common Identity* (Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2010).

sole legitimate representative of the value-based politics of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. The image of a Community based on common values and supranational cooperation came to embody the very idea of Europe. In the 1970s and 1980s, belonging to the EC became, in the discourse of Parliament, belonging to Europe.

The European Parliament held debates on the political developments in Portugal, Spain and Greece throughout the 1970s. In April 1974, Parliament debated an oral question by the Socialist group to the Commission asking for the Association Agreement with Greece to be rescinded, on the grounds that no progress had been made towards democracy. Even though the other groups were against rescinding the agreements, all the speakers re-stated that democracy was a necessary requirement for any membership applications to be considered by the Community[109]. In 1974 and 1975, Parliament discussed the situation in Portugal and Spain several times,[110] deploring the dictatorships and asking the Commission to take concrete steps to support the democratisation process in both countries[111]. In February 1975, following the collapse of the Portuguese dictatorship, Christian Democrat Alfred Bertrand told Parliament that 'Portugal is called upon to resume its place in the community of European nations as a democratic country'[112]. On 12 June 1975, Greece officially applied for EC membership and on the 25 and 27 June 1975, the ninth meeting of the EP-Greek Joint Parliamentary Committee took place in Athens, the first such meeting after the years of dictatorship in which the agreement was frozen. The debate on the results of this meeting in November 1975 was the first debate on enlargement to the Mediterranean countries: it was, to a large extent, a debate on the technical aspects of the negotiations. However, speakers also revisited the idea of Europe as a guarantor of democracy: Corterier, the *rapporteur*, stated that Europe would provide Greece with a close cooperation that would help it to 'strengthen its own democratic institutions, prevent any relapse into dictatorship'[113]. He also affirmed that the

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[109] See EP Debates, Oral Question No 20/74 with debate: Association Agreement with Greece, 4 April 1974.

[110] For example, in September and October 1974, and April, June, September and October 1975.

[111] For instance, on 17 October 1974, Italian Socialist Libero Della Briotta asserted that 'the European Community should not merely do something: all hands are needed to steer the ship of Portuguese democracy into port', Della Briotta, Socialist, Italy, EP Debates, Oral question to the Commission on Portugal's connections with the European Community, Doc 250/74, 17 October 1974. Della Briotta was a member of the EP from October 1972 until July 1976.

[112] Alfred Bertrand, Christian Democrat, Belgium, EP Debates, 19 February 1975. Bertrand was the Chair of the Christian Democratic group between 1975 and 1977, and a member of the EP from its establishment until 1979.

[113] Peter Corterier, Socialist, Germany, EP Debates, Recommendations of the EEC-Greece Joint Parliamentary Committee adopted on 27 June 1975 – Additional Protocol to the EEC-Greece Association Agreement, 12 November 1975. He was a member of the European Parliament from 1973 until 1977. He

accession of Greece would 'make it possible to safeguard democracy in that country and to strengthen democracy in Europe generally'[114]. The idea of strengthening democracy through membership would become ever more dominant in Parliament's discourse.

In July 1977, in a debate on the situation in Spain, Parliament approved a resolution drafted by the Political Affairs Committee on the result of the first free democratic elections held in the Iberian country. Praising the orderly and free elections, the mover of the resolution also said that its real purpose was to show that, in the view of the assembly, the restoration of democratic life also restored Spain to its place in Europe[115] and that Parliament was 'willing to acknowledge [Spain's] right to take its place in our Community at the earliest opportunity'. In passing this resolution, the European Parliament was strengthening the primacy of the democratic criterion over all others: it was a re-affirmation of the political character of enlargement. It was an expression of political support for Spain on the part of the EP, and an assertion that, despite all the technical, economic, and financial difficulties, the one and only reason that had so far precluded its entry had been the rejection of the Community's political values[116]. Democracy was again being given a primary defining role in the Community's identity.

The first fully-fledged parliamentary debate on enlargement was held on 1 October 1977, after the new democratic governments of all three countries had officially applied for accession (after Greece, Portugal and Spain applied in March 1977 and July 1977 respectively). Christian Democrat Egon Klepsch opened the debate arguing that the political motives of applicant states were of the utmost importance, and that a rejection

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later served as secretary general of the North Atlantic Assembly, from 1987 to 1997.

[114] Peter Corterier, Socialist, Germany, EP Debates, , Recommendations of the EEC-Greece Joint Parliamentary Committee adopted on 27 June 1975 – Additional Protocol to the EEC-Greece Association Agreement, 12 November 1975.

[115] 'We are delighted to note that this people, despite its lack of experience, rejected all the extremists in the elections and came out in favour of a peaceful transition to full parliamentary democracy. The purpose of this resolution [by the Political Affairs C'ttee] is thus to express Parliament's satisfaction at these events, to stress that, as far as we are concerned, Spain is part of the European Community and that we are willing to acknowledge its right to take its place in our Community at the earliest opportunity', Alfred Bertrand, Christian Democrat, Belgium, EP Debates, Political Situation in Spain, July 1977.

[116] Liberal Democrat speaker Cifarelli stated: 'the difficulties and the problems relating to Spain's entry were in the past all overshadowed by the fundamental and critical question of political freedom. As long as the Francoist regime existed, there was no question of Spain's coming into the Community. Now the fundamental political obstacle has been removed and specific problems are coming to the fore. [..] we are convinced that the difficulties can be faced and ovecome'. Michele Cifarelli, Liberal Democrat, Italy, EP Debates, Political Situation in Spain, July 1977. Cifarelli was a member of Italy's Partito Repubblicano Italiano and a member of the EP from 1969 until 1979.

would be tantamount to betraying the ideals of democracy and solidarity on which the Community itself was based:

> 'A country's motives for wanting to join the Community are undoubtedly to a great extent of a material, economic and financial nature, but there are also - and most significantly - political motives, and priority must be given to these political aims [...] by rejecting these applications, the Community would be betraying its ideals [the Community must be] open to all democratic European states'[117].

The socialist Pietro Lezzi continued along this line by saying that

> 'the EC is the best solution to the political problem of strengthening democracy'[118].

Liberal Democrat Jean Durieux also reiterated this concept, saying that it was clear that for the applicant countries, joining Europe was the logical corollary to overthrowing the dictatorial regimes and that 'in all these countries, Europe and democracy are synonymous'[119]. The Conservative Geoffrey Rippon also confirmed this understanding of the nexus between EC membership and the stabilisation of democracy by saying that

> 'any rejection of enlargement would weaken European democracy and undermine the coherence of the Community'[120].

Giorgio Amendola, speaking on behalf of the Italian Communists, highlighted the 'fascist' character of the former dictatorships and, pointing to the Community's political responsibility to help eliminate the 'roots of fascism', also agreed with the general consensus by saying that the applications expressed these countries' 'political determination and their genuine acceptance of the democratic reality which our Community represents'[121]. This cross section of the party political positions shows that the consensus on the identification between the European Community and the

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[117] Egon Klepsch, Christian Democrat, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement of the Community (debate on report doc 323/77), 1 October 1977. Egon A. Klepsch was a German Christian Democrat member of the EP from 1973 to 1994. He was President of the EP between January 1992 and July 1997, and chair of the Christian Democratic Group, then of the renamed Group of the European People's Party, from June 1976 until January 1992.
[118] Pietro Lezzi, Socialist, Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement of the Community (debate on report doc 323/77), 1 October 1977. Lezzi was an MEP from October 1976 until July 1979, and vice-chair of the Socialist group from July 1977 until March 1982.
[119] Jean Durieux, Liberal Democrat, EP Debates, , Enlargement of the Community (debate on report doc 323/77), 1 October 1977. He was Chair of the Liberal Democrat group between 1973 and 1977.
[120] Geoffrey Rippon, Conservatives, UK, EP Debates, Enlargement of the Community (debate on report doc 323/77), 1 October 1977. Rippon had been responsible for the British negotiations for entry between 1970 and 1971. As a member of the EP he was chair of the European Conservatives. See also Caroline Jackson, 'The first British MEPs', *Contemporary European History*, 1992, Vol. 2:2
[121] Giorgio Amendola, Communist, Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement of the Community (debate on report doc 323/77) 1 October 1977. Amendola was a member of the EP from January 1969 until June 1980, first as a non-attached member until October 1973 and then as Chair of the Communist and Allies Group from October 1973 until 1980.

democratic ideal was so widespread as to embrace all parties in the political spectrum of Parliament, from left to right. Democracy was considered the defining feature of Europe, and, in turn, a European nation looking to re-affirm its democratic vocation would be able to do so through EC membership, which represented the members' adherence to a common political identity based on shared values. However, it is also interesting to notice that MEPs refrained from giving more specific definitions of 'democracy', thus being able to find convergence on the principle without venturing into the details of whether and how the European Community's idea of democracy was to be realised in the practice of each member state.

The 1977 debate already showed how the European Parliament was interpreting enlargement as a way of ensuring that democracy would take root in the Mediterranean applicants, and that there was a widespread consensus among parliamentarians on the idea that the European Community was the representative of democracy in Europe. This idea constituted a shift in the image that the EP was constructing: democracy was no longer just a requirement for Community membership, a feature of the national political systems of the member states to which applicant states needed to adjust in order to be able to accede. The European Community was now, in and of itself, a guarantor of democracy in its member states. The concept of the Community as a 'guarantor of democracy' introduced in 1967 in relation to the authoritarian coup in Greece became the crucial element of the new discourse on enlargement. The European Parliament constructed an image of the EC, with its system of institutionalised supranational cooperation between parliamentary democracies, as a superior political system, upholding values of democracy and human rights. It also equated belonging to this system with belonging to Europe: for instance, in 1975 it was possible to say that Portugal 'belonged only potentially to Europe', even if this country was a founding member of NATO, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and EFTA (European Free Trade Association), and that only its full democratisation and membership of the EC would realise this potential[122]. This concept was developed over the next few years and in 1979 the respect of these values came to be identified as a primary goal of the integration process. The next logical step was, of course, that equating Europe (or rather the EC's version of it) with democracy would not simply

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[122] Ernest Glinne, Socialist, Belgium, EP Debates, Situation in Portugal, 11 April 1975. Glinne was an MEP from June 1968 until July 1984. He chaired the Socialist Group from July 1979 until July 1984, and was vice-chair from 1976 until 1979 and then again from 1984 until 1989.

mean that any European state that was not democratic could not become a member, but also, conversely, that any European state that was democratic could not be refused. The EP's discourse thus became highly relevant within the wider European political and institutional context in so far as the development of the democratic identity actually influenced the policy: the reiteration of the democratic identity as a fundamental pre-requisite of membership provided a fundamental criterion for any decisions made regarding potential accession applications.

The 'Declaration on Democracy' issued by the Copenhagen European Council in April 1978 showed the extent to which the European Parliament's ideas about the Community's democratic identity also permeated the other EC institutions, at the very least in terms of common rhetoric and declared values: coming immediately after the long-awaited announcement of the date of the first direct elections to the European Parliament, the Council's 'declaration on democracy' started of by affirming how direct elections would be 'a vivid demonstration of the ideals of democracy shared by the people' within the EC and went on to state that their desire to 'safeguard the principles of representative democracy, of the rule of law, of social justice and of respect for human rights', concluding that 'the respect for and maintenance of representative democracy and human rights in each Member State are essential elements of membership of the European Communities'.[123] The democratic identity that the European Parliament had argued for so passionately for nearly two decades was thus ensconced at the heart of the Community's self-identity – and with it, the idea that the EP's discourse represented the EC's own commitment to democracy was also making inroads outside the walls of parliament.

This confirmation spurred MEPs on in their quest for a clear determination of the Community's political identity vis-à-vis the candidate states. In the January 1979 general enlargement debate, *rapporteur* Pintat, after highlighting the economic and financial difficulties of enlargement, reiterated the idea that accepting the Mediterranean applicants was primarily a political act based on the affirmation of shared values, an 'act of faith in democracy in Europe' and the confirmation of the 'joint undertaking to adhere to the principles of pluralist democracy'[124]. The Pintat report also contained a

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[123] Conclusions of the Sessions of the European Council (1975-1990), Copenhagen, 7-8 April 1978.
[124] Jean-François Pintat, Libearal and Democratic Group, France, EP Debates, Prospects of enlargement of the Community - discussion of Pintat report Doc 479/78, 19 January 1979. Pintat was a member of the

concrete provision for the enforcement of democracy within the Community's member states: it suggested that the European Court of Justice

> 'should be able to establish the failure of a Member State to respect these principles of freedom and pluralist democracy […] any such failure should be incompatible with membership of the Community'.

This suggestion never turned into reality, but it represented the one instance in which the idea of the EC as a safeguard of democracy within its member states was coupled with a concrete suggestion for the enforcement of this principle. The European Parliament approved the resolution on the Pintat report on 19 January 1979:

> 'the EP - considering that, in the preamble to the EEC Treaty, the member states of the Community declare themselves 'determined to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe' and 'resolved by thus pooling their resources to preserve and strengthen peace and liberty' and call upon 'the other peoples of Europe who share their ideal to join in their efforts' - considering that the observance and defence of democratic principles form one of the essential cornerstones of that Community - having regard, in this connection to the statement made in 1973 by the Heads of State or Government of the Community Member States on the European Identity, the Council and the Commission of the EC on the protection of Fundamental rights and the declaration made by the European Council in April 1978 on democracy [...] welcoming the fact that Greece, Portugal and Spain have evolved from dictatorships into pluralist, parliamentary democracies, expressing, conscious of its responsibilities in this respect, its support for the maintenance and strengthening of pluralist democratic systems [...] expresses its political will to see Greece, Portugal and Spain join the Community'[125].

The first directly elected European Parliament hailed the accession of Greece in 1981 as a symbolic moment in the affirmation of the Community's democratic identity. On welcoming the Greek delegation of euro-MPs, the EP President, Simone Veil, highlighted not merely Greece's return to democracy, but the fact that by accepting Greece, 'the mother of democracy', the Community was affirming its identity as

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Union pour la France en Europe from 1974 to 1978, then of the French Parti républicain freom March 1978 until July 1979 and again of the Union pour la France en Europe. He chaired the Liberal Democratic group in the MEP from October 1978 until July 1979 and was then its vice-chair until 1984.
[125] European Parliament Resolution 19 January 1979.

'Europe'[126]. Furthermore, the European Parliament increasingly adopted a language in which joining the European Community was indicated as 'joining Europe', so that only by becoming an EC member would a country be able to completely fulfil its European vocation. The European Parliament was equating the European Community with the one legitimate representative of positive European political values. It was also establishing the equation between the European Community and Europe in a way that depicted those who remained outside the European Community and did not subscribe to its political values as, implicitly, less European. To join the Community was slowly becoming an affirmation of a country's European nature.

The resolution on the enlargement to Spain and Portugal of November 1982 reiterated once again the idea that the EC should support new democracies: the use of the word 'duty' indicated that, by now, the idea of the EC as a champion of democracy was, in Parliament's eyes, so crucial to the nature and purpose of the integration process that denying membership to new democracies would undermine the legitimacy of the Community. Parliament stated that

> 'considering that the Community's duty is to welcome all European States which
> apply the principles of a pluralist democracy and observe human rights and civil
> liberties and support the ideal of a strong and united Europe, [the European
> Parliament] 1. Reaffirms the great importance that membership of the
> Community should be open to countries like Spain and Portugal which share
> with the present Member States the principles of democracy and individual
> freedoms'[127].

The same resolution also re-asserted Parliament's interpretation of the Treaty of Rome:

> '[the European Parliament] recalls the principle enshrined in the Treaty of Rome,
> which established the EEC, that any democratic and pluralist country has the
> right to become a member of the Community'[128].

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[126] Simone Veil, EP President, EP Debates, Welcome to Greek members, 12 January 1981. Simone Veil, survivor of Auschwitz, was a member of the French Union pour la France and Europe from 1979 until 1984 and later the Union pour la démocratie française until 1993. She was the first president of the directly-elected European Parliament from July1979 until January 1982, and was chair of the Liberal and Democratic Group from July 1984 to December 1985, then Liberal and Democratic Reformist group from December 1985 until July 1989, after which she became vice-chair of the group for the rest of her time in the EP until 1983. She was the French Minister of Health between 1974 and 1979 and was appointed to the Constitutional Council in 1998. For the full quote see chapter four.

[127] European Parliament Resolution on the enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal, 17 November 1982.

[128] On the Drouro report (Doc. 1-658/82) on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee on the enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal and the Sutra report (Doc. 1-785/82) on behalf of the

The democracy theme emerged clearly in the 1982 and 1985 enlargement debates on the entry of Spain and Portugal[129]. Again, there was consensus on the fact that the primary objective of enlargement was to 'safeguard democracy in Spain and Portugal'[130]. The only dissenting voices on this point were those of the French and Greek Communists, the latter maintaining their original opposition to their country's membership of the Community:

> 'it is claimed that entry will protect democracy in these countries. Democracy prevailed in these countries when the two 40-year old pre-war dictatorships were overthrown thanks to the struggle of the working classes, and to this the Community made no contribution whatsoever'[131].

Even within the Communist group, however, the idea of the Community as a democratic force that would act as guarantor of democracy in Western Europe was accepted by the Italian representatives, who in developing an independent foreign policy path for their party during the 1970s had come to uphold the widespread understanding of the inherent link between democracy and the EC:

> 'the Italian Communist Party has always considered the accession of Spain and Portugal to the EEC as an historically essential step in European integration and in the consolidation of democracy on our continent. Armed with this conviction we have endeavoured to promote inside and outside our country, within the context of the European left, the extent of the consensus in favour of enlargement, something which could by no means be taken for granted at the outset and which even now comes up against substantial resistance. [...] We have always set our sights beyond these [problems] at a superior interest, i.e. the union in democracy of all European peoples'[132].

Committee on Agriculture on Mediterranean Agriculture and the problems of the enlargement of the EEC towards the south.

[129] General debates on southern enlargement were held in November 1982, January, May and September 1985.

[130] Otto von Habsburg, Germany, EPP, EP Debates, Accession of Spain and Portugal, 17 January 1985. Otto von Habsburg, eldest son of the last Austrian emperor and claimant to the throne until 1961, was a member of the EP for the Bavarian CSU from 1979 until 1999, becoming the EP's senior member. He was President of the Paneuropean Union from 1973 until 2004.

[131] Vassilis Ephremidis, Communist and Allied Groups, Greece, EP Debates, Enlargement of the EEC towards the South, 17 November 1982. Ephremidis was an MEP from 1981 until 1999. He was vice-chair of the Communist and Allies Group from 1982 to 1989, then of Left Unity until 1994 and of the Confederal Group of the European United Left until 1999.

[132] Pancrazio De Pasquale, Communist and Allied Groups, Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement, 8 May 1985. De Pasquale was an MEP for the Italian Communist Party from 1979 until 1989.

From left to right and with only a handful of exceptions, all from groups that remained outside the mainstream of parliamentary discourse, MEPs saw the Community as the political and symbolic embodiment of democracy in Europe, and the final resolution of 8 May 1985 on the conclusion of negotiations with Spain and Portugal started with this very idea:

> 'satisfied that the enlargement of the Community is in keeping with its original mandate to be open to all democratic European States which stand by peace and freedom and to create an ever-closer union between the peoples of Europe, the European Parliament welcome[d] the conclusion of the negotiations with Spain and Portugal'[133].

In September 1985, for the first time in its institutional life, Parliament debated the Accession Treaty and approved a resolution that it considered the equivalent of a ratification, stating that it was not trying to usurp the rights of national parliaments, but endorsing them[134]. Only two groups of MEPs voted against: the Communist and Allied Group, with the exception of the Italian delegation, and the Danish Social Democrats, who believed that the European Parliament was usurping a prerogative of national parliaments. The fact that the EP would in fact arrogate the right to ratify an Accession Treaty – or even consider itself to be in the position of doing so – was a telling sign of the development of the EP's self-image: by assuming a role that had previously been a prerogative of national parliaments, MEPs were firmly reiterating that they considered the EP to be the core institution within the EC's democratic system and clearly showed how they kept striving to increase their collective relevance within the Community.

The fact that the consensus on democracy was only broken by the French and Greek Communists highlighted how the Cold War provided a powerful framework for parliamentary debates on enlargement. The Cold War structured the environment in which the European Community was conceived and developed, not just in strategic but also in ideological terms. This structure provided the European Community with a set of limitations within which to develop its political identity: for instance, even within the European Parliament, there were no appointed members representing the Communist

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[133] European Parliament, Resolution embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the conclusion of the negotiations with Spain and Portugal, Official Journal of the European Communities, 10/06.1985 No C. 141.
[134] Ejner Hovgård Christiansen, Socialist, Denmark, EP Debates, Explanations of Vote, 11 September 1985. Christiansen was a member of the EP for the Danish Socialdemokratiet from 1984 until 1994. He was a member of the Socialist group between 1984 and 1986 and 1989 and 1992, and its vice-chair from 1986 to 1989, and a non-attached member from 1992 to 1994.

parties of the Six, even if these were very significant political actors at national level. The Communists were generally opposed to European integration in the 1960s, but until the early 1970s[135] their positions were not represented in the Community institutions and the discourse therefore developed within the parameters of a largely pro-European and pro-Western outlook (despite the differences of interpretation between the socialists and Christian Democrats). The Cold War therefore provided the discourse with an existing framework within which a political identity could be defined, and with a ready political and strategic "other" in the guise of Communist Central and Eastern Europe. This would come to a head in the late 1990s, when the post-Cold War process of enlargement to the countries of the former Communist bloc proved the successful establishment of the European Union's political identity through the candidate states' acceptance of the latter, and yet, as will be shown in later chapters, also showed the limits of using political values as the sole or even primary basis of a shared European identity[136].

Rather than an explicit reference, in the 1960s the Cold War remained an undercurrent of European parliamentary debates on enlargement. This is largely due to the fact that Spain was perceived to be firmly within the Western Camp, and Greece was a NATO member and hence an important strategic partner within the Western Camp. The right-wing dictatorships in both countries did not, therefore, constitute a strategic problem in terms of the Cold War logic. As pointed out by Powell, some member states were willing to negotiate entry with Spain on the basis of its Western orientation[137]. The discourse on democracy within the European Parliament therefore developed against the Cold War background but did not explicitly address the Cold War. This changed in the 1970s, when Communist representatives were part of the assembly and the democratisation of Spain, Greece and Portugal was also widely perceived as a potential source of instability. Parliament's discourse on democracy developed within this context through the

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[135] The Italian Communist Party was finally able to send representatives to the assembly in 1969 – by which time a it was already possible to discern a shift in their foreign policy that would lead them to the 1970s formal acceptance of, and support for, Italy's place within the Western Camp, and to the experiment of Eurocommunism. Their foreign policy positions created significant contrast with the French Communists, and separate positions adopted in European parliamentary debates by the two.
[136] The enlargement discourse of the late 1990s and early 2000s was characterised by the fact that MEPs were able to demand and monitor compliance with the Union's political identity, while at the same time they felt compelled to introduce and strengthen cultural and historical elements of the European identity in order to justify the Eastern Enlargement. Parliamentary discourse in this period showed how shared political values fell short of providing an all-encompassing identity that could bind the old and new member states together sufficiently.
[137] See Charles Powell, 'The long road to Europe', Julio Baquero Cruz and Carlos Closa eds., *European integration from Rome to Berlin*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2009).

elaboration of the idea of the EC as a guarantor of democracy and of the quest for the EC to find a mechanism for developing a common foreign policy. Part of the concern with anchoring democracy was linked to the fear that the void left by the collapse of the right-wing dictatorships in Portugal, Spain and Greece would be filled by left-leaning parties that would re-orientate these countries away from their firm pro-Western stance and into the arms of the Soviet Union. The European Parliament thus defined the democratic identity vis-à-vis the former dictatorships but also vis-à-vis the alternative political system that dominated Eastern Europe. Affirming the identification between the European Community and Europe was also a way to affirm that only adhering to the political system of Western Europe would fulfil the Mediterranean countries' "Europeanness", whilst a re-orientation towards the Communist camp would deny it once again.

The end of the Cold War order, on the other hand, greatly shaped the debates on German unification and Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Whilst the collapse of the fascist dictatorships of the 1970s had enhanced the cohesiveness of the European Parliament's construction of Europe by allowing it to define the European Community as the one true Europe that the new democracies should aspire to join, the end of the Cold War divide brought about the paradoxical need to re-define the Community's identity vis-à-vis the crumbling of its Eastern European political other. Throughout the 1990s, the European Parliament responded by trying to re-elaborate its image of Europe, articulating the idea of democracy into more detailed themes such as the protection of national minorities, the abolition of the death penalty and human rights, but also re-introducing a more prominent emphasis on cultural and historical aspects into its discourse, in an attempt to construct an identity that would fit a Union embracing Central and Eastern European countries. The following chapter on the link between democracy and human rights in the European political identity and the chapters on cultural and historical themes will return to this in greater depth.

German re-unification and the collapse of the Iron Curtain: struggling to adjust

The unexpected and sudden collapse of the Communist dictatorships in Central and Eastern Europe and the prospect of German re-unification opened up a completely new series of problems for the definition of the Community's identity. On the one hand, the

collapse of the only truly alternative system of organising political life in Europe was a confirmation of the success of the Western European model. The claim of Central and Eastern European countries that they wished to rejoin Europe confirmed the political image of the EC as the symbol of democratic Europe. However, the collapse of the Cold War order created significant problems for the definition of Europe's identity. The international political framework within which the European actors, and hence also the European Parliament, had constructed their discourse suddenly crumbled, together with the strategic structure that had allowed Western Europe to safely develop its Community. The ideological undercurrent of previous enlargement debates, when anchoring a country to the Community had also meant anchoring it to the Western camp in the Cold War, disappeared. In the immediate aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe made it clear that they aspired to join the Community in the future. On the one hand, this could be and was perceived as a victory of the political values represented, and Commission President Jacques Delors lost no time in pointing out that the EC had acted as a catalyst for the changes in the Communist bloc in his address to Parliament in January 1990:

> 'the prosperity and freedom of our Community - free from hegemony, governed by the rule of law, where even the small country has a say - served as a lodestone, a lodestar in terms of ideals and action'[138].

On the other hand, the end of the Cold War division of Europe also presented the EP and the EC with a new situation in which the Community's identity forged in a suddenly outdated geopolitical and ideological context could not remain unchanged. European Parliament debates in the period between 1989 and 1990 show that this institution found it increasingly difficult to define Europe's political identity within this new context and that the focus on democracy receded into the background as new concerns with the stability and security of Europe following the end of the Cold War stalemate dominated the debate. Moreover, the challenges of German re-unification, strategic uncertainty, and the demands of Central and Eastern European countries created a need to finally articulate the details of European identity beyond general notions of 'democracy', explaining what this democratic nature actually entailed and how the EC would now act

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[138] Jacques Delors, President of the Commission, EP Debates, Presentation of the Annual Programme of the Commission, 17 January 1990. Jacques Delors was President of the European Commission from 1985 to 1994. He was a Socialist member of the EP between 1979 and 1981, and was then French Minister of Economics and Finance until 1984.

as a guarantor for democracy throughout the continent. The European Parliament, paradoxically, also found that the success of its construction of a political identity for the Community now created the need to re-introduce cultural and historical elements into its image of Europe.

German re-unification constituted, de facto, an enlargement to a country, the German Democratic Republic, that had lived for fifty years under a completely different political, economic and social system from those of Western European member states. The re-unification was, of course, far beyond the control of the European Parliament. Nevertheless, this did not stop the assembly from debating the question frequently and at length and producing reports on the consequences of the East German accession via unification for the Community as a whole[139]. German Chancellor Kohl also visited the Parliament to report on the German developments as early as December 1989, and went back in April 1990, in a show of respect for the concerns of Germany's European partners but also in recognition of the role of EP as the democratic representative of Europe's citizens and of the impact that re-unification would have on the Community itself.

Parliamentary debates on German re-unification were largely intertwined with discussions of developments in Eastern Europe. While German re-unification would clearly have a more immediate and direct impact on the Community, the reorganisation of the continent loomed large in the minds of EP members. In 1989-1990, the concern with the strategic and political stability of the continent centred on the German question, but discussions on Eastern Europe started at the same time and would shape the debates of the European Parliament for the following decade and a half.

Parliamentarians discussed German re-unification using a wealth of historical references to underline the risk of destabilisation and nationalist resurgence, and showed widespread concern with the need to reform Community institutions and move quickly

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[139] See for instance European Parliament Resolution on the implications of German unification for the European Community (17 July 1990), European Parliament Resolution on the conclusions of the special meeting of the European Council in Dublin on 28 and 29 April 1990 (8 May 1990), European Parliament Resolution on the implications of German unification for the European Community (17 July 1990), EP report on The impact of German unification on revenue and expenditure under the Community budget (May 1990), EP report on The impact of German unification on the European Community (May 1990).

towards a more overtly political European Union as the means to counter this. An intervention by Danish Socialist MEP Jensen exemplifies this type of concern:

> 'we feel it is important that this [unified] Germany should not break away from Europe, but should form part of the same political, economic and security system as the rest of us [...]. Among the neighbouring countries there is a widespread fear of a Greater Germany. One may perhaps question the basis for this fear, for history is not about the repeat itself. Nevertheless, the fear is there and we must take it seriously by putting forward proposals that will make German re-unification possible in a European framework [...]. European integration is our way of defeating nationalism'*[140]*.

In a later sitting, the Belgian MEP and former Prime Minister Tindemans stated:

> 'we [Belgians] accept a reunified Germany but we want it to be part of a federal Europe, and that Germany can't be neutral. The true revolution of the second half of the 20th century will come when European Union rises above past rivalries and conflicts and we are able, within a new structure based on common values, to embark on a period which is totally different from anything our world has known before'[141].

Such interventions recalled 1950s ideas about institutional integration as a way to rein in nationalist sentiment in Europe by linking former enemies such as France and Germany into an institutionalised network of common supranational institutions[142]. This idea re-emerged and many MEPs used it explicitly to recall the original purpose of the

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[140] Kirsten M. Jensen, Socialist, Denmark, EP Debates, Commission Statement on Eastern Europe, 17 January 1990. Jensen was a Danish Socialist MEP from 1989 until 1999, and chair od the delegation for relations with Czechoslovakia until 1992, then with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania until 1994. She was vice-chair of the Socialist group between 1989 and 1993, then group of the Party of European Socialists until 1999.

[141] Leo C. Tindemans, EP Debates, Debate on German Unification, 4 April 1990. The Belgian Leo Tindemans was a member of the EP from 1979 to 1981, and then from 1989 until 1999, as a member of the EPP for the Christelijke Volkspartij. His name is associated with the Tindemans report on European Union of 1975, while he was Prime Minister.

[142] Further interventions along the same lines included Elmar Brok, EPP, Germany: 'the supranational formula of the E.C. must be the model to follow so that no one in Europe is able ever again to dominate the continent (p. 128). Anyone who fears a big, united Germany should help us to anchor it firmly within the United States of Europe, to impart a new impetus for European unification', EP Debates, Debate on German unification, 4 April 1990. Elmar Brok was an MEP for the German CDU from 1980 until 2009 (he was re-elected in 2009), and chaired the Committee on Foreign Affairs from 1999 to 2007; and Adrien Zeller, EPP, France: 'the problem is to reach agreement speedily on all the Community's aims and on one step, an effective European monetary union, the anchoring of the new Germany in Western Europe in matters of security and defence, political union in Europe in a federal framework', Debates of the European Parliament, 4 April 1990, Debate on German unification. Zeller was a French MEP within the EPP group from 1974 until 1976 (for the party Réformateurs et démocrates sociaux) and again from 1989 until 1992 (for the Centre des démocrates sociaux).

integration process: stability and prosperity through institutional cooperation among European states and the pooling of sovereignty[143].

Reports and resolutions adopted by Parliament also show that the primary concern at the time of German re-unification was with issues other than the affirmation of the democratic identity of the Community. The word democracy appeared sporadically, if at all, in the key documents produced by the EP on this topic. In the Resolution on the conclusions of the special meeting of the European Council in Dublin on 28 and 29 April 1990 of 8 May 1990, the word democracy did not even appear in the document – the only mention was completely unrelated to the Community itself and it was in paragraph 13, which indicated in the negotiations between the two German governments the source of democratic legitimation for unification[144]. The May 1990 report on *The impact of German unification on the European Community* also made no mention of 'democracy', and dealt exclusively with the potential economic, financial and social consequences of German unification on the two Germanies and the Community as a whole. Finally, the EP Resolution of 17 July 1990 on *The implications of German unification for the European Community* was also remarkable for the lack of references to the democratic character of the Community. The word democracy appeared twice in the text, but in neither case was this in direct relation with Community: there was a reference to the need not to destabilise emerging democracies in Eastern Europe by altering trade

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[143] 'The European Community today, in terms of its economic and political stability, stands as a pillar of strength and symbol of hope […]. We must also give priority to the foundations of which our own stability as a Community of Twelve is now based. Here I would like to refer to the German question [...] strategic challenge to our Community is to ensure that [unification] happens within the framework of European Community integration itself. [...] This Community bases its strength on the ambitions of its founding generation and on their courage to think big and act accordingly. The wheel of history has now turned a full circle. The continent-wide challenge today is no less than that which we faced 40 years ago in Europe', Pat Cox, Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland, EP Debates, Statement by the Council on the programme of activities of the Irish presidency, 16 January 1990. Pat Cox was an Irish liberal democrat MEP from 1989 until 2004. He was vice-chair of the group of European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party from 1998 until 2002, and was President of the European Parliament from January 2002 until July 2004. The Italian Colombo also said: '[…] the unification of Germany will be a source of stability and security for Germany and for all Eastern and Western European, if it it comes about as part of the process of European unification […] what guarantee could the unification of Germany give unless it shared political responsibility with other Europeans, and what sort of solidarity, other than an ephemeral solidarity, could the other Europeans give, if they were not bound by a political bond to one another?, Emilio Colombo, EPP, Italy, Statements by the Council and the Commission on a unified Germany, 14 February 1990. Colombo was a member of the EP for Italy's Democrazia Cristian from 1976 to 1980 and then again between 1989 and 1992.He was President of the European Parliament from 1977 to July 1979. He also served as Italian Prime Minster between 1979 and 1972, and Foreign minister between 1980 and 1983 and again between 1992 and 1993.
[144] European Parliament, Resolution on the conclusions of the special meeting of the European Council in Dublin on 28 and 29 April 1990 (17 May 1990), in Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC). 18.06.1990, No C 149.

relations with unified Germany, and there was another reference, more significant in terms of the conceptualisation of the Community, to the EP's own role in providing democratic legitimacy for enlargement to the GDR, in the statement that the EP's approval of Commission's package for an integrated GDR should happen before unification[145]. In all these cases, Parliament was producing documents that were mainly preoccupied with stability, preventing the resurgence of a nationalist Germany outside the integration context, and strengthening the Community to make sure German unification happened within a stronger framework of European integration encompassing institutional, political, economic and financial issues. Democracy was no longer the focus of attention – possibly because it was now an engrained element of the idea of Europe, but also because, in the face of such momentous change, the European Parliament, as all other political actors at the time, found itself much more concerned with the strategic consequences of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Democracy continued to appear as an important theme of the debate, but with a change of emphasis towards the need to "democratise" the Community's institutions themselves – by giving a central role to the European Parliament. For instance, in the debate on German unification of 4 April 1990, the French Socialist Cheysson affirmed that German unity could only be considered in tandem with political union, and that this was the only viable response to the changes in Central and Eastern Europe:

> 'We will not debate German unity without considering political union, and everyone is now quite convinced that there is no chance of building Europe after these revolutionary upheaval [...] if there is no political union'[146].

This concern re-emerged throughout the debates of 1990 and showed a change in emphasis towards acting upon the democratic ideal within Community institutions, which would be developed throughout the 1990s reflecting the expansion of the competences of European institutions and the related need to make the European Community and European Union more accountable and representative. The case for Community democratisation would be strengthened in the 1990s by the idea that, in

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[145] European Parliament, Resolution on the implications of German unification for the European Community (17 July 1990), in Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC). 17.09.1990, Nr. C 231.
[146] Claude Cheysson, PES, France, EP Debates, Debate on European Council meeting 28-29 April 1992, 4 April 1990. French socialist Claude Cheysson was a member of the EP from 1989 until 1994, and was previously European Commissioner in charge of Development and Cooperation Policy, Budgets and Financial Control between 1973 and 1977 and then Commissioner responsible for Development from 1977 to 1981. He was also France's Foreign Minister from 1981 until 1984.

asking the future Eastern European member states to democratise their political systems, the European Union should in turn show the readiness to become more democratic itself.

Parliamentary debates and documents on German re-unification show that the European Parliament was struggling to adjust to the new context and to define its concept of European identity more clearly, or at least to define its content in a detailed and specific way. Democracy remained important and at first glance it should and did remain the pivotal element of Europe's political identity. Central and Eastern European countries queued up to join the European Community showed how they now shared the equation between the Community and 'Europe' that had originated, at least in part, within the European Parliament. It was clear that, despite Parliament's participation in attempts to devise a policy of support and cooperation short of accession, enlargement would be the ultimate solution if the Community was to uphold the values it claimed to espouse and stabilise the continent in security terms. Paradoxically, in the 1990s the European Parliament would find itself in the conundrum of having to define the content of the democracy-based Community identity, whilst at the same time using cultural and historical arguments in an attempt to integrate the Eastern European countries into a comprehensive idea of Europe. Moreover, MEPs would also in many cases attempt to place limits upon the extent of this new idea of Europe in order to prioritise some claims to association or membership amongst the many that could potential emerge from the former Soviet Union.

The extent and limits of the European Union's political identity

The European Parliament's enlargement discourse of the 1990s was characterised by the new institutional framework granted to political identity in 1993 as well as by the contemporary surge in the attempt by Europe's parliamentarians to complement political identity with cultural and historical elements. The political identity elaborated through the parliamentary discourse of the first three decades of European integration was formalised in 1993, when the European Council in Copenhagen institutionalised the principles of democracy and respect of human rights as the foremost political criteria to which aspiring member states had to adhere in order to qualify for membership of the European Union:

'To join the EU, a new Member State must meet three criteria:

- political: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- economic: existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union;
- acceptance of the Community *acquis*: ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

For the European Council to decide to open negotiations, the political criterion must be satisfied'.[147]

The Copenhagen criteria framed the European Parliament's enlargement discourse thereafter. The very fact that the democratic element of the EU's political identity had been institutionalised as a formal criterion for accession meant that MEPs were now largely upholding an idea of Europe that was widely accepted. It was no longer a question of introducing and reinforcing the democratic principle as the foundation of the process of European integration as it had been in the 1960s, or of turning the European Union into a guarantor of the democracy of its member states: both developments were now firmly ensconced at the heart of the European self-image.

The European Parliament's reaction to the political situation in Slovakia in the mid-1990s only served to provide further proof that democracy was the primary defining element of the European Union's identity. The Commission had pointed to the institutional structure of the country as well as the Meciar government's approach to political rights and to the rights of national minorities as the primary reasons for its negative opinion. Following the Commission's analysis, the European Parliament's debate on Slovakia showed how far the democratic principle went in defining the EU's identity. Rapporteur Oostlander made it clear in the general enlargement debate of December 1997 that Slovakia's less than democratic government was, in essence, not European:

'I find it regrettable that Slovakia does not yet meet the Copenhagen criteria and the constitutional state, for which a democracy clause was incorporated into the

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[147] The criteria are available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/criteria/index_en.htm.

Treaty of Amsterdam at our request. In the event that Bratislava changes course then Slovakia will belong to the most advanced candidate members. But perhaps the country needs a government which is better at presenting the European character of Slovakia than the present one'[148].

Socialist co-rapporteur Wiersma took a slightly different approach to come, essentially, to the same conclusion on the equation between democracy and Europeaness: whilst he acknowledged that Slovakia was European regardless of its government, he also maintained that the inability to fulfil the democratic criterion and the consequent failure to become a member of the European Union would make the country 'disappear from the European horizon' which in effect limited Europe to the European Union:

'our critique of the government in this country is the main thing. At the same time we do not want to shut the door on Slovakia, and its population. It is and will remain a European country which must not be allowed to disappear over the European horizon. It is Europe's youngest state. This can lead to extra problems. That is why we support the creation of an entry partnership and regard Slovakia's inclusion in the European Conference as a positive counter sign for everyone in that country. That way the responsibility for Slovakia's failure will be placed where it belongs: with the government. It is unacceptable that a government should treat the interests of a country in this way. We hope that the opinion of the European Parliament, but also that of European Commission, will make those responsible in Slovakia think again. Better to change now than to find a closed door later.'[149]

Although a few MEPs disputed the EP's right to discuss Slovakia's government as an infringement upon the country's domestic affairs, the dominant line adopted was that Parliament was indeed to continue to try and influence the Slovaks so that their government would respect democratic standards[150]. Oostlander confirmed this point a year later, when he emphasised the increased importance of the democratic identity of the European Union alongside its economic identity:

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[148] Arie M. Oostlander, EPP, Netherlands, EP Debates, Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Oostlander was a Dutch Christian Democrat MEP from 1989 to 2004.
[149] Jan M. Wiersma, PES, Netherlands, EP Debates, Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Wiersma was a MEP from 1994 to 2009, and was vice-chair of the Socialist group from July 2004 until July 2009.
[150] Report by Arie Oostlander on the Communication from the Commission 'Agenda 2000 - for a stronger and wider Union' (COM(97)2000 - C4-0371/97).

'we are currently engaged in a process that considerably changes the Union's image of itself. Up to now, we have always regarded ourselves as members of a European economic community, but we are increasingly coming to the conclusion, particularly in our contacts with the applicant countries, that we are primarily a confederation of democratic constitutional states. This has also, of course, had an effect on our relations with some of the applicant countries, particularly Slovakia, and we can be grateful that the trouble we took with Slovakia in this respect may well have helped to influence its people to change the way they voted'[151].

Wiersma's words in his role as Rapporteur for Slovakia in December 1998 were again stronger in equating the country's turn towards more democratic practices as perceived by the EU with proof of its "Europeanness":

'Slovakia once more features on the map of Europe, following the September elections in which the coalition government which caused us so many difficulties was kicked out. Slovakia's voters voted for Europe and against isolation'[152].

The Slovak example showed how the democratic identity had become ingrained in the self-identity of the European Union, and how the Copenhagen criteria had institutionalised it to the point that any state wishing to join the Union was now formally required to converge onto the political values established by the EU.

The EP's enlargement discourse of the 1990s was thus characterised by a strong emphasis on political identity as institutionalised by the Copenhagen criteria, and it also included an unprecedented focus on human rights. As will be shown in the next chapter, MEPs had dedicated countless hours of their sessions to human rights throughout the previous decades, producing yearly reports on the state of human rights in the world and building up the European Parliament as a champion of the human rights cause in the global arena. The enlargement discourse provided MEPs with the unique chance to intertwine human rights values with the democratic identity that lay at the heart of their identity discourse. As shown later, talk of democracy was often, if not always, charged with a subtext that implied that only the democratic values, and consequently the structures, of the European Union could adequately guarantee the respect of human rights in future member states. The human rights discourse that developed outside the

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[151] Arie Oostlander, EPP, Netherlands, EP Debates, Pre-accession Strategy (on A4-0397/98 report), 18 November 1998.
[152] Jan M. Wiersma, PES, Netherlands, EP Debates, Applications for Membership, 2 December 1998.

enlargement context was thus also woven into the identity constructed during enlargement debates so that it became inherent to the image of Europe depicted by MEPs. This was evident in the parallel debate on the European Convention and on the creation of a European Charter of Fundamental Rights[153]. The enlargement discourse of the 1990s up to 2004 was the culmination of parliament's reinforcement of this political identity. However, it was also characterised by an unprecedented emphasis on the non-political elements of a common European identity – as analysed in later chapters.

Conclusion: the idea of democracy in the construction of Europe's political identity

European Parliamentary debates on enlargement between 1962 and 1990 show how the European Parliament introduced and elaborated the concept of democracy to create a distinctive political image of the European Community. This political image was finally institutionalised in 1993, when the Council's adoption of the Copenhagen criteria for accession to the European Union showed how the discourse of political identity had seen the convergence of the main European institutions onto the idea of Europe as being primarily based on shared ideals of democracy – and human rights.

The European Parliament first identified the concept of democracy as a primary defining feature of Community membership and hence as a requirement for membership in the early 1960s, in conjunction first with the 'theoretical' exploration of the issue by the Political Affairs Committee and the discussion of the Birkelbach Report in 1962. The idea of democracy as a condition for membership was reinforced later that year when, faced with the prospect of a Spanish application, the Socialist group questioned the Council and the Commission as to whether a country that did not share the fundamental political values of the Six could ever be considered for membership or association as long as it remained a dictatorship. The Commission's and Council's initial failure to respond to the Socialists' challenge was highly indicative of the fact that this was a novel idea and that the nexus between democracy and membership demanded by the European Parliament was not, at the time, immediately shared by the more powerful institutions in the Community. By appealing to the fundamental value of all member

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[153] See chapter two for more on this.

states and playing on the pressure that social actors such as trade unions were applying on Member State governments, the European Parliament was eventually successful in establishing the democratic ideal as a foundation of the European Community.

Once introduced into the discourse as a fundamental value of the Six, the concept of democracy as a defining feature of the EC was consolidated in 1967, when the authoritarian coup in Greece sparked the EP's demand for a freezing of the Association Agreement with Greece on the grounds that parliamentary democracy, (retrospectively) interpreted as the political precondition for that association, was no longer present in Greece and hence the association was no longer valid. The concept of democracy adopted by Parliament was based on the existence of a functioning parliamentary democracy and on the respect of civil and political rights. It was again mainly the socialist group that pushed the idea of democracy as an association criterion within the European Parliament. However, this created a wide consensus across the political spectrum of the institution and it became a primary element of Parliament's definition of the Community's political identity. The fact that at the end of the 1960s the idea of democracy as a foundation of the Community was widely accepted shows that the EP's deliberations were also, to some extent, able to influence the general background of political values against which the Council and the Commission had to measure their policy decisions.

In the 1970s, the European Parliament proceeded to refine it in relation to the Mediterranean enlargement to post-authoritarian Greece, Spain and Portugal. In a shift from democracy as merely a requirement for membership, the European Parliament built on its view of the role of the European Community to create an image of the EC as a guarantor for democracy in Europe, and especially within member countries. The dominant element was the political focus on democracy, and the equation European Community – democracy – Europe, which effectively appropriated the democratic political tradition of Europe for the EC, rejecting more authoritarian traditions and affirming the "superiority" of the Community system over both the right-wing and Communist alternatives. In this image of Europe, only states that joined the EC became fully European. This was linked to the specific nature of the membership applications of the mid-1970s: Greece, Spain and Portugal were all emerging from right-wing dictatorships, and they had been until then positioned within the Western camp in the

Cold War divide. Concerns about their internal stability were closely linked with concerns about their international orientation and the European Parliament, by linking membership with democracy, linked it with being 'truly European'. The European Community became synonymous with democracy and synonymous with Europe.

The crumbling of the Cold War framework a few years after the Iberian enlargement undermined the ideological structure within which Parliamentary discourse had developed until then. The end of the Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and these countries' demand to 'rejoin Europe' via Community membership, coupled with German re-unification, presented the EP with a new challenge: re-defining the Community's identity by identifying new themes to include these new countries and, at the same time, determining new boundaries for "Europe". The institutionalisation of the political identity that the EP had built into its discourse for so long came, paradoxically, at a time when MEPs perceived an increased need to complement it with stronger cultural and historical elements in order to justify the enlargement to states that had until then been part of Europe's political other throughout the existence of the European Community. The debates of the 1990s, despite the reinforcement of the political identity represented by the institutionalisation of the democratic criterion and by the Slovakian case, and the institutionalisation of human rights, also showed the limitations of this political identity and the consequent attempt by MEPs to weave new threads into their construction of a collective European identity for the new European Union.

Chapter Two: Human rights and the Limits of Europe's political identity

The European Parliament's construction of European political identity was based on the close association between the principle of democracy, traced in chapter one, and the principle of human rights. The democratic identity that became firmly ensconced at the heart of the European Parliament's image of Europe within the first three decades of the EC's existence was defined by a rhetoric in which democracy and human rights appeared hand in hand in constant mutual reinforcement. Inherently linked to the democratic principle expounded by MEPs was the shared understanding that democracy was needed in order to provide the necessary political and legal structures for the protection of what the European Union would proclaim its 'fundamental values' in 2001. The 1990s and early 2000s, when the European Union finally expanded to most of the European continent beyond the old separation lines of the Cold War, witnessed the seeming triumph of the European political identity as it had originally been articulated by the EP in the 1960s: formalised enlargement criteria cemented a common commitment to democracy and human rights and parliamentary debates reiterated the inherent meaning of these values for the process of European integration. Human rights and democracy were tied together at the heart of the political identity discourse and became key political criteria for EU accession.

Any observer of the European Parliament's identity discourse would have expected the post-Cold War enlargement debates to provide the climax of the political identity centred on democracy and human rights. The promotion and protection of human rights did appear to be an urgent task in the face of the democratisation of Eastern European countries whose previous regimes had blatantly disregarded them, and the bloody eruption of the Yugoslav wars brought back the spectre of mass human rights abuse on European soil. The EP was, after all, traditionally very involved in the promotion and protection of human rights both within and without the European Community – increasing debates on human rights issues in the 1970s were stepped up in the 1980s, when in 1983 the EP started to approve an annual report and resolution on the status of

human rights in the word[154]. A close look at the EP's enlargement debates from 1997 to 2004 however leaves such a legitimate expectation largely unfulfilled. It was in fact in post-Cold War times, at the same time as enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe marked the extension of what had thus far been a Western European political identity to most of the continent, and the doctrine of human rights had been institutionalised within the EU, that MEPs started to venture more firmly beyond political identity in order to construct the image of a unified Europe that would include Central and Eastern European members.

Human rights and the institutionalised political identity

The development of the European Parliament's discourse on human rights in relation to European identity followed the same trajectory as its discourse on democracy: as the two concepts went hand in hand, the EP's establishment of the democratic identity in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s also determined the adoption of 'respect for human rights' as its complement. Tracing this development thus shows, at first sight, that, in the EP's discursive construction of a European political identity, democracy and human rights constituted two sides of the same coin – to the extent that MEPs talked about democracy to signify a system based on the respect and protection of the human rights values that the Community subscribed to. However, more so than the democratic principle and unlike the cultural and historical elements of which parliamentary discourse also made use to define European identity[155], the principle of human rights was embedded in a wider European and international institutional and legal framework that lent it a unique quality. A large part of the EP's discourse on human rights was thus inevitably linked with the development of a legal system of human rights protection that supported parliamentary discourse in a practical and substantial way that did not underpin other elements of the emerging European identity. The existence of this framework was an additional asset to the EP's identity discourse as it provided the human rights element with a legal basis of legitimisation. It also, however, presented MEPs with a set of constraints as to the way in which human rights principles and

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[154] Karen E. Smith, The European Parliament and human rights: norm entrepreneur or ineffective talking shop?, Dossier El Parlamento Europeo en la Política Exterior no 11/2004.
[155] See chapters 3 and 4 for an exploration of the EP's historical narrative and cultural discourse, respectively.

practice developed in the Community and thus the way in which they could be used within a discursive construction of European identity.

The European human rights regime was steadily established in the decades following the end of the Second World War[156]. The European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) of 1950 provided a Europe-specific legal framework for the protection of human rights, leading to the creation of the European Court of Human Rights in 1953. The ECHR was signed under the aegis of the Council of Europe and required that all countries that were members of the Council of Europe participate – thus also including countries that would not become members of the Community or the Union until much later, if at all. The European framework for the protection of human rights was thus not something that could be claimed to be exclusive to the Community, as in fact its origins predated the creation of the EEC in 1957 and involved countries outside the membership of the Community. Community member states adhered to the ECHR as individual countries, and it was not until 1979 that the European Commission suggested that the Community enter the agreement in its own right[157]. European concerns with the protection of human rights and the establishment of a related legal framework to ensure the respect of human rights principles were thus not in any way solely the prerogative of the European Community. They belonged instead to a wider reality of institutional and legal frameworks of which the European Community and its member states were but a small part.

Nonetheless, the foundation of the EEC in 1957 was shortly followed by the increased involvement of Community institutions in the development and reinforcement of the European human rights system. The European Court of Justice, for instance, began reinforcing human rights principles in the late 1960s, when it started to 'affirm that respect for fundamental human rights was part of the legal heritage of the Community'[158], thus raising the issue of the protection of human rights at Community level as well as at the level of the member states. Several studies of the European Court of Justice (ECJ)'s

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[156] See Andrew Moravcsik, 'The origins of human rights regimes: democratic delegation in post-war Europe', *International Organization*, 2000, Vol. 54:2, pp. 217-252.

[157] 'The Community should adhere as soon as possible to this Convention and to the protective mechanisms which it contains', Commission memorandum to EP and Council, 2 May 1979. Only the Lisbon Treaty of October 2007 established the legal basis for the EU's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights. Joint talks would start in July 2010. See Krüger, Hans Christian, 'Reflections Concerning Accession of the European Communities to the European Convention on Human Rights', *Penn State International Law Review*, 2002-2003, Vol. 21.1.

[158] Philip Alston ed., *The EU and Human Rights*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

approach to human rights show how it tended to align itself with the European Court of Human Rights in matters of interpretation and how it played a significant role in 'proclaiming the existence of fundamental rights enshrined within the EC's legal order as general principles of law and identified human rights in the EC as inspired by the constitutional tradition common to the member states and by related international treaties'[159].

The other Community institutions were also involved to a greater or a lesser extent in reinforcing the European human rights regime throughout the 1960s and 1970s and up to the signature of the Single European Act in 1986, which finally established the formal place of human rights principles within the Community by 'declaring the fundamental rights included in the European Convention on Human Rights and in the constitutions of the Community's member states to be the EC's basis for promoting democracy'[160]. The European Commission, for instance, had pushed for human rights to be recognised within the Community for years, suggesting as mentioned above in May 1979 that the European Community subscribe to the European Convention on Human Rights[161], and introducing human rights provisions in its development cooperation agreements and its economic and cooperation agreements with non-member states[162]. The Declaration on European Identity in 1973 showed that the foreign ministers of the Nine also felt the need to include human rights among the values that constituted the 'fundamental elements of the European identity'[163]. The three institutions' concern with human rights converged into a joint declaration in which they committed themselves to respect fundamental rights 'in pursuance of the aims of the European Communities' in April 1977[164]. After their formal inclusion in the treaties by way of the Single European Act, human rights principles and their protection and promotion became a prominent feature of the European Union throughout the 1990s. The Maastricht Treaty declared in 1992 that the European Union would respect 'fundamental rights as guaranteed by the ECHR'[165] and the Amsterdam Treaty gave the ECJ the power to scrutinise Community institutions to ensure respect for fundamental rights in 1997. After the Cologne

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[159] Bojkov V., 'National Identity, political interest and human rights in Europe: the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union', *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 32:2, pp. 323-353.
[160] Bojkov op. cit.
[161] Bojkov, op. cit.
[162] Charles Leben, 'Is there a European Approach to Human Rights?', in Alston, op. cit. p. 89.
[163] Declaration on European Identity, in Bulletin of the European Communities. December 1973, No 12, pp. 118-122.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Bojkov, op. cit.

European Council of 1999 called for a European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights to be drafted by a Convention on the Future of Europe, agreement was reached and the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission signed and proclaimed the Charter 7 December 2000 in Nice[166]. The Community thus steadily developed its own legal framework for the protection of human rights alongside the existing pan-European framework provided by the ECHR.

The European Parliament was a key player in the development of a Community approach to human rights and its contribution to the institutionalisation of a European human rights regime has also been largely documented[167]. The EP passed a resolution in November 1977 to request that the Community become a party to the ECHR, a request reiterated two years later in a similar resolution[168]. In October 1982, the Gonella Report called on the Commission to submit a formal proposal for accession to the Convention[169]. Alston, among others, points out the EP's involvement through the publication of annual reports on human rights, the wealth of debates and resolutions on human rights issues, parliament's withholding its assent to external agreements on human rights grounds, its involvement in election monitoring and sending parliamentary delegations to scrutinise human rights issues across the world, as well as the activities of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, and the Subcommittee on Human Rights of the Committee on Foreign Affairs[170]. All Community institutions thus contributed over the decades since the EC's creation to build a Community framework for the protection of human rights.

The general European human rights framework provided by the ECHR was thus increasingly flanked by the emergence of a Community legal framework that

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[166] For the EP's official website: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm.
[167] The Journal of European Public Policy dedicated a special issue to the 'constitutionalisation of the European Union', emphasising in particular both a process of parlamentarisation in which the EP progressively acquired more power and competences and a process of institutionalisation of human rights: *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2006, Vol. 13:8; and Lenka Rovná and Wolfgang Wessels eds., *EU Constitutionalisation: from the Convention to the Constitutional Treaty 2002-2005. Anatomy, Analysis, Assessment*, (Prague: EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, 2006); see also Stefan Goetze and Berthold Rittberger, 'A Matter of habit? The sociological foundations of empowering the European Parliament', *Comparative European Politics*, 2010, Vol. 8:1 pp. 37-54; Berthold Rittberger, 'The creation and empowerment of the European Parliament', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2003, Vol. 41: 2, pp. 203-225.
[168] Resolution OJC 299, 16 November 1977; Resolution, 22 April 1979.
[169] Gonella Report 29 October 1982. See also Tana C. Stever, 'Protecting human rights in the European Union: an argument for treaty reform', *Fordham International Law Journal*, 1996, Vol. 20:3.
[170] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/committeesList.do?language=EN and Alston, op. Cit.

institutionalised human rights within the European Community and later the European Union. Political scientists have referred to this process as part, together with parliamentarisation, of a process of 'constitutionalisation' of the European Union, whereby 'European legal integration has led to […] a polity that has evolved from a set of legal arrangements binding upon sovereign states into a vertically integrated legal regime conferring judicially enforceable rights and obligations on all legal persons and entities, public and private, within the sphere of application of EC law'[171]. Many competing theories explaining this development have been put forward, ranging across the spectrum from rationalist to constructivist analyses of how and why human rights were institutionalised in the European Community and then the European Union[172]. Regardless of any preferred theoretical explanation, however, this process was significant for the European Parliament's identity discourse because, when using human rights principles to underpin a common idea of Europe, MEPs were speaking within the boundaries set by the development of both a general European human rights framework and a specific Community human rights framework.

The institutionalisation of human rights within the EU was coupled with the dedication that the European Parliament showed to human rights themes throughout its existence. The document produced in 1994 by the Commission Directorate General for Research upon request from the EP itself was proof of the importance that the EP attached to its own human rights activities, exemplified by the foreword by then EP President Egon Klepsch:

> 'vigilance and perseverance in action are particularly characteristic of the European Parliament's approach to respect for human rights. Convinced that *'freedom in not a fixed routine which is ruled by ancient prescriptions and can be rehearsed, but must be continually improvised'* (Jean Guéhenano) the Assembly representing the Union of European nations monitors and supervises respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms'[173].

The paper itself started with the statement that 'the European Parliament has a special interest in respect for human rights and the protection of individual freedoms. […] the

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[171] Berthold Rittberger and Frank Schimmefennig, 'Explaining the Constitutionalisation of the EU', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2006, Vol. 13:8.
[172] See the introduction to the special issue of the *Journal of European Public Policy,* 2006, Vol. 13:8.
[173] 'The European Parliament and Human Rights', Directorate General for Research and the Huamn Rights Unit, Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications for the European Communities, 1994 – Foreword by Egon Klepsch.

European Parliament embodies the link between the fledging European democratic structure and human rights'[174]. The EP thus presented itself to the world as an institution that made the promotion and protection of human rights the heart of its work, and also as the embodiment of the European Community's democratic identity. Parliamentary activity in the field of human rights had been particularly high ever since the 1970s, when the European Parliament started to hold regular debates on human rights both within the Community and in the world at large, especially in the wake of the Helsinki Final Act. The establishment of the annual Sakharov Prize (Prize for Freedom of Thought) in 1988 was for instance described as 'an important means of asserting the European Parliament's commitment to the defence of human rights throughout the world'. The centrality of human rights to the self-image of the European Parliament was therefore an established fact even outside the specificity of enlargement debates. This self-image of the EP as Europe's champion of human rights, coupled with the institutionalisation of human rights highlighted above and the formalisation of the political identity in 1993, would lead to a natural expectation for a consolidation of the political identity in the EP's enlargement discourse after 1993. This was partially the case: human rights principles were reinforced in both discourse and practice as the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) formally started on their path towards accession to the Union. In particular, Parliament's focus on human rights manifested itself in the great emphasis that the EP placed upon monitoring progress in the political field among the candidate states of Central and Eastern Europe throughout the 1990s and up to the final accession of the ten new member states in 2004. These years were characterised by the reinforcement of the political identity that the EP's discourse had successfully established during the previous three decades. However, the enlargement discourse of the late 1990s also showed the limits of the political identity constructed thus far, and highlighted the perceived need to expand the identity discourse to cultural and historical elements that would include the new candidate countries in a common idea of Europe beyond the Western European construction of the previous decades.

The political identity discourse traced in chapter one showed the centrality of democracy to the European identity elaborated by the European Parliament. Closely intertwined to the democratic theme was the focus on human rights, which MEPs identified as the dual essence of Europe's political identity from the very beginning of the European

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[174] Ibid.

Parliament's identity construction in the early 1960s. Established as a fundamental and intransitive characteristic of the European political character early on, parliamentary attention to human rights never waned, and the promotion and protection of human rights surged instead to become a central tenet of Parliament's ideological construction of European politics and policy, both within and without the borders of the Community and later the Union. It also became a pivotal element in enlargement debates, starting with the initial 'theoretical' affirmation of the Community's political identity surrounding the 1962 Birkelbach Report, through to the southern enlargements of the 1970s and up to its final institutionalisation with the Copenhagen criteria of 1993. Throughout the 1990s and mid-2000s, compliance with European human rights standards was identified as a necessary step towards accession by Central and Eastern European countries. By 2004, Europe's role as the champion of human rights was an established fact of enlargement and identity discourse. Human rights and democracy would often appear as part of the same phrase in both the parliamentarians' discussions in plenary assembly and in the reports or resolutions adopted by the EP. At other times, MEPs would merely refer to 'democracy', meaning by extension 'human rights'. It also provided an important link with the construction of European identity along cultural and historical as well as political lines: MEPs were constant in their definition of human rights as Europe's cultural heritage – a feature that is explored at length in chapter four, which is dedicated to the EP's cultural identity discourse, or lack thereof. A quick re-examination of the political identity discourse examined in chapter one shows how in the MEPs' construction of identity irrevocably tied together democracy and human rights, and also how the two discourses were in fact so enmeshed that it is in fact quite impossible to discern a separate human rights discourse: MEPs often used democracy to signify human rights, and vice-versa.

The development of the European Parliament's definition of the political identity of the Community as traced in chapter one placed democracy and human rights at the heart of the EC's self-image: the linkage was clearly present in Birkelbach's words from the January 1962 debate (see quote on page twenty-nine linking 'pratiques gouvernementals vraiment démocratiques' with 'le respect des droits fondamentaux et des libertés fondamentales' as the key pre-requisites for membership), and the events of 1967, when the EP successfully called for a freezing of the Community's association with Greece following this country's descent into dictatorship, reinforced the determination of the

Strasbourg assembly to firmly set the connection between the EC and the respect of human rights and democracy in the minds of those European governments who sought to associate themselves with the Community:

> 'nous ne pourrions jamais accepter une communauté d'intérêts et de conceptions avec des gouvernements qui, avec des méthodes inhumaines, asserviraient la personne humaine à leurs objectifs politiques. Dans notre Communauté, peu importe que nous nous appelions chrétiens-démocrates, socialistes, libéraux ou gaullistes, la pierre de touche de la validité de nos conceptions politiques, c'est le respect de l'intégrité de la personne humaine'[175].

The EP's success in pushing the EC to freeze its association with Greece in response to the Colonels' take-over of the country and their disregard for human rights was the first substantial step in Parliament's establishment of human rights as a core value of the Community's political identity alongside democracy and paved the way for the reinforcement of this principle throughout the enlargement talks of the 1970s and 1980s. It also clearly showed that the respect of human rights was considered to only be possible within a certain type of democratic parliamentary system akin to those of the member states of the European Community[176]. Democracy and human rights were thus already intertwined as two complementary sets of values that the EP was determined to place at the heart of its dealings with potential future member states.

The political identity of the Community thus seemed to be irrevocably linked to a conception of democracy based on human rights principles: during debates on human rights issues in the 1970s, this idea had already been used to justify the European Parliament's focus on human rights issues even when these did not actually fall within the competences of this institution:

> 'these matters [of human rights] from which the whole concept of a European Community, and a parliamentary democracy, derives; […] tell the whole world that our Community accepts this responsibility to defend, to enhance and to extend the rights of man'[177].

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[175] Wilhelmus Schuijt, Christian Democrat, Netherlands, Débats, Question orale n 9/67 avec debat: Association CEE – Greece, 28 November 1967. Schujit, who at the time for President of the Committee for association with Greece, is referring in particular to the existence of political prisoners and the use of torture in Greece.

[176] Alston also points out this connection, in op. cit.

[177] David Russell Johnston, Liberal Democrat, UK, EP Debates, Human Rights, 11 May 1977. An MEP from 1973 until 1979, Russell Johnston was Chairman of the Scottish Liberal Party (1970-1974) and then its Leader (1974-1988), and was President of the Council of Europe from 1999 until 2002.

The political identity discourse in enlargement talks favoured either the pairing of democracy and human rights, or the use of 'democracy' as an all-encompassing concept that included within its meaning also the respect and protection of human rights. MEPs talked about democracy as the one and only truly 'European' political system and used the term in a way that implied that respect of human rights was subsumed within the expectations of what a Western European democratic system would provide. Human rights could only be guaranteed by democracy, and democracy was in turn to be fostered and protected through membership of the European Community. Even when talking specifically about human rights, MEPs would therefore often rather talk about 'democracy': this was used to justify both the EP's competence over human rights issues beyond the Community's borders, as the EP, in so far as it was the 'symbol of European democracy', was to focus its attention on ' the vital struggle for civil rights':

> 'As the only directly elected supranational parliamentary body in the world, we are better qualified than any other institution to campaign for democracy and respect for civil rights regardless of national frontiers, and therefore we enjoy a moral and political prestige'[178].

Dutch ARC MEP Jaak Vandemeulebroucke expressed a similar sentiment:

> 'Our democracies have a duty to proclaim everywhere the foundations of our society: respect for human rights and freedom'[179].

The fall of the dictatorial regimes in Greece, Spain and Portugal in the mid-1970s provided the EP with the opportunity to further develop its idea of the EC's twin political values when discussing why, and how, these countries should be allowed to become members of the Community and to bring the ideas formed in their general debates on human rights into the enlargement discourse. The need for enlarging the Community to Greece was justified in terms of identity discourse by the linkage between Europeanness and democracy, and the consequent association between Greece's aspiration to overcome its years of dictatorship by establishing a viable democratic system within the parameters of Western Europe. Parliamentary discourse had already

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[178] Jas Gawronski, Liberal and Democratic group, Italy, EP Debates, Human Rights 1984, 22 October 1985. Italian of Polish descent, Jas Gawroski was an MEP from 1981 until 1994, as a member of the Italian Republican Party (Partito repubblicano italiano) within the Liberal and Democratic group, and from 1999 until 2009 with Forza Italia within the EPP.

[179] Jaak H.-A.Vandemeulebroucke, ARC, Belgium, EP Debates, Human Rights 1984, 22 October 1985. Vandemeulebroucke was an MEP from 1981 until 1998, elected for the Belgian Volksunie and member of the Rainbow Group, which he chaired between 1984 and 1994, and then of the group of the European Radical Alliance, of which he was treasurer from 1994 until 1998.

twinned the respect of human rights with democracy: the two were constantly paired in parliamentary rhetoric throughout the previous decade and a half. It followed logically that the European Parliament's advocacy of accepting the Greek membership application as a means of anchoring its democracy to the Community's institutions was by extension to also guarantee the respect and protection of human rights in the newest member state.

Subsequent debates on EC enlargement to Spain and Portugal presented the same argument in support of the new Iberian democracies: their new commitment to a democratic system that would ensure the respect of human rights could only be successfully underpinned by their full participation in the political and institutional framework provided by European integration. MEPs pointed out that it was in fact the Community's very role to accept applications from European states that were both democratic and respected human rights:

> 'the Community's duty is to welcome all European States which apply the principles of a pluralist democracy and observe human rights and civil liberties and support the ideal of a strong and united Europe'[180].

Just as it had been a few years prior with the Greek enlargement, the equation between membership of the European Community and the respect of democracy and human rights provided the rhetorical basis for the political justification of adding two new and economically poor members to the European Community.

The equation between a democratic system and membership of the Community was seemly validated only four years after the accession of the Iberian states, when the countries of Central and Eastern Europe responded to the fall of the Iron Curtain with the desire to gain full membership of the EC as part of their path to democracy. As shown in chapter one, the European Parliament's initial response to the events of 1989-90 was cautious, especially in relation to the fast-paced unification of the two Germanies and its potential ramifications for the future of the Community and of Europe's geo-political stability[181]. MEPs, despite their qualms about the nature and fast pace of the changes taking place in post-Communist Europe and the de facto enlargement to East

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[180] Resolution on the enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal, 17 November 1982, Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC). 20.12.1982, No C 334.
[181] see for instance the debate of 16 January 1990 on the Statement by the Council on the programme of activities of the Irish presidency and the debate of 17 January 1990 following the Commission's Statement on Eastern Europe for initial reactions showing a gamut of sentiments running from outright mistrust to cautious optimism, then 14 February 1990 on the Statements by the Council and the Commission on a unified Germany and the debate on German Reunification proper on 4 April 1990.

Germany, were also keen to reiterate the Community's desire to promote democracy and human rights within and without its borders. They pointed out that the desire of the ex-Warsaw Pact countries to gain EC membership did indeed demonstrate that the Community's strength as a catalyst for the emerging democracies lay precisely in its political principles:

> 'the E. C. today [is] a community which is varied, strong and attractive because it is united, peace-loving and unreservedly based on the principles of human rights'[182].

The idea that the EC's democratic and human rights credentials made it into a pole of attraction for the peoples of European countries that were subjected to non-democratic systems during in the Cold War confrontation was a constant undercurrent in MEPs' enlargement and democracy discourse. Italian Christian Democrat Mario Scelba had for instance already openly referred to this idea in a human rights debate in 1977, stating that human rights were the values on which the Community was based, and claiming that this focus was what made the EC attractive for people whose countries' systems were not based on the same kind of parliamentary democracy:

> 'By taking positive measures to defend human, civil, political and social rights, the European Community will not only be remaining true to its inspiration but, by displaying a human face, it will also become the focal point for all those independent spirits who are looking for a valid alternative to the regimes oppressing them'[183].

This of course was also a clear reference to the wider geopolitical context within which the Community was growing and was part of the Cold War logic whereby enlargement to the newly democratic states of Greece, Spain and Portugal was being advocated on the grounds that by anchoring themselves to the Community and thus to the Community's ideas of democracy and human rights, the new member states would be better able to resist the temptation to turn to the opposite camp in the Cold War confrontation. The image of the EC as a pole of attraction was of course only reinforced with the fall of the Iron Curtain: when it was finally time to discuss potential enlargement to the new states

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[182] Henry Chabert, EPP, France, EP Debates, Debate on German Unification, 4 April 1990. Chabert was an MEP from July 1989 until July 1994, first as a member of the group of the European Democratic Alliance (until 1991) and then as a member of the EPP.

[183] Mario Scelba, Christian Democratic Group, Italy, EP Debates, Human Rights, 11 May 1977. Scelba had been Italian prime minister between 1954 and 1955. He was President of the EP from 1969 until 1971, and an MEP from 1960 until 1979.

of Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s, it was an accepted reality for all MEPs to talk about the European Union as attractive precisely because of what it claimed as its foundational values:

> 'For us, and therefore for Slovenia as a future Member State, European Union means human rights'[184].

Applying political identity to the enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe

The enlargement debates revolving around the membership applications of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1990s provided a primary example of the complexity of using democracy and human rights as the key defining features of the European Union's identity. On the one hand, the European Parliament's enhanced role in the enlargement process and its ability to oversee the progress made by the candidate countries towards compliance with the Copenhagen criteria was combined with the EP's traditional high profile stance on human rights issues to give MEPs the ability to call candidate countries to task on any perceived problems that remained with their implementation and compliance with required human rights standards. Its close scrutiny of the Commission's progress reports on each prospective member, as well as the direct contact with the candidate states through the inter-parliamentary delegations formed with representatives of the EP and the parliaments of the candidate states, and related parliamentary discussions were thus keenly focused on human rights issues and reinforced the image of the EU as a polity primarily based on a democratic political identity[185].

The existence of a legal framework of human rights meant that, unlike the largely vague ideals of democracy spun into the threads of the identity discourse, the definition of what the human rights values of the European Union exactly entailed was easier to pinpoint. In terms of the European Parliament's enlargement discourse, this largely translated into the monitoring of the treatment of national and other minorities and the abolition of

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[184] Reinhard Rack, EPP, Austria, EP Debates, Europe Agreement with Slovenia, 23 October 1996. Rack was an MEP from January 1995 until July 2009, elected within the lists of the Österreichische Volkspartei. He was vice-char of the EPP group from November 1996 until July 1999.
[185] The European Parliament established Joint Parliamentary Committees with all candidate states as part of the original Association agreements 'or similar special relationships'. The Committees were charged with the task of overseeing the implementation of the association agreements and considering all aspects of a country's application for membership. The archives of the committees for the 2004 enlargement are available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/euro/before_may_2004_en.htm.

practices such as capital punishment. The latter was a long-standing concern of the European Parliament that turned into a strong European foreign policy goal in the late 1990s, after a declaration on fundamental rights and the abolition of the death penalty by EU member states and a June 1997 EP resolution on the abolition of the death penalty together with the suggestion for the EU to pursue a universal moratorium via the UN[186]. It also meant that arguing for a democratic system as a fundamental prerequisite of membership was easier, as the two concepts were irrevocably linked in the way that MEPs discussed the political characteristics of the European Union. The Slovak example of the mid-1990s cited in chapter one showed precisely how closely tied democracy and human rights were in the EP's political image of Europe, and how this connection helped the European Parliament in pressing for democratic practices in the candidate countries. Parliament's criticism of the Slovak government could be argued on the basis that the less than democratic attitude of the Meciar government prevented the respect of human rights values, as did Dutch Liberal Democrat Gijs De Vries:

> 'Slovakia has been told that the basic rules on which the European Union is founded are democracy and respect for civil rights and freedoms, and I hope that it will see this as an incentive to strengthen its own democracy'[187],

and Dutch Socialist Jan Wiersma:

> '[the present govt of Slovakia] does not fulfil one of the most important conditions of EU membership, namely the establishment of a stable political democracy in which human rights and democracy are respected'[188].

The Slovak case was striking in that Parliament's reinforcement of the political criteria for accession agreed in 1993 served the dual purpose of having a practical effect on a candidate country by influencing Slovak public opinion against what was a breach of established accession criteria, and of also reinforcing the identity discourse by

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[186] Ian Manners, 'Normative power Europe', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40:2, pp. 235-258, esp. pp. 246-247; see also Marika Lerch and Guido Schwellnus, 'Normative by nature? The role of coherence in justifying the EU's external human rights policy', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2000, Vol. 13:2.,pp. 304-321; the chapter by Evi Girling on 'European Identity and the Mission against the Death Penalty in the United States is also an interesting piece on 'the cultural uses of [Europe's] ostentacious abolitionism'. In Austin Sarat and Christian Boulanger eds., *The cultural lives of capital punishment: comparative perspectives*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

[187] Gijs De Vries, Liberal Democrat group, Netherlands, EP Debates, Agenda 2000, 16 July 1997. De Vries was a member of the EP from 1984 until 1998, elected with the Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (Dutch People's Party for Freedom and Democracy). He chaired the group of the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party between 1994 and 1998, when he became Dutch Deputy Interior Minister until 2002. He was then chosen as the EU's anti-terrorism coordinator from 2004 until 2007.

[188] Jan Wiersma, PES, Netherlands, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000 (Co-Rapporteur, Slovakia), 3 December 1997.

emphasising how non-fulfilment of the EU's membership criteria would not simply impede Slovakia's accession to the Union, but would also at the same time constitute a rejection of the contemporary meaning of 'Europeanness' as embodied by the Union[189]. However, the existence of a legal framework for human rights that acted as a perceived guarantee that political commitment to the common political values would be sufficient to affirm the common political identity in new member states, also meant that no further elaboration of this identity was necessary in the EP's enlargement debates.

Thus, whilst MEPs from different party groups declared their agreement on the basic principle that human rights must be respected for a country to be a member of the EU, they also did not engage in a wider discussion on the meaning of fundamental rights in the Union's identity whilst debating enlargement – possibly because they were so clearly part of the acquis that they did not really constitute an issue within the context of enlargement. Moreover, it has also been pointed out that the EP's focus on human rights has not always found a reciprocal interest in the European Commission or the Council, and that the EP in turn has not always engaged in a fruitful debate on human rights, especially when discussing the 'scope and status of social rights'[190]. If the discourse on human rights remained perhaps less insightful or less elaborate than may be expected, this may in part be explained by the fact that other elements of the identity discourse were gaining prominence in the way MEPs discussed enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe: cultural and historical considerations featured prominently in the way in which MEPs encouraged or justified enlargement to these countries, and were increasingly used as ways to reinforce the political identity beyond the institutional framework of the Copenhagen criteria and the legal system that upheld human rights.

Enlargement and European political identity in post-Cold War Europe

The circumstances of the fifth enlargement come perhaps a long way towards explaining the apparent contradictions in the MEPs' treatment of human rights issues in the candidate countries. In the first place, the institutionalisation of the democratic and human rights principles by the Council in 1993 meant that the political identity that

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[189] See Paul Kubicek, *Turkish accession to the EU in comparative perspective*, St Antony's College Oxford, South Easter European Studies Programme, European Studies Centre, Occasional Paper No. 1/04, May 2004 – for a comparison of the Slovak, Romanian and Turkish cases regarding complying with the EU's political criteria.
[190] Philip Alston , op. Cit.

parliamentary discourse had steadily built up over time enjoyed unprecedented recognition at all institutional levels by the time accession by Central and Eastern European countries was actually being discussed. Parliamentary debates could thus only continue to reinforce a reality that was already both institutionalised and legalised throughout the Community framework. The fact that a legal framework existed provided a solid platform on which MEPs could figuratively stand as a basis of strong legitimisation for their identity discourse. In addition to the EC's laws, however, MEPs could also argue their case on the back of a legal framework for the protection of human rights that actually went beyond the boundaries, and hence the competences, of the Community and thus of the European Parliament. The existence of a wider European and international legal human rights framework to which the newly free Central and Eastern European countries could, and did, adhere regardless of their attaining EU membership also meant that the primary identity-based rationalisation of previous enlargements to ex-dictatorships, namely the Mediterranean enlargements of 1981 and 1986, no longer necessarily constituted the same compelling argument that it had provided on previous occasions. In fact, the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe all became members of the Council of Europe and signatories of the ECHR between 1991 (Poland) and 1995 (Latvia), thus in all cases before they even lodged their applications for membership of the European Union[191]. The European Union was thus not the only European framework based on the safeguarding of human rights to which the Central and Eastern European Countries decided to adhere after regaining their freedom from Communist rule, nor was it the first. Membership of the EU could thus be presented as a reinforcement of an existing commitment, but the Cold War element of 'we vs. you' that had underscored the 'anchoring democracy' argument during the southern enlargements lost all of its original potency when the CEECs were so eager to shed their previous political identity and adopt what had until then been the prerogative of Western Europe.

Whilst the concept of anchoring new member states to the EU's way of doing things remained in the way that MEPs justified the fifth enlargement, there emerged from their

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[191] The dates of accession to the Council of Europe are as follows: Poland 26 November 1993, Czech Republic 30 June 1993, Slovenia 14 May 1993, Hungary 6 November 1990, Slovak Republic 30 June 1993, Lithuania 14 May 1993, Estonia 14 May 1993, Latvia 10 February 1995, Bulgaria 7 May 1992, Romania 7 October 1992; Cyprus had been a member since 24 May 1961 and Malta since 29 April 1965. All of them applied for EU membership between 1990 (Cyprus and Malta) and 1996 (the Czech Republic). Dates of applications for accession to the EU:
http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enlargement/2004_and_2007_enlargement/e50017_en.htm

discussions a growing feeling that what had been sufficient in the case of the Mediterranean enlargements would no longer be enough in dealing with the accession of ten Central and Eastern European countries. The security concerns that had existed during the Cold War and that had reinforced the claim that anchoring the southern European states to democracy through Community membership would also steer them away from left-wing radicalism and thus prevent potential rapprochements with the Communist bloc morphed into a similar concern, which was however expanded to the stability and security of the whole of the European Continent: enlargement was certainly still seen as a means of stabilising the new democracies, especially after the experience of the war in Yugoslavia. Swedish Liberal Democrat Hadar Cars emphasised how shared democratic values would bind together old and new member states to the point that enlargement to the candidate countries could not be denied:

> '[enlargement is] best way to strengthen freedom, security, peace and economic development of Europe […]. All European democracies who share the Union's values and objectives, and who wish and are able to accept the Union's laws, have the right to become members. [...] The doors are now being opened to a healed and whole Europe, and Europe founded on democracy, mutual respect and trust'[192].

This was acknowledged by MEPs across the party political spectrum, who were united in claiming that the European Union shared a responsibility for the stability of the continent and that enlargement was the key tie that would bind Europe together with the same set of values. Members of the European People's Party emphasised how

> 'the challenge for the Union now is to offer membership to these countries which belong to the European circle. [...] The Union can contribute to stability in wider Europe. The peaceful revolution in the east has its roots in the peace which it was the EU's original task to create. This is our historic mission'[193].

Despite misgivings about the details of enlarging to so many new and economically less developed countries, the concerns expressed by the EPP were shared by their colleagues in the Confederal Group of the European United Left:

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[192] Hadar Cars, Liberal Democrat group, Sweden, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Cars (Folkpartiet liberalern) was an MEP from 1995 until 1999.
[193] Staffan Burenstam Linder, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000,3 December 1997. Burenstam Linder (Moderata samlingspartiet, Moderate party) was a member of the EP between 1995 and 2000. He was vice-chair of the EPP group from November 1996 until his death in July 1999. He had been Sweden's Minster for Trade in the late 1970s.

> 'the truly historic opportunity of enlargement must be defended for the sake of
> stability and security'[194];

whilst Liberal Democrats such as future Representative for Terrorism Gijs De Vries underlined how enlargement was to be part of the Union's heightened responsibility for security in Europe:

> 'the most important foreign political responsibility of the European Union in the
> coming decades will be contributing to the security and stability of this
> continent'[195].

The interpretation of enlargement as a means of ensuring continental stability through a shared political identity was echoed by the Greens:

> 'we now have a unique opportunity to create an entire Europe of peace, of
> democracy and freedom'[196];

and reinforced by their Socialist colleagues:

> 'If we handle this process properly the European Union will become a genuinely
> wide European Union, not simply a Western European Union. It will become a
> zone of stability and prosperity which will improve the quality of life of all its
> citizens and it will become a major force for good in the world beyond its
> borders'[197].

Looming large in the background of these considerations and of parliamentary debates on the future of Central and Eastern Europe in the mid- and late 1990s was the example of Yugoslavia's breakdown into violence. The dismay at the repeated explosions of civil violence in the Balkans and the European Union's utter inability to prevent or allay the conflict contributed to the desire to avoid similar occurrences in other parts of former Communist Europe by tying them to the European Union, as expressed by Swedish EPP representative Staffan Burenstam Linder:

> 'the effect of all these countries striving to qualify for EU membership has
> already been very advantageous for the Member States. Their efforts to step up

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[194] André Brie, Confederal Group of the European United Left, Germany, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000. Brie, of the German Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus, was an MEP from 1999 until 2009.

[195] Gijs De Vries, Liberal Democrat group, Netherlands EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.

[196] Elisabeth Schroedter, Verts, Germany, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997, Schroedter was a member of the EP from 1994 until 2009 (re-elected in 2009).

[197] Gary Titley, PES, UK, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Titley was a British Labour member of the EP from 1989 until 2009. He was vice-chair of the group of the Party of European Socialists from May 2003 until July 2004.

democracy and improve human rights has fostered peace in Europe. We should

be aware that it is not just in the former Yugoslavia that a complex pattern of

ethnic rivalry has sparked off serious conflict'[198];

and by his Austrian colleague in the same group Ursula Stenzel:

'there should be no doubt about the will of the European Union to extend its

zone of peace and stability to central Europe and Poland'[199].

This resulted in many MEPs showing their appreciation for the commitment of the

governments of the candidate countries to European stability. It was often on the basis

of such considerations about the potential rise of old and new nationalist antagonisms

that MEPs argued the consequent obligation for the existing member states to

reciprocate such concerns through enlargement:

'In these countries it is evident that priority has to be given to political affairs and

to security, and only then can progress in other fields be tackled. [...] So in these

dangerous times enlargement is one of our best guarantees of peace, if not to say

the only guarantee of peace which in the long run will give these peoples what

they want'[200].

Security concerns were therefore far from just a memory of the Cold War: parliamentary

discourse showed that enlargement was very much viewed in terms of wider European

stability in the late 1990s as it had been in the late 1970s. In fact, the idea of membership

in a shared political and institutional structure as a means of preventing potentially

destructive conflicts from flaring up played a large part in the political motivations put

forward for the completion of the fifth enlargement. The link between ensuring that

Central and Eastern European countries converged onto the EU's democratic values and

maintaining peace and stability was best articulated by Hans-Gert Pöttering, who would

later be elected as President of the EP to preside over the first two years of parliamentary

activities in the newly enlarged Europe:

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[198] Staffan Burenstam Linder, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, Applications for membership, 2 December 1998.
[199] Ursula Stenzel, EPP, Austria, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000. Stenzel was an MEP from 1996 until 2006, and chaired both the EU-Poland (1997-2002) and the EU-Czech Republic (2002-2004 Joint Parliamentary Committees.
[200] Otto von Habsburg, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Applications for membership, 14 April 1999.

'the crux of the matter here is to anchor the European family in the principled

society bequeathed by European civilisation, the expression of which is the

European Union. This will promote stability and safety, democracy and peace'[201].

The European Union's political identity – which by extension was 'Europe's' only valid political identity following the collapse of alternative systems of right-wing or left-wing dictatorships in previous decades – thus became an inherent guarantee of wider European security. In fact, the European Union was confirmed as the embodiment of 'Europe', a theme that had already emerged in the 1970s when the EP first built up the Community's political democratic identity vis-à-vis those of the Greek and Iberian dictatorships and the Communist East. The circle initiated in Cold War times, when parliamentary discourse first started to equate Community with democracy and, rather implicitly, democracy with peace and a superior (Western) European way of guaranteeing human rights, came to a close when this political identity was extended to the Community's former Eastern European other. The fact that the association between EU, democracy and stability underlying the EP's debates on the Eastern Enlargement was reflected in very similar rhetoric used in the same debates by representatives of respectively the Commission and the Council seemingly confirmed Europe's triumphant political identity.

Commission representative Verheugen, who was the Commissioner responsible for enlargement, in the same vein as his colleagues in the European Parliament, repeatedly emphasised how the respect of democratic and human rights values formed the foundation of European peace and stability, as is exemplified by his comments to MEPs during the debate of October 2000 on the *progress of the twelve candidate countries*:

'it is no coincidence; on the contrary, it is virtually a cast-iron rule that we only

have peace and stability in Europe where these values [democracy, the rule of

law, human rights and the protection of minorities] have been put into practice

and where Europe is already unified or is in the process of unifying. Peace and

stability in Europe are the basis for a happy future for all the people of Europe.

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[201] Hans-Gert Pöttering, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, European Council of 3 and 4 June/ German Presidency, 21 July 1999. Pöttering was a German Christian Democrat MEP from 1979 until 2009 (re-elected in 2009). He chaired the EPP group from 1999 until 2007 (after being vice-chair between 1994 and 1999), and would then be President of the EP until 2009.

And if they do not apply throughout Europe, then they are in jeopardy
throughout Europe'[202]

Belgian Council representative Neyts-Uytebroeck would use similar concepts in her
explanation of why enlargement was necessary in the debate of the following year on the
same topic:

'Why enlargement? […]This project brings us, European leaders and elected
Members, face to face with our responsibilities. We must henceforth make every
effort to ensure a stable, secure and prosperous future for our fellow citizens in
an enlarged Europe. Enlargement was, and still is, imperative in order to prevent
destabilisation in the candidate countries, as well as the expressions of such
destabilisation. […] The unfortunate events in the Balkans in the last ten years
have shown that a region cannot be stabilised without introducing and
consolidating the enlargement or association process. […] Moreover, the positive
results of future enlargement are already tangible. In Central and Eastern Europe,
stable governments have been established which have adopted the common
values, or the values which they have in common with us, such as democracy, the
rule of law, respect for human rights and the protection of minorities'[203].

Both Council and Commission thus flanked MEPs in their focus on common political
values as the fundamental ties binding Europe together into a Union guaranteeing
stability and peace.

However, in spite of all the ways in which the political identity discourse was woven into
the enlargement discourse during the 1990s with the focus on democracy and human
rights, and its link to security, the most striking element of parliamentary debates on the
fifth enlargement was how human rights, which could be expected to dominate the
discourse, were in fact not its most striking feature, and political identity was threaded in

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[202] Günter Verheugen, Commission, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate
countries, 3 October 2000. Verheugen, a German politician and member of the SPD since 1982, was the
Commissioner responsible for Enlargement in the Prodi Commission (1999-2004), and would then be in
charge of Enterprise and Industry in the first Barroso Commission. His website while Commissioner for
Enlargement is still available:
http://ec.europa.eu/archives/commission_1999_2004/verheugen/index_en.htm.
[203] Annemie Neyts-Uytebroeck, Council, Belgium, EP Debates, Progress of the 12 candidate countries in
2000, 4 September 2001. Neyts-Uytebroeck was State Secretary for Foreign Affairs between 2000 and 2001
and then Minister, deputy for Foreign Affairs in charge of European Affairs in 2001-2003. She was also a
member of the EP within the group of the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform party from 1994 until
1999, and again from 2004 until 2009 (re-elected in 2009) within the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and
Democrats for Europe. She was the leader of the Flemish Liberal Party from 1985 to 1989, and President
of the Liberal International 1999-2005.

with an increasingly dominant historical narrative that came to exemplify the European Parliament's construction of the European identity vis-à-vis the accession of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. As will be shown in chapter three, MEPs constructed a historical narrative that attempted to provide a sense of common, shared history for existing and prospective member states, arguing for Eastern enlargement on the basis of a moral obligation derived by history.

Conclusion

The European Parliament's political identity discourse was embedded in both Parliament's own wider human rights discourse and in the practical policy and institutional developments building up the human rights legal framework. This reinforced the claim that the European identity was firmly defined by the commitment to uphold and protect human rights, as the progressive institutionalisation of human rights within the Community could not but confirm. Paradoxically, however, the EP's and the Community's involvement in the general human rights discourse and practice, and their active promotion outside the Community's boundaries as a vital part of the Community's external affairs would also complicate the identity discourse. This was largely because the European Parliament's construction of a political identity for the Community tended to both appropriate the term 'Europe' for the Community's own version of Europe, thus arrogating the role of primary representative of European identity for itself, and that it did so primarily by using human rights principles that were in fact not the sole prerogative of the Community but of the whole of Europe and indeed, by their very definition, of mankind in general. Whilst a recognition of the validity of human rights principles beyond the Community's borders could provide legitimisation, the sheer universality inherent in the concept of human rights made it more difficult to claim such values had a clear enough 'European' quality to make them the primary basis of European identity. The end of the Cold War brought into relief this fact by effectively taking away the very useful political other against which the democratic and human rights identity had been upheld thus far. The CEECs' eagerness to adopt the EC's political values both strengthened and strained the European political identity.

Membership of the European Union could effectively provide a 'community of justice' that would ensure the respect of democratic values and human rights: legal and

institutional reinforcement of the discourse MEPs had initiated in the 1960s made this an accepted reality within the European Union and among the candidate states, who agreed to comply with the political criteria for accession. At the same time, however, what should have been, and to some extent was, the triumph of the EU's political identity, was also the beginning of a renewed search for a stronger identity going beyond the political. Principles such as democracy and human rights had an inherent universal quality to them that in a way made them less than adequate criteria of 'Europeanness' and thus eligibility than they had been in the Cold War period, when the sheer opposition between the political systems of East and West reinforced the EC's emphasis on its own principles democracy and human rights. After the end of the Cold War, MEPs became conscious of the need for historical and cultural elements that would allow them to distinguish potential candidates among a wave of countries that were now striving to abide by universal political principles that could be attained by any country irrespective of its historical, cultural or geographical closeness.

Ultimately, in spite of the institutionalisation of the democracy and human rights, political values could not remain the sole focus of a European identity discourse that aspired to legitimise the inclusion of such a large number of countries whose adherence to the political values in question was an extremely recent phenomenon, especially at a time of turmoil and uncertainty for both the deepening of EU integration and the geo-political reorganisation of the European continent. The denouement of parliamentary enlargement discourse over the CEECs saw MEPs look beyond political identity towards the construction of a historical narrative that could help justify the accession of Western Europe's erstwhile political other to the European Union.

Chapter Three: A historical narrative for Europe: themes and myths in European public discourse

The European Parliament's enlargement debates in the post-Cold War period gave prominence to new themes alongside that of political identity. The debates on the fifth enlargement, in particular, were characterised by the presence of a strong historical narrative that flanked the existing political features of the European identity constructed by MEPs in the previous three decades. In articulating this historical narrative and inserting it alongside political values in their legitimisation of the accession of ten new countries between 1997 and 2004, MEPs attempted to go beyond a purely political identity in their construction of 'Europe': this chapter explores the contents of this narrative, its use in parliamentary discourse, and its limits within the wider enlargement debate.

It is widely accepted in social identity theory that history, or rather shared historical narratives, constitute a fundamental element in the construction and re-construction of collective identities. The past is often mobilised in order to justify or legitimise the present, and it is interpreted and understood in function of contemporary concerns and needs. This interpretation and re-interpretation of the past constructs 'myths' that give meaning to the present and provide a shared framework for political debate.[204]

Myths can be defined as 'a special kind of story about the past that symbolises the values of a group and legitimates their claims' – as for instance does Peter Burke in his work on European memory[205]. Such myths are largely produced by political and cultural elites and are based on the construction of historical narratives that are then used as a frame of reference for political debate. They provide a source of political legitimacy (not necessarily a legitimacy based on historical continuity, but also, potentially, a legitimacy founded on a 'sharp break with the past due to traumatic experiences or policy failures'[206]). In this sense historical events (or a specific selection of historical events) are

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[204] Bo Strath, introduction to Bo Strath ed., *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community: historical patterns in Europe and beyond*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2000); see also Jürgen Straub ed., *Narration, identity, and historical consciousness*, (New York: Berghan Books, 2005).

[205] Peter Burke, 'Foundation Myths and Collective Identities in Early Modern Europe', in Bo Strath, *Europe and the Other and Europe as Other*, (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2001).

[206] Jan-Werner Mueller, ed., *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe – Studies in the Presence of the Past*,

interpreted and constructed into a historical narrative that shapes collective memory. History, memory and identity are thus inexorably interconnected to the extent that the meaning constructed through a historical narrative provides political legitimacy and cohesion to a community[207]. Historians have a long tradition of looking at the role of myths and collective memory in the foundations of national identities. For instance, Georges Mosse analysed the creation of the 'Myth of the War Experience' in post-WW1 Europe, and Germany in particular, as the attribution of meaning to a hitherto meaningless experience by taking it through a process of memorialisation, institutionalisation, and even trivialisation that transforms a recent historical experience into a key element of political culture[208]. Henry Rousso's analysis of the way the French have remembered, or removed, their Vichy past, provides a further example of how history and memory have played out in a selective form of remembering a troubling past through different phases of French public life[209]. The role of history in the construction of collective identities is therefore well documented, and it may not come as much of a surprise that a historical narrative of Europe did in fact also emerge in the European Parliament's identity discourse on enlargement.

European Parliament discourse developed a strong historical narrative that provided legitimisation for the process of European integration as undertaken by the European Union: this discourse emerged most clearly during the debates on the fifth enlargement, after having been present but largely understated and never fully articulated in previous enlargement debates. The striking difference between the second and third enlargements and the fifth one was, of course, the end of the Cold War, which greatly affected the way in which MEPs elaborated their historical narrative in the second half of the 1990s and early 2000s. If during the Cold War, 'history' was mainly used as the spectre of past conflict in order to justify cooperation among former enemies as a new political course, in what Ole Waever referred to as Europe's past being Europe's 'other' in the construction of European identity[210], after the end of the Cold War, the order of the previous fifty years was called into question and the need to revisit the EC's role in this

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 26.

[207] Bo Strath, introduction to *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community,* (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2000).

[208] Georges Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers – Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[209] Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).

[210] See Pen den Boer, Peter Bugge and Ole Waever, The *history of the idea of Europe,* (Milton Keynes: Open University/London: Routledge, 1995).

history arose. This development manifested itself in many ways throughout Europe. The end of the Cold War opened a Pandora's Box of contested histories between different nationalities in prospective member states, from the Baltic states to the former Czechoslovakia to the bloody conflict in ex-Yugoslavia, while at the same time redefining the terms within which the existing members had so far been able to define the EC's place in history. The European Parliament's discourse on the fifth enlargement reflected this reality by articulating not a single historical theme, but a variety of historical references that, reprised by different actors at different times, formed a complex and heterogeneous narrative. Determining whether these themes can be seen to constitute a 'historical narrative of Europe', much along the lines of historical narratives that are at the basis of the construction of collective identities[211], will be the key task of this chapter.

Opening the gates: the end of the Cold War and the challenge to redefine "Europe"

The sudden collapse of the Iron Curtain brought back to the surface continent-wide historical debates that had thus far remained dormant within the discursive frame provided by the Cold War. 1989 represented a watershed in the political, military and security, economic, and ideological organisation of the continent, unravelling the geopolitical order that had shaped Europe in the post-war era and ushering in new period of uncertainty, as well as opportunity, for the countries of both Western and Eastern Europe. Debates in the European Parliament reflected the climate of confusion that characterised the months immediately following the Eastern European revolutions of 1989-1991, and the soul searching that defined much of the 1990s up to the turn of the Twenty-first century.

The European Community was to a large extent a product of the post-war order: it may have claimed to represent "European values" that reached beyond the Iron Curtain in time as well as space, but its exclusively Western European membership and its political and economic orientation placed it firmly and conclusively within the West. The U.S. had encouraged the integration process since its inception and the EC's political self-image was firmly opposed to the Eastern European dictatorial system – as exemplified by the emphasis on democracy and human rights in the development of the Community's

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[211] See also Cristina Blanco Sío-López ed., Richie Europa Newsletter, Special Issue: 'European Memories and the construction of a collective European memory', No. 8, 2010.

political identity. When Eastern European peoples tore down their communist regimes and the new democratic governments started clamouring for their nations' right to 'return to Europe' and queuing up for EC membership, the EC had to suddenly come to terms with German re-unification, the 'moral obligation' to open its doors to its 'lost' neighbours, and the need to maintain economic and political stability within its own borders but also, hopefully, across the continent[212]. The very concept of 'return to Europe' used by Central and Eastern European intellectuals from the late 1980s, claiming that their countries' rightful historical place was among the countries of Western Europe rather than with the non-European East, challenged the division into Western and Eastern Europe in the name of a prior shared history[213]. Gorbachev's Common European Home rhetoric, although not directly quoted by MEPs, may also have facilitated the emergence of a strong discourse based on the idea of a 'united Europe'. Moreover, the wars in Yugoslavia acted as a powerful reminder of pre-Cold War European history of national and ethnic conflict and re-awakened fears of Europe falling back into its historical pattern of internecine confrontation and war[214]. The re-emergence of such concerns with historical legacies of the pre-Cold War era would become an important feature in the EP's discourse on the Eastern enlargement.

The membership requests from the countries of the former Eastern bloc flowed into the existing debate on the rationale and goals of the European integration process. After the revival of the Single European Act in 1986 and the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the Union had already entered yet another phase of introspection and self-questioning, brought on by the economic challenges of rising unemployment and coping with globalisation, combined with the strategic and geopolitical challenges of the end of the Soviet Union and Europe's role in a changing global arena, and previous considerations for further integration and institutional reform within the EC itself would manifestly need to be adjusted to the new circumstances. The 1990s were therefore to a large extent a decade of soul-searching for the newly named European Union, which faced dealing with new

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[212] Ulrich Sedelmeier also highlights the idea of a moral obligation towards Eastern Europe: Ulrich Sedelmeier *Constructing the path to Eastern enlargement: the uneven policy impact of EU identity*, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2005). See also J. G. A Pocock, 'Deconstructing Europe', in Peter Gowan and Peter Anderson eds., *The Question of Europe*, (London/New York: Verso, 1997).

[213] Milan Kundera, 'The Tragedy of Central Europe', *The New York Review of Books*, April 26, 1984; Timothy Garton Ash, 'Does Central Europe Exist?', *New York Review of Books*, October 9, 1986.

[214] See for instance Ulpu Iivari, PES, Finland, EP Debates, Europe Agreement with Slovenia, 23 October 1996. Iivari (Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue/Finlands Socialdemokratiska Parti) was an MEP from 1995 to 1996 and again between 1999 and 2004. She was vice-chair of the delegation to the EU-Estonia Joint Parliamentary Committee from 2002 to 2004.

institutional developments and further plans for reform via the Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice Treaties while at the same time finding itself called to respond to complex political developments, with the violent break-down of Yugoslavia and the consequent European debacle as perhaps the most symbolic example of the new challenges facing the EU. The preparation from 1997 to 2004 of the most extensive enlargement ever experienced by the Union was an important catalyst for a new reflection on the deeper meaning of European integration, which accompanied the Union well into the first decade of the new millennium until the accession of ten Eastern and Southern European countries in 2004 and its coda three years later with the entry of Bulgaria and Romania[215].

The EP debated what would become the fifth enlargement round at length, not just in in discussing the yearly Commission's Progress Reports on each candidate country starting in 1998, but also in preparatory discussions before and after European Council meetings[216] or 'State of the European Union' debates[217]. This enlargement would become a defining issue for the European Union, and MEPs explored both the broader political aspects of accepting so many countries that were new to democracy and market economics, and the minute details of accession, from fisheries to agricultural subsidies to the candidates' overall readiness to implement the *acquis communautaire*. The EP also pushed for negotiations to start with all the candidate countries at once and for the date of accession to be set for 2004 and was keen to highlight how the Council and Commission later adopted its suggestions, as German EPP representative and future EP President Hans-Gert Pöttering proudly pointed out in April 2003, during the debate on the ratification of the accession treaty:

> 'it was our House that demanded a timetable for the negotiations – which the Commission and the Nice Summit accepted – so that they could be completed in time, enabling the countries capable of doing so, and their people, to take part in the 2004 elections to the European Parliament. It was our House that did that! That is what we should be telling people, and it is something of which we can be proud, for it helps to make democracy real in Europe and to give the people of the ten countries the opportunity to send freely-elected representatives to the European Parliament. Let us rejoice in that!'.[218]

[215] Dieter Fuchs and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, 'Eastward enlargement of the European Union and the identity of Europe', *West European Politics*, 2002, Vol. 25:4, pp. 19-54.
[216] See for instance debate of 27 May 1998, Preparation of European Council Meeting in Cardiff.
[217] See for instance debate on the 'State of the European Union' on 18 September 1996.
[218] Hans-Gert Pöttering, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.

With the acceleration of the enlargement process after the beginning of accession negotiations, the EP's related activities also increased: debates were more frequent, meetings with the representatives of the parliaments of the candidate countries intensified, and the EP's presidents visited the candidate countries increasingly often.

Discussions of the fifth enlargement also intensified because at the turn of the millennium it was becoming more necessary than ever before to explain enlargement to EU voters: disillusion with European integration, increasing talk of the EU's democratic deficit and widespread preoccupation with the citizens' disaffection with the Union all highlighted in the mind of their European representatives the need to strengthen the legitimacy of the integration process in general and of enlargement in particular in the eyes of the European public[219]. There was among MEPs a perceived need to justify the intake of ten new Eastern European countries. A renewed recourse to history and Europe's past was a means for providing just such legitimisation.

Throughout the fifth enlargement debates, the 'return to Europe' slogan resonated with European parliamentarians and fuelled their reflections on the idea of Europe, intended as the project of European integration but also more broadly as a community of peoples that shared the European geographical, political and cultural space beyond the borders of the EU. Enlargement provided new stimuli for this debate: perhaps more than any other enlargement round before it, the enlargement round of 2004 provided the context for a prolonged and open-ended discussion on the origins, progress, and ultimate aims of the process of European integration embodied by the EU.

The historical themes that emerge more frequently in European parliamentary discourse form a series of interconnected myths: the first is the myth of the 'founding fathers' and of European integration as reconciliation, which is elaborated in opposition to a broader, negative foundation myth of Europe's heritage of conflict and bloodshed prior to the first integration initiative of 1950. These myths are very closely intertwined and constitute the basis for legitimisation of the European Union as a whole – and have been present in parliamentary and Community discourse ever since the launch of the Schuman

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[219] See for instance the debate of 3 October 2000 especially contributions by Pat Cox and Miguélez Ramos (PES) on the need to engage with the public on enlargement. MEPs also discussed polls on public attitudes to enlargement in September 2001.

Plan in 1950[220]. Furthermore, in order to justify widening this process to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, MEPs emphasised a new set of historical references in their enlargement debates: the idea of a common European heritage and an undivided Europe before the Cold War trumping the 'artificial' separation superimposed by the post-Second World War confrontation between East and West.

The myth of European reconciliation and its 'founding fathers'

European Parliament discourse after the end of the Cold War was characterised by ubiquitous references to the history of European integration and to the 'founding fathers' of the European Union. Besides the official commemorations such as the anniversaries of the Schuman declaration, MEPs often referred to the 'founding fathers' when they wanted to stress the positive moral, idealistic and yet pragmatic and innovative origins of the process of European integration. This was a recurrent need when debating the fifth enlargement. For instance, during the December 1997 debate on Agenda 2000 and enlargement, similar references were made by speakers on behalf of all the main party groups: Dutch Liberal Democrat Gijs De Vries highlighted that

> 'the historical responsibility for our generation is to do for the whole of Europe
> as the generation [of] Adenauer, Beyen, Monnet and Spaak did for France and
> Germany: to build one communal house, a joint framework within which power
> is subordinate to the law'[221].

He was echoed from the right of the political spectrum, perhaps surprisingly given his membership of the Italian Alleanza Nazionale, by Gastone Parigi:

> 'the coming enlargement is the direct and logical consequence of that
> revolutionary act which was the foundation of the construction of Europe – I
> refer to the Schuman Plan – revolutionary because it has weakened the
> nationalist culture which had been laid down over the centuries, east and west of
> the Rhine, giving rise to wars and tragedies with monotonous regularity'[222]

and to the left by the German socialist, and former European Parliament President, Klaus Hänsch:

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[220] See Claudio G. Anta, ed., *Les pères de l'Europe: sept portraits*, (Brussels: P.I.E. – Peter Lang, 2007); Mark Gilbert, 'Narrating the Process: Questioning the Progressive Story of European Integration', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2008, Vol. 46:3, pp. 641-662.

[221] Gijs De Vries, Liberal Democrat, Netherlands, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.

[222] Gastone Parigi, Non Attached (Alleanza Nazionale), Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Parigi was a non-attached member of the EP from 1994 until 1999.

'a final point which I shall phrase in very general terms: the generation of politicians of the 1950's had the courage and the foresight to remove the thousand-year-old antagonism between France and Germany in a European Community. Our generation of politicians will have to develop the courage and foresight to give the whole continent, for the first time in a thousand years, an organization of peace and cooperation'[223].

Irrespective of the different political affiliations, policy prescriptions and nationalities of the three speakers, they all referred to the founding fathers of the European Union in a remarkably similar way: they credited them with creating a community for European nations on the Western side of the Iron Curtain and for having extraordinary vision in finding a creative and peaceful solution to conflictual relations among former enemies. The lexicon associated with the myth of the founding fathers always revolved around 'vision', 'courage', 'foresight', 'inspiration'[224]. These references to a 'generation of leaders' constituted part of a positive myth that was accepted by MEPs from mainstream political groups across the political spectrum[225]. Moreover, Presidents speaking on behalf of the EP to outside audiences used this myth whenever they needed to emphasise the 'rightness' of the European project, its implied 'moral superiority' over what came before and its unique place in history. The President of the EP, Irish Liberal Democrat Pat Cox, for instance spoke repeatedly of the

'generation of European leaders […] who had the courage of their European convictions'[226],

of the 'vision' and 'indispensable' leadership of Monnet, Schuman, Adenauer, de Gasperi and Spaak[227]. The general thrust of his references to the founding fathers is well condensed in this extract from the speech he delivered on 5 February 2004 in front of the Cercle Gaulois on *2004: towards a Union of 25, towards a European Constitution, towards the European elections*:

'in Western Europe, with the Second World War barely over, certain individuals had the courage to think big. People like Konrad Adenuaer, Robert Schuman,

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[223] Klaus Hänsch, PES, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.
[224] Maria Martens, EPP, Netherlands, EP Debates, European Council in Vienna – Austrian Presidency, 16 December 1998. Maria Martens was a member of the EP from 1999 until 2009.
[225] There were of course exceptions to this consensus, mainly on the far-right and far-left of the political spectrum, who are against integration per se. See for instance Bruno Gollnisch, Non-attached (Front National), France, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.
[226] Address by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland) on the occasion of the solemn opening of the Convention on the Future of Europe, Brussels, 28 February 2002. See note 143 for more on Pat Cox.
[227] Address by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland) to the IBEC Conference on 'Our Future in Europe - Nice and Beyond', Dublin, 20 September 2002.

Jean Monnet, Paul-Henri Spaak, Alcide de Gasperi and others, who took the time, who had the authority, the will and the political and personal determination to think in the long term and to think big: not to lose themselves in mean-minded trivia, but to pull themselves out of the ashes and ruins of war, and see hope where there was despair, see an opportunity in the midst of economic collapse, and see the European project in terms of the ideal of reconciliation: a project which offered possibilities which would make those men a generation different from any other generation that Europe had ever known'[228].

His predecessors in the role of European Parliament President also used similar sets of references. José María Gil-Robles Gil-Delgado quoted directly from Jean Monnet's memoirs in his speech on *the Europe we are building* in 1998 to legitimise the 'new philosophy' of cooperation above national interest, which he saw as the underpinning of the integration process[229]. Nicole Fontaine also referred to the founding fathers as examples of extraordinary leadership:

'what the founding fathers of the European Economic Community achieved with six states in the wake of the defeat of Nazi Socialism, we are now prompted by contemporary developments in the world to achieve in our turn, and for the same reasons, for the whole of the continent of Europe'[230].

Klaus Hänsch used very similar words during the enlargement debate of 9 April 2003, which also closely resembled his rhetoric from the 1997 debate on Enlargement – Agenda 2000:

'I am cautious about drawing historical comparisons, but it is appropriate to do so today. A generation of politicians in the Fifties – Konrad Adenauer, Robert Schuman, Jean Monnet, Alcide De Gasperi, Paul-Henri Spaak and others – had the courage and the vision to establish a European Community that would overcome a thousand years of antagonism between Germany and France and begin the unification of Europe in the West. We, the present political generation,

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[228] Speech by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland) to the members of the Cercle Gaulois on "2004: towards a Union of 25, towards a European Constitution, towards the European elections", Brussels, 5 February 2004.
[229] José María Gil-Robles Gil-Delgado, 'The Europe we are building', Madrid, 1998. Spanish MEP José María Gil-Robles Gil-Delgado, vice-chair of the EPP in 1990-1992, was an MEP from July 1989 until July 2004, and was President of the European Parliament from 1997 to 1999.
[230] Nicole Fontaine, Speech at the '12th meeting of the President of the EP with the Presidents of the Parliaments of the Countries Participating in the Enlargement Process', Brussels, 5 December 2001. Nicole Fontaine was President of the EP from 1999 to 2002. She had been serving as a French MEP in the EPP since June 1984, and was re-elected in 2004.

have the opportunity, for the first time in a thousand years, to bring the

continent together by peaceful means and on a voluntary basis into a European

Union, a union of freedom, peace and prosperity. If we do not seize this

opportunity, we will be failing in our historic mission'[231].

The allusion implied in Hänsch's words remains fairly vague: it is in fact unclear whether the thousand years he refers to pertain to the Holy Roman Empire, to the Roman Empire, or perhaps to Charlemagne – a figure often considered a precursor of attempts to unify Europe – or indeed whether the 'thousand years' were just a rhetorical flourish. The quote however is exemplary of the way in which MEPs used historical references when discussing 'Europe' during the fifth enlargement: the abundant allusions to an unspecified historical time when Europe was allegedly unified served as one of the legitimising arguments for the 're-unification' of the continent, lacking any chronological specificity but creating a sense of historical inevitability that permeated much of the fifth enlargement discourse.

The myth of the founding fathers greatly emphasised the idealistic aspect of the integration process. It was often embedded in an interconnected and yet wider theme of European integration as 'reconciliation' and 'peace process'. European integration was described as a 'communal house'[232] based on principles of 'solidarity'[233] and 'cooperation'[234] among former enemies. MEPs deemed it 'the only concrete idea for achieving peace and prosperity'[235] in Europe based on 'the brilliant, but historically unusual, idea of bringing people together at the negotiating table instead of through trench warfare'[236]. This was an image of Europe as the historical embodiment of new values: 'peace as our rule and a shared destiny as the solution'[237]. During the highly symbolic 'extraordinary debate on enlargement' with the representatives of the candidate countries held by the European Parliament on 19 November 2002, when MPs from the

[231] Klaus Hänsch, PES, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.
[232] Gijs De Vries, Liberal Democrat group, Netherlands, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.
[233] Klaus Hänsch, 'Rekindling the European Flame', Speech given at Leyden University, 21 February 1996.
[234] Staffan Burenstam Linder, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000.
[235] Otto von Habsburg, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Applications for membership, 14 April 1999.
[236] Cecilia Malmström, Liberal Democrat, EP Debates, Sweden, EP Debates, Progress report on enlargement, 28 November 2002. Malmström was a Swedish MEP within the group of the ALDE (Folkpartiet liberalern) from 1999 until 2006, when she was appointed Swedish EU minister. In 2010, she would become European Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs.
[237] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003. He was also referring to the war in Iraq and the divisions among European states over participating. Barón Crespo was a Spanish Socialist MEP from January 1986 until July 2009. He was vice-president of the EP between January 1987 and July 1989, then its President between July 1989 and January 1992, vice-chair chair of the group of the PES from January 1986 until October 1987, then chair from 1999 until July 2004.

ten candidate countries due to accede in 2004 participated in a session of the EP and sat with their future colleagues in their respective political groups, the idea of reconciliation was extended to the Eastern and Southern European candidate states: the debate itself was meant as a symbol of how reconciliation finally embraced Eastern Europe, marking 'a truly continental-scale act of reconciliation and healing'[238].

A striking aspect of this myth is that no American statesmen are enumerated among Europe's founding fathers. This selection excludes from Europe's narrative those whose influence was arguably the strongest external factor in encouraging the progress of European integration from ideas into actual policy. American support throughout the first decades of the European experiment however did not translate into the inclusion of American names into the European pantheon depicted by the EP: this selection may divert from historical accuracy, but it had a clear rationale in terms of the creation of a founding historical narrative for Europe. It would make little sense for politicians trying to legitimise the continued existence of a polity on moral-historical grounds to attribute a prominent, even decisive role to external actors in the original creation of this polity. Contemporary political necessity did not fit well with historical accuracy: the creation of the myth of the founding fathers required the exclusion of the non-European protagonists of the historical process that had brought about integration, in favour of a simpler, more cohesive and above all exclusively European myth.

Another interesting absence is that of the inter-war advocates of integration, such as Aristide Briand or Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, or even Winston Churchill, whose Zurich speech may well have earned the Englishman earned a place in the Union's pantheon – although admittedly the inclusion of the latter would have clashed with the image of Britain as the country that initially rejected integration only to belatedly, and perhaps never whole-heartedly, change its mind. The English war-time Prime Minister was quoted once, however, in a 1996 'State of the European Union' debate, by the then EP President Klaus Hänsch[239]. The exclusion of these figures serves to highlight once more the choices, conscious or not, behind the construction of the foundation myth of the European Union: only the figures directly related to the initiation of the integration process as it is known today were mentioned as inspirational figures for modern-day

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[238] Pat Cox, Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland, EP Debates, Introductory Remarks - Extraordinary Enlargement Debate, Brussels, 19 November 2002.
[239] Klaus Hänsch, PES, Germany, EP Debates, State of the European Union, 18 September 1996.

politicians, disregarding other ideas about Europe that were not followed through or did not directly instigate the establishment of the existing institutional system. Whilst historians of Europe and European integration have expended a great deal of time and effort on the kind of ideas about Europe, unity and cooperation that floated around in the inter-war years and even during the Second World War and its immediate aftermath, MEPs gave them little to no consideration. The history that they chose to speak about was very much the history of the Europe embodied by the European Union, with its Treaties and its institutions, as in debating the enlargement of the European Union to new member states, MEPs were concerned with legitimising a specific conception of 'Europe' realised in the institutional system originated by the Treaties of Rome in 1957, and not with alternative conceptions of Europe or may-have-beens.

The founding fathers thus became the principal characters in the wider positive myth that underpinned the discourse on European Union: the myth of the inherent moral 'goodness' of the integration process intended as a historical process of reconciliation among former enemies. Moreover, enough time had passed between 1950 and the first decade of the twenty-first century that any partisan allegiances to Christian Democracy or Socialism, Atlanticist or non-Atlanticist tendencies, or even nationalities that may have made references to Schuman or Monnet politically charged were effectively neutralised. Referring to other, more recent figures such as Helmut Kohl or François Mitterrand, whose role in European politics and within the Community could have been considered just as significant, would have been much more likely to introduce an unwelcome partisan or national element to a discourse whose goal was essentially the construction of a common interpretation of the origins and evolution of the European Union of the present. The 'founding fathers' thus became more than merely the political leaders who initiated the integration process: whether their choice to initiate the integration process aimed to meet the geopolitical or economic needs of their nation states was no longer an important or determining factor in the way they were portrayed five decades later. What mattered instead was the fact that politicians working at the heart of the integration process in the 1990s used their very names, words and choices as a legitimating myth for the continuation of that process, and that by doing so they chose to emphasise the ideals underpinning the process rather than national interest per se.

This narrative of reconciliation as the historical uniqueness of European integration reverberated throughout the fifth enlargement discourse and inherently legitimised both the need to continue along this path of integration and the necessity to allow candidate states to become involved in it as full members. The possibility of referring to a generation of leaders that had initiated this process five decades earlier gave this theme the strength of a historical myth: in the 1990s, European integration was no longer a new initiative but a reality whose fifty years of institutional existence and success guaranteed its place in European history. The fact that this was a particular kind of integration based on the establishment of common institutions and that other ideas had existed, for instance in the interwar years, and still floated around about different methods of integration remained largely unsaid within parliamentary debates. On the other hand, the figures who had launched this particular kind of integration in the 1950s had in some cases, for instance Jean Monnet's, already acquired a 'larger than life status' within the 'integration story': Monnet had a whole education programme dedicated to him in 1989, which included the establishment of Jean Monnet chairs and Centres of Excellence for the study of European integration – this meant that their names could be used to provide the European Union with a set of wise figures from the past. Moreover, at the turn of the twenty-first century, with arguably four decades of successful integration under the Union's belt, MEPs were no longer talking just about a recent political phenomenon with an uncertain future. They could now claim that what had been born as a risky political initiative had consolidated its rightful place in history over four decades of institution building. By the time the enlargement process to the Central and Eastern European countries began in earnest in 1999, the integration process itself was ripe for being used as a myth in itself, and the source of legitimacy for continuing along the path indicated fifty years earlier by the founding fathers.

'Breaking with history': the European project defies historical legacies

The European Parliament's historical narrative of Europe inserted the positive myths of the founding fathers and of reconciliation highlighted above into a wider narrative depicting Europe's history as a negative and dark past that needed to be contrasted and overcome through an integration process whose primary aim was to 'break with Europe's history'[240]. The idea had in fact been present in European discourse since the

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[240] See for instance Ole Waever, 'European Security Identities', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 1996, Vol.

inception of integration. However, in the late 1990s and early 2000, this came to form the tenets of a complex historical narrative in which the old negative myth of conflict was interwoven with the newer myth of reconciliation embodied by the European Union as a primary theme in the legitimisation of the fifth enlargement. This historical narrative was based on the claim that Europe must reject its history prior to 1950: the negative myth of Europe's long-term historical experience provided a broad frame for the positive myth of reconciliation and cooperation. Europe's dark past served to legitimise the integration process as the only tool capable of providing reconciliation among European nations and cooperation as the basis for peace and prosperity. Whilst the reconciliation myth was essential for the legitimisation of the European Union and for its enlargement to the wider European continent, its essence was entirely rooted in the historical legacies of Europe's experiences prior to the launch of the integration process in 1950.

The discourse of the European Parliament presented the idea of reconciliation and of European integration in general as a 'historical absurdity […] that was gradually consolidated and came to change the face of history'[241], a project initiated to defy Europe's historical legacy. Europe's past of war and violence culminating in the two world wars is the negative historical myth that underpins the whole European construction. Paradoxically, it was this very historical myth that legitimised the idea that in order to achieve peace and prosperity Europe must free itself of its historical legacy and project its political vision into the future, denying a past that led to so much bloodshed.

Throughout the fifth enlargement debates, MEPs and EP Presidents acknowledged that the roots of European integration were to be found in war:

> 'out of the ashes of destruction and hate of two world wars came a Union of the
> European peoples. War between the member states, despite centuries of rivalry
> and conflict, is now unthinkable. Europe can be a force of peace throughout the
> continent'[242];
> 'the original challenge was twofold: first, through close cooperation, to subdue an
> historic hostility which tears our continent apart in order instead to build
> friendship and understanding, and secondly to provide political and economic

34:1, pp. 103-132, esp. pp. 121-122.
[241] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, EP Debates, Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 2007.
[242] Klaus Hänsch, PES, Germany, Address to the National Assembly of Slovenia, Ljubljana, 2 April 1996.

strength and thus the confidence in our system based on democracy and market economy, which was necessary to be able to resist the external threat which the Soviet Empire posed on the dark horizon. Through its successes the EU has changed the path of world history'[243].

Yet the historical roots of European integration also meant that Europe needed to break away from its past and create a new system that was to be completely detached and opposed to the previous one: not just to 'overcome history' but

> 'not to allow a triumph of the dead over the living not to let history dominate our future [sic]'[244].

The myth of post-war European integration as a 'peace process[245]' based on reconciliation and cooperation was thus based on a mirror historical narrative of the violence and nationalist antagonism that dominated Europe until the culmination of the Second World War. Many MEPs emphasised how historically attempts to unify Europe had been carried out by force and how only the European Union embodied the peaceful and voluntary unification of the continent[246]: for instance, in 1996 Italian EPP representative Antonio Graziani argued, referring to historical legacies and the rights of minorities in Slovenia, that a Europe assigning blame for past events

> 'would not be a Europe of today, far less of tomorrow, but the Europe of the civil wars of the recent and more distant past'[247].

A year later, his Danish colleague in the EPP Frode Kristoffersen, speaking in his role as *rapporteur* for Lithuania, also talked about the need to bring Europe together after centuries of violent struggle:

> 'the idea is to get this Europe repaired and bind it together again. A characteristic of this part of the world is that for centuries, at regular intervals, we have bashed each other over the head, and time and again Europe has been dismembered [...] but now at the end of this century the important thing is to organise relationships

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[243] Staffan Burenstam Linder, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.
[244] Klaus Hänsch, Address to the National Assembly of Slovenia, Ljubljana, 2 April 1996. This was both a reference to national antagonisms that had led to conflict and world war and to the resurgence of nationalist conflict in the former Yugoslavia.
[245] Pat Cox, (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland), EP President, Address to the Natioanl Press Clubm Washington DC, United States, 10 July 2002.
[246] Cecilia Malmström, Liberal Democrat, Sweden, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.
[247] Antonio Graziani, EPP, Italy,EP Debates, Europe Agreement with Slovenia, 23 October 1996. Graziani was an MEP from 1994 until 1999, and was also vice-chair of the EPP for the same period.

in this part of the world and to repair the damage that was done in the first half

of the century'[248].

Spanish Socialist and former EP President Enrique Barón Crespo argued on 19

November 2002 that enlargement would finally bring an end to the shameful trail of war

and blood left by the Twentieth century and that Europe would go back to being a

geographical union and would be born again as a political unit:

> 'Con ello [enlargement] conseguiremos, simbólicamente en Grecia, que Europa
>
> se liebre del rapto del Minotauro, que la ha tenido tanto tiempo presa. Porque,
>
> cuando en 2004, se abran las puertas para los nuevos socios, Europe volverá a ser
>
> una union geográfica desde el Atlántico hasta el Báltico y desde la Laponia hasta
>
> Chipre, y atrás quedarán las ignominies de un siglo XX en el que las guerras y
>
> repartos de botín rasgaron los Estados, destrozaron a los pueblos y trazaron
>
> fronteras a sangre y fuego […] Europa […] renacerá como una unidad política'[249].

Swedish Liberal Democrat Cecilia Malmström reiterated during the enlargement debate
of April 2003 that:

> 'for the first time, we are uniting almost the whole of the continent by peaceful
>
> means – through agreements, compromises and treaties, rather than through war
>
> and conquest'[250].

Pat Cox came back to this idea time and again in his speeches in front of the parliaments
of the candidate countries:

> 'For the first time in millennia on the continent of Europe, we are creating a
>
> common space of prosperity, reconciliation and peace. We are not creating that
>
> space at the point of a sword or from the barrel of a gun, but, as I said earlier, by
>
> the free will of a free people. It is that which gives the depth and strength to the
>
> European process of reconciliation'[251].

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[248] Frode Kristoffersen, EPP, Denmark, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Kristoffersen was an MEP from 1988 until 1989 (European Democratic Group), and again from 1994 until 1999 (EPP), elected with the Danish Det konservative folkeparti.

[249] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, EP Debates, Extraordinary Debate on Enlargement, 19 November 2002.No official English translation is available for this extraordinary debate: 'With this we will achieve, symbolically in Greece, that Europe free herself from the Minotaur's abduction, which kept her prisoner for so long. When in 2004 the doors open for the new members, Europe will return to being a geographical union from the Atlantic to the Baltic and from Lapland to Cyprus, and so the ignominies of the twentieth century will cease, the wars and booties that tore apart states, strangled peoples and traced frontiers with blood and fire […] Europe […] will be reborn as a political unit'.

[250] Cecilia Malmström,Liberal Democrat, Sweden, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003

[251] Address by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland) to the Saeima's Plenary Session (Latvian Parliament), Riga, Latvia, 28 May 2002. He used the word 'reconciliation' 28 times in his speeches to external audiences over his two years as EP President.

This negative foundation myth was predicated on the need to break with history, by creating and advancing a new, "ahistorical" principle of organising political and economic relations among the peoples of Europe and thus breaking free from the dominant legacy of the past. The image of Europe constructed through the use of these historical narratives was therefore one in which Europe, intended as the contemporary framework of supranational institutions and close cooperation between member states, was the child of a unique generation of leaders who decided to reject the legacy of Europe's past and on the basis of this rejection created a new system of relations based on the shared commitment to reconciliation. Europe, in this sense, is therefore to this day a historical process of reconciliation – one that stemmed from the history of this continent and yet projects its identity into the future and rejects the image of Europe embodied by the past.

This historical narrative had at its very heart a contradiction that could in the long term undermine the whole construction of a historical foundation myth for the European Union. By selecting only a very specific and very short historical experience as the positive foundation of the modern European polity, and attributing a wholly negative connotation to the course of European history before 1950, the European Parliament effectively denied legitimacy to historical references attempting to go further back in time to the much richer and longer history of Europe before 1950. Moreover, in identifying the experience of European integration after WWII as the only positive historical experience that Europe could refer to in constructing its identity and advocating the need to break with all previous history, parliamentary discourse attributed a positive value to an experience that had been shared only by Western European countries on the basis of economic integration and, to a much smaller extent, political cooperation. This created problems on two levels: it excluded Central and Eastern European countries from the Union's positive historical narrative and it deprived even Western Europe itself of the possibility of finding positive shared experiences beyond the beginning of the integration process – rejecting as part of that negative past, cultural and political experiences that could otherwise provide additional content to a positive foundation myth. It excluded centuries of shared political, cultural and social experiences that were actually considered by many Europeans as the most important aspect of their common heritage. This contradiction is all the more striking considering that MEPs used this historical narrative

the most in their discussions of Central and Eastern Europe, countries with whom the members of the European Union had in fact not shared the experience of institutional and economic integration of the previous decades. In light of the division between East and West during the Cold War, the MEPs' choice of founding their historical narrative on the exclusion of the experiences prior to the Second World War is in fact quite puzzling: justifying the fifth enlargement would thus entail a difficult balancing act between a double narrative of recent exclusive experiences and previous, unspecified common experiences of alleged European unity before the Cold War.

Justifying the fifth enlargement: a common history before the Cold War

The European Parliament's debates on the fifth enlargement saw MEPs engaging with the double challenge of providing legitimacy to the European integration process as a whole, and justifying the expansion of membership to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe that throughout the East-West bloc confrontation had constituted the Community's political 'other'. Geopolitical and economic reasons were of course paramount, yet a historical theme also came into play: Central and Eastern European countries had the right to be part of the integration process because, according to the historical narrative of 'Europe', before the Cold War had forced them onto the 'wrong' side of the Iron Curtain, the CEECs were part of Europe and thus shared a long, if at times far from peaceful history with Western European countries. The theme of 'breaking with history' was vividly used in the justification of enlargement, when it was combined with the idea of the Cold War as the historical 'kidnapping' of the Eastern half of the European 'whole'[252].

Before the end of the Cold War, Western Europe had defined itself politically in stark opposition to the communist dictatorships of Eastern Europe. After 1989 its political identity could not be changed – in fact, it was strengthened by an increased emphasis on 'European' values such as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.[253] Enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe was predicated on the need to support these countries'

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[252] See for instance Jean-Louis Bourlanges, Liberal Democrat, France, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Bourlanges (Union pour la democratie Française) was an MEP from July 1989 until December 2007.

[253] That such values may just as accurately be deemed to be 'Western' did not seem to alter the course of MEPs' words much: only a few individuals pointed this out, or tried to engage with the prickly question of what can in fact be deemed to be the difference between the 'Europeannes' and the 'Westerness' of certain political values.

political re-orientation towards adherence to these same political/politico-cultural values[254]. However, this in itself was not sufficient to legitimise enlargement. After all, none of the former Warsaw Pact countries were yet fulfilling the political and economic criteria of membership and would not come close to Western European standards throughout the 1990s.

The European Parliament largely justified widening EU membership to Central and Eastern European countries on the basis of a moral duty stemming from a twofold reading of history as having 'robbed' these countries of their 'rightful place' in Europe through the Cold War and of an earlier, shared historical heritage cutting across the Iron Curtain. This shared history made the accession of Central and Eastern European countries 'natural'[255]. The fifth enlargement would bring together centuries of common 'history, culture and art', and overcome the division imposed by Yalta and Munich[256]. These two historical moments symbolised the two different aspects of the historical division of Europe: Munich was considered by many to be the moment in which Western Europe had abandoned Eastern Europe to National Socialist aggression, and Yalta was seen as the imposition of an artificial geopolitical and ideological division that would then be cemented by the hardening of the Cold War. In both cases, MEPs claimed that the way in which these countries had been abandoned to their fate now imparted upon the European Union a 'moral obligation' to accept their membership applications[257]. Enlargement would mark the final end of the Cold War division and 'ensure that the old iron curtain is not replaced by a velvet one, excluding part of the continent from the benefits of belonging to the European family'[258]. It was also

> 'an act of moral justice: European countries, countries which are just as European as those which are already part of the Union but which, by a twist of fate, found themselves, through no fault of their own, on the wrong side of an artificial line drawn across our continent, are coming back to Europe, coming back to us'[259].

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[254] See chapter one for the Copenhagen Criteria established in 1993.
[255] Nicole Fontaine, speech to the European Conference, Sochaux, 23 November 2000.
[256] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, Extraordinary Debate on Enlargement, 19 November 2002
[257] Otto von Habsburg, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Applications for Membership, 14 April 1999. He was referring specifically to the Baltic states.
[258] Peter Truscott, PES, UK, EP Debates, Enlargement - Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Truscott (Labour) was an MEP between July 1994 and July 1999. He was made Life Peer in the House of Lords in 2004. for other examples see also Frode Kristoffersen, EPP, 2 December 1998, and Klaus Hänsch, PES German, Progress towards Accession by the 12 Candidate Countries, 3 October 2000.
[259] Jas Gawronski, Liberal and Democratic group, Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.

The lexicon in sentences such as the one above moreover shows how by using 'history' as a somehow external or superior force that imposed the Cold War division MEPs also partly absolved Western European countries and their most powerful ally, the US, from responsibility for the division of the continent.

Europe had, of course, never been unified in the first place, and so such talk of 're-unification' constituted at best a very benevolent view of European history before the world wars and the onset of the Cold War. Wolff's study of the invention of the idea of Eastern Europe in the Eighteenth Century provides but one example of the fact that the distinction between East and West had already been present in the European consciousness for centuries, and that Western Europe had a long tradition of excluding Eastern European countries from its political and even 'civilisational' self-image[260]. The concept of Mitteleuropa is another instance of the many different concepts of "Europe" and potential ways of subdiving its countries and peoples by grouping them according to different cultural, political and geographical criteria – and one that did not really make an appearance on parliamentary enlargement discourse[261]. Futhermore, what the MEPs' alleged 'common history' actually amounted to was never specified. While this was pointed out by some MEPs[262], such remarks remained isolated and did not influence the main thrust of parliamentary discourse. European parliamentarians seemed, on the contrary, to prefer instead a reading of history that was more in line with that put forward by East-Central European intellectuals in the 1980s, from Kundera to Havel. In fact, Vaclav Havel himself became an important point of intellectual reference for many MEPs, who quoted his words time and again during plenary debates. His ideas about the 'dream' of uniting the European continent made their way into the enlargement discourse of the European Parliament and EP President Pat Cox constantly quoted Havel's 1990 speech to the EP when visiting the candidate countries:

> 'without dreaming of a better Europe we shall never build a better Europe. To me the twelve stars of the European flag do not express the proud conviction that we will build heaven on this earth - there will never be heaven on earth - I see these twelve stars as a reminder that the world could become a better place, a

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[260] Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).
[261] See Peter Stirk, *Mitteleuropa: history and prospects*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994).
[262] See for instance André Brie, Confederal Group of the European United Left, Germany, EP Debates, Progress Report on Enlargement, 19 November 2002.

better place that in time and from time to time [sic] if we had the courage to look up at the stars'[263].

Increasingly, MEPs and EP Presidents talked no longer merely of 'enlargement', but of 're-unification': the word reunification appeared sixteen times in the October 2000 enlargement debate, twice in September 2001, 11 in the 19 November 2002 debate (not the extraordinary debate of the morning, but the standard debate on the progress by the candidate countries in the afternoon), and 9 times in the final enlargement debate before the official accession of the new member states on 9 April 2003. Pat Cox used the word 'reconciliation' sixty three times in the official speeches he gave outside plenary over his two-year term as EP President between 2002 and 2004.

Parliamentary discourse on the fifth enlargement also built upon the idea of the European project as a break from history by defining the need for enlargement as the need to 'amend history'[264] and to 'finally turn the page'[265] on the 'cruel division of Europe'[266] imposed by the Cold War. The accession of the Eastern European countries was therefore also the symbolic closure of the period of division and signified that the Berlin Wall had finally been torn down[267]. Enlargement was thus 'an opportunity because it [was] an occasion to reunite what the tragedies of recent history had torn apart'[268]. The mere use of the word 're-unification' provided the fifth enlargement with significant historical and moral legitimisation:

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[263] Pat Cox was referring to the speech by Vaclav Havel to the European Parliament, 16 February 2000. Speech by Pat Cox to the Estonian Parliament (Riigikogu), Tallinn, Estonia, 15 April 2002.
[264] 'as citizens of the European Union we now have the historic opportunity to transcend Munich – to reverse the events of 1939 when the people of central and eastern Europe were abandoned – and this must be done on the basis of what we have built. I think it is a question of amending history, and we should welcome the opportunity to do so'. Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, EP Debates, Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.
[265] Jean-Claude Pasty, Union for Europe, France, EP Debates, Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Even though Pasty had a very different, right-wing political position from the speaker preceding him, he still made use of the same set of references. Pasty (Rassemblement pour la République) was an MEP from 1984 until 1989. He was chair of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance from July 1994 until July 1995 (vice-chair 1989-1994), then of the Group Union for Europe until July 1999.
[266] Ursula Stenzel, EPP, Austria, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.
[267] Address by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland) at the European Council in Brussels, 25 October 2002.
[268] Catherine Lalumière, ARE, France, EP Debates, Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Lalumière was an MEP between 1994 and 1999 (Energie Radicale, European Radical Alliance) and between 1999 and 2004 (Parti radical de gauche, PES). She was vice-president of the EP between 2001 and 2004, and chaired the group of the European Radical Alliance from 1994 until 1999.

'"enlargement" itself is not the correct name - it is the coming together again of our old continent of Europe, it is a reunification, a re-birth of sorts, a renaissance of the European idea'[269].

Upon the signature of the Accession Treaty on 16 April 2003, Cox stated that the history had finally been corrected and its legacy overcome:

'today we consign our fractured past to the history books'[270].

The narrative constructed by MEPs remained fairly superficial and the rhetoric highlighted above was really the whole extent of their elaboration of a historical discourse. They refrained from trying to define the actual contents of this alleged common history and created a narrative that could perhaps work within the specific circumstances and emotional connotations of the fifth enlargement, but would prove difficult to extend to Turkey, for instance.

Contested histories: unresolved debates on the European past

The dominant historical narrative of parliamentary discourse on the fifth enlargement remained fairly general and rarely touched upon unresolved debates about the past that were still relevant for contemporary politics in the acceding states. A compelling illustration is provided by the way in which the European Parliament tried to tackle the issue of the Beneš Decrees, the controversial piece of Czech legislation at the centre of the debate on the political requirements for EU enlargement. The Beneš Decrees were a series of legislative acts passed by the Czechoslovak Parliament and associated with the name of the then Czechoslovak President Edward Beneš at the end of the Second World War and confirmed by the provisional National Assembly of Czechoslovakia as a constitutional law of 28 March 1946. They contained a number of provisions, but the controversy centred on those Decrees that confiscated all property of people of German or Hungarian nationality and denied Czechoslovak citizenship to people who had received German or Hungarian nationality, and on legislation of May 1946 that made reprisals against Germans not punishable, even when they constituted actual criminal acts according to the law. Many considered the permanence of these decrees in Czech law to be incompatible with the political criteria for accession established by the Copenhagen

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[269] Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland), Speech to the Estonian Parliament (Riigikogu), Tallinn, Estonia, 15 April 2002.

[270] Address by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland), President of the European Parliament at the Ceremony of the Signature of the Treaty of Accession, Athens, 16 April 2003.

Council of 1993, especially with regards to the treatment of national minorities, and debate arose over Czech eligibility for EU membership while the decrees remained part of the country's legislation.

Members of the EP disagreed in their approach to this question. On the one hand, many MEPs deemed the Beneš Decrees to be a human rights issue that needed to be solved before the Czech Republic was considered to have fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria, as for instance did the Austrian Daniela Raschhofer (from the Austrian Freedom Party):

> 'Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in its report on the progress of the Czech Republic, the Commission writes, and I quote: "The Czech Republic continues to fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria." This is a remarkable statement. The Commission's report does not contain a single word about the Beneš Decrees. The Commission overlooks the fact that upholding the Beneš Decrees, which justify the expulsion and murder of many thousands of people after the Second World War, is clearly contrary to the accession criteria established by the Community. The Czech Republic's stance, that it does not wish to repeal them, amounts to a disregard for fundamental basic values and human rights which the EU expressly upholds. This means that Europe is sending out a signal which does lasting damage to the EU's credibility on matters of fundamental and human rights'[271].

Others, however, chose to set up their discussion of the Decrees not in terms of the human rights discourse but as part of the historical considerations that formed the foundation of the European Parliament's historical narrative. The Motion for a Resolution on 7 November 2002 veered towards this approach:

> '[the European Parliament] Refers to the report commissioned by the EP and supports its common conclusions, namely that the presidential decrees do not pose an obstacle to Czech accession to the EU, meaning that all Union citizens will enjoy the same rights on Czech territory after accession and that judgments handed down *in absentia* have been quashed; regards the statements of principle made in the German/Czech Declaration of 21 January 1997 as a sound basis for

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[271] Daniela Raschhofer, Non-attached, Austria, EP Debates, Progress of the 12 candidate countries in 2000, 4 September 2001. Raschhofer was a non-attached member of the EP from 1996 until 2004, elected with the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Freedom Party).

reconciliation, which represents the moral foundation for European integration; considers a political gesture by the Czechs to this effect as desirable'[272].

MEPs were not in agreement over the interpretation of the Beneš Decrees and eventually a consensus emerged not to discuss them as a historical issue, which would have led to a much wider debate on reprisals and possibly forced migration throughout Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the Second World War. Instead, they mainly confined them to the realm of the past, as exemplified by the words of German EPP representative Jürgen Schröder:

'this is not some sort of attempt to rewrite history on our part. There is no question of that. It is Today and, more importantly, Tomorrow, which are at stake'[273];

and his fellow group member Elmar Brok:

'our task is not to examine the past from a legal perspective, but to ensure that no discrimination arises as a result of the current application of the law […] there is no attempt to use issues of history as new combat instruments in the European Union; instead, we must ensure that we learn from history to prevent the suffering, expulsions, murders and wars which occurred in the past from ever happening again'[274].

British PES member Simon Murphy was in agreement:

'questions of history are important but questions of history are exactly that, historical questions […] they are not conditions for accession to the European Union'[275];

as was fellow British and Liberal Democrat Graham Watson:

'[the]Liberal Democrats deplore the abuse of enlargement negotiations to reopen old wounds and animosities. The infamous Beneš Decrees are a good example of this. It serves no useful purpose to inflame tensions on this issue'[276].

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[272] Motion for a Resolution, On enlargement: progress report (COM(2002) 700 – C5 0474/2002 – 2002/2160(INI)), Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy.
[273] Jürgen Schröder, EPP, Enlargement, EP Debates, Applications for EU Membership, 14 April 1999.
[274] Elmar Brok, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, 12 June 2002.
[275] Simon Francis Murphy, PES, UK, EP Debates, 12 June 2002. Murphy (Labour) was an MEP from July 1994 until July 2004, and vice-chair of the group of the PES from March 2000 until May 2003.
[276] Graham Watson, ELDR, UK, EP Debates, Enlargement of the Union,12 June 2002. Watson (Liberal Democrats) was an MEP from July 1994 until 2009 (re-elected in 2009). He chaired the group of the European Liberal Democratic and Reform Party from January 2002 until July 2004, then chaired the re-named group of the Alliance of Liberal and Demcorats for Europe until July 2009.

The European Parliament, however, remained divided on its judgment of the Beneš Decrees and, more broadly, on how to address and deal with certain consequences of the Second World War in candidate countries. Many MEPs eventually argued that the controversy was unnecessary because the decrees were a historical occurrence and should bear no consequence for Czech eligibility for EU membership, as entry would project this country into a common future and a 'community of justice'[277] that would ensure the respect of human and minority rights. They also argued that the Czech willingness to comply with the Copenhagen political criteria was evidence enough of their allegiance to the principle of reconciliation, the 'moral foundation of integration'[278]. Reconciliation was thus used as a blanket concept that could also include the Czech case: by joining the EU the Czech Republic would embrace the principle of reconciliation as the founding principle of European integration, and other EU members would in turn extend this "spirit" to the Czech Republic and ensure, as a community, that the discriminatory nature of the Beneš Decrees would remain confined to the past.

This was a means to overcome the obstacle without dealing with the deeper historical issues inherent in the adoption and maintenance of the Decrees in the Czech legal system. It allowed the MEPs a way out of the debate on the treatment of minorities in Central and Eastern Europe after the war, and it also allowed for the continued use of the general narrative of integration as reconciliation, glossing over the more controversial aspects of the past and its consequences, without delving into the actual complexities of specific historical events, relegating them to a past that was "closed" and far away as opposed to a past that still had contemporary relevance. Even if references to such events may have been more relevant to contemporary politics and hence they could arguably have stimulated greater interest and possibly identification among Europe's citizens, there could be no agreement across the political spectrum and national divides on the "correct" interpretation of such histories, and thus they were left out of the dominant narrative.

Pat Cox's speeches in the candidate countries and the use of historical myths

Historical narratives were woven into the discourse on Europe together with many other elements: their significance was to a large extent determined by how and when they were

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[277] Jürgen Schröder, EPP, Enlargement, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.
[278] Ibid.

used within the discourse. Pat Cox was President of the EP during the last stages of negotiations of the fifth enlargement between 2002 and 2004 and his speeches to the Parliaments of the candidate countries provide an interesting example of how he condensed the historical narratives that emerged from parliamentary discourse in his addresses to the parliamentary assemblies of the prospective member states – as well as depicting an image of how the European Parliament presented itself to the candidate countries. They therefore provide a useful way of ascertaining the place of historical myths in the discourse on the fifth enlargement.

During his visits to the candidate countries, Cox spoke to the same general canvas about Europe and the fifth enlargement, with a few modifications to adapt it to the audiences he was addressing. His speech to the Czech Senate of 21 March 2002 is one such instance. Opening with the general protocol greetings, Cox then moved immediately to address the question of national identity and European integration. Introducing it by way of comparison between the Czech Republic and his home country of Ireland, he spoke about European integration being an amplifier of the strength and sense of purpose of its constituting nations and used his own election to the post of EP President as the demonstration that even a small peripheral member state could be 'at the heart of contemporary European democracy'[279]. This was to a large extent based on the political identification of Europe based on democracy and on the EP's interpretation of its own role as the most democratic institution within the Union's political system. He then moved on to consider the negative outcome of the Irish referendum on the Nice Treaty, presenting it to the Czech audience not as a rejection of the enlargement process but as the fruit of the Irish public's preoccupation with maintaining the country's military neutrality. This was the first opportunity for him to introduce a direct reference to the Cold War experience: Cox referred to the Central and Eastern European historical experience and consequent perception of engaging with the EU and NATO as a very distinct one from the Irish experience and one that could prevent the Czechs from understanding the Irish desire to preserve 'military non-alignment'. He then immediately linked this to his earlier mention of national identities by saying that each member state has a distinct history and thus different sensitivities[280]. His closing remarks focused on

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[279] Pat Cox, EP President (Liberal Democrat Group, Ireland), speech in front of the Czech Senate, Prague, 21 March 2002.
[280] Ibid.

the need 'not to repeat history' and to 'make history for Europe and its future and not to repeat the past'[281].

The historical narrative was therefore the culmination of Cox's speech on this occasion and it served a double purpose: as well as legitimising the European integration process as a whole, it embraced internal political conflicts to the Czech Republic within the same process of reconciliation. Linking the Czech national and the European levels into a single community of values based on the European interpretation of history, Cox clearly connected the Czech desire to join the EU with its subscription to a certain interpretation of European history as conflict and contemporary Europe as the constant practice of reconciliation of that conflict. By association, he suggested that the Czechs should apply the same principles to their internal politics and the Beneš Decrees. History in this speech was therefore a key element of the political message that Cox was delivering about what it meant to join the EU.

His speech to the Slovenian parliament one month later, on 17 April 2002, followed a very similar pattern. He addressed first of all the issue of how small states could preserve and even enhance their national identity by benefiting from interdependence within the European Union, followed by the role of the EP at the heart of European democracy and the respect for diversity within the 'European family'. History featured heavily in his final remarks, firstly to say that in the break-up of Yugoslavia Slovenia had demonstrated its understanding of the 'European' principle of not falling back into the violence of the past to solve disputes with the neighbours and was therefore ready to join in the common project to 'build the future and not to repeat the past'. He then concluded with a statement on the historical uniqueness of the coming together of Europe on the basis of a will for reconciliation, through 'the free will of free peoples from free parliaments negotiating a new purposeful reconciliation'[282].

On 9 May 2002, on the anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, Cox spoke in Cyprus[283]. The speech had once again a similar pattern, starting with Cox's considerations on the place for small countries within the Union and the EP's role. This was however

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[281] Ibid.
[282] Pat Cox, EP President, (Liberal Democrat, Ireland), Speech to the Slovenian National Assembly, Ljubljana, 17 April 2002.
[283] Pat Cox, EP President (Liberal Democrat, Ireland), Speech to the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicosia, 9 May 2002.

followed by a much heavier emphasis on history and reconciliation in the next section, when Cox addressed the unresolved issue of Cyprus' division. In order to introduce this topic, the EP President used as his starting point the anniversary of the Schuman declaration, building upon the image of Schuman as a visionary who understood how Europeans could 'build a new future and a new history, founded on mutual respect and reconciliation'. He then spoke of Nicosia as the 'last divided capital city in Europe' and depicted himself as 'the bearer of Schuman's message of reconciliation'. Cox used the myth of Schuman and the European project of reconciliation to ask the Cypriots to find a settlement to end the division of the island. He invoked such a solution not as a condition for membership but in the name of the commitment to the ideals of peace and reconciliation that Cyprus was committing itself to by joining the European Union. The reconciliation myth permeated his whole speech: it represented the whole purpose of European integration, and enlargement in this sense was an expansion of the European ideal to the future member states. It was thus in Schuman's name and in the name of his idea of Europe that Cox called for a peaceful end to the division of Cyprus. By making such an explicit link between Europe's driving purpose of reconciliation and enlargement to Cyprus, of course, Cox was also treading on treacherous ground: were the two Cypriot communities not to find a settlement, as in fact proved to be the case, enlargement to only half of the island would cement the division even further and undermine the idea that European integration was the means to reconciliation and that enlargement would export this to new the member states.

Pat Cox used historical references in all his speeches to the candidate countries. However, these references became much more extensive and central to his speeches when he addressed countries in which there were large unresolved political problems relating to national minorities, divided communities or contested borders that had their roots in historical divisions. It was in such circumstances that he relied more heavily on the image of Europe as a process of reconciliation and a conscious rupture with the legacy of conflict and that he extended this concept to the candidate countries as the primary motive for joining in the European project. He used the positive myth of Europe as a legitimating tool for the existing Union and as a foundational ideal that the candidate states were committing to by joining. Unfortunately, in doing so he also exposed the limits of this idealistic construction of history in relation to the political and economic reality of enlargement: in neither the Czech nor the Cypriot cases did the

European Union make accession conditional upon successful "reconciliation", and both countries eventually became full members of the EU in May 2004 without either issue finding the resolution the EP had wished for.

This historical narrative was not exclusive to the EP's discourse: representatives of other EU institutions also referred to these themes and myths in their interventions in parliamentary debates. When speaking in plenary session to the EP, the representatives of the Commission and Council discussed enlargement within the same discursive frame: they claimed that the EU was to 'seize this historic opportunity to banish for ever the divisions that have sadly scarred our continent for too many years'[284] and spoke of ending 'a century of world and conflicts' and 'the Europe of the Yalta Conference and the Cold War' and opening the door to 'a new era'[285]. Finally, in welcoming the new Eastern and Southern European member states on 3 May 2004, the Greek Council President Mr Yannitsis pointed to the 'common history, heritage and culture' shared by old and new member states and remarked that 'their accession marks the end of the artificial division of our continent'[286].

The same choice of words and examples was evident in the words of the Commissioners who addressed Parliament throughout the enlargement process, from Günter Verheugen:

> 'Only now have we been handed this opportunity by the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, who never reconciled themselves to being cut off from the free part of this continent. So I do believe that we must now seize this opportunity to shape the future in such a way that twenty-first century Europe will be characterised by peace and freedom, security and prosperity'[287]

to Commission President Jacques Santer in 1997:

> 'the unified Europe whose foundations we laid down in 1952 and that we have been building for more than forty years, this Europe which, I say proudly, has accomplished great things, now sees artificial divisions coming to an end. It is an

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[284] Henderson, Council President (Luxembourg), Results of the European Conference in London, 1 April 1998.

[285] Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Denmark, Council President, EP Debates, 18 December 2002. Rasmussen was Danish Prime Minister from November 2001 until April 2009.

[286] Tassos Yiannitsis, Council President, Greece, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003. Yannitsis was Greek Deputy Foreign Minister between 2001 and 2004, then Foreign Minister for three months in spring 2004.

[287] Günter Verheugen, Commission, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.

historic opportunity which can bring about far-reaching changes'[288]
and Commission Vice-President Loyola De Palacio in May 2004:

> 'the emotion of a day on which we are seeing the fulfillment of the ambitions and
> hopes of so many people who have fought for freedom for so many years. A
> moment which means overcoming brutal scars, which for too many years have
> marked an artificial division of our Europe, the division which originated in war,
> the division which left many European countries separated by this wall of shame,
> by this completely artificial Iron Curtain, which goes against our very nature,
> which left all of those countries in a situation of oppression and communist
> dictatorship. The twenty-first century must overcome the horrors of the
> twentieth century, and we are overcoming the horrors we have experienced in
> Europe for good'[289].

The EU executives and the European Parliament therefore shared a similar way
of framing the fifth enlargement within a specific representation of European history as
one of conflict and the fifth enlargement as the symbolic end of this legacy and the
beginning of a new era founded on the ideas of solidarity and cooperation between
states. The articulation of this historical discourse in its various themes however is less
identifiable in the words of Commissioners and Council representatives, at least in so far
as their participation in parliamentary debates is considered.

Conclusion

The EP's enlargement discourse of the 1990s made ample reference to history and
consolidated the positive myth of reconciliation and the negative myth of Europe's
centuries of war as the historical narrative legitimating the European Union. It was with
the debate on the fifth enlargement that the EP's historical narrative really came into its
own.

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[288] Jacques Santer, Commission President, EP Debates, Agenda 2000, 16 July 1997. Santer was President of
the European Commission from 1995 until 1999. He had previously been Prime Minister of Luxembourg
from 1984 until 1995. He was an MEP from 1974 until 1979 (parti Chrétien social of Luxembourg) within
the EPP, serving as the EP's vice-president from March 1975 until March 1977, and was then an MEP
once again from 1999 until 2004.
[289] Loyola de Palacio, Commission, EP Debates, Formal opening of the first sitting of the enlarged
European Parliament, 3 May 2004. Loyola de Palacio Vallelersundi was briefly a member of the EP within
the EPP group between July 1999 and September 1999, when she became a member of the Prodi
Commission, in charge of energy and transport. She was also vice-president of the Commission alongside
Neil Kinnock, and was responsible for relations with the EP.

This discourse comprised many strands, weaving together the three historical myths: that of the founding fathers and reconciliation, that of Europe's dark past and that of a shared history prior to the Second World War and the Cold War – all the while using the idea of reconciliation to bring the whole togeher. Parliamentary discourse built up these myths within its debates. The same myths were then greatly enhanced, as much as simplified, in the projection of a European image towards the candidate states in the speeches of the EP Presidents. In the EP's image of Europe, the European Union itself became the embodiment of the myth of the European peace process, and was presented in constant opposition to the historical tradition of violence. The recent positive myth was anchored in the myth of the long history of conflict and legitimized as a decisive rupture with Europe's historical legacy and as the dawn of a new era. In justifying the fifth enlargement, however, Parliament also reintroduced the idea that there was in fact a positive, if largely undefined, shared history between the countries of Western and Eastern Europe and that this constituted the basis of a 'reunification' of the continent: enlargement was thus transformed into the rightful return of the kidnapped East to the common European fold[290].

MEPs in the 1990s were widely concerned with the public's growing disaffection with the European project. They were also aware of the fact that the recourse to images of war and bloodshed risked not having any resonance with the new generations of European citizens: precisely because the reconciliation process had been so successful, MEPs in the 1990s grew increasingly aware of the fact that young Western Europeans had only ever experienced 'peace and prosperity'[291]. Images of war in Europe no longer worked in the same ways as they had in the Cold War decades: despite the outbreak of war on European territory with the prolonged conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the new generations crucially did not have any direct experience of the world wars and nor, increasingly, did their parents. The European Union had made the idea of war among the member states such an alien concept that it now became difficult to conjure up the myth of reconciliation as the primary factor of legitimatisation for the Union. At the same time

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[290] See Helene Sjursen, 'Why Expand? The Question of Legitimacy and Justification in the EU's Enlargement Policy', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2002, Vol. 40:3, on Eastern Europe as the "kidnapped West".
[291] See for instance Gunilla Carlsson, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000. Carlsson (Moderata samlingspartiet, EPP) was an MEP from 1995 until 2002. In 2006 she became Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation.

when they were constructing this myth, MEPs were also increasingly aware of the fact that it would not be sufficient to stimulate strong allegiances to the enlarged European Union among its citizens: the myth of reconciliation may have been consolidated during the fifth enlargement debate and used to justify the accession of Central and Eastern European countries, but whether it would survive as a legitimating tool for the future remained open to question.

Almost as significant was the fact that the myth of European integration was constructed on the basis of largely superficial, and even artificial, historical references: MEPs rarely, if at all, chose to venture into the complexities of European history, nor did they seek to provide an accurate understanding of the intricacies of the common historical experiences that they referred to. This was due to the very nature of their historical discourse, which revolved around the creation of a foundation myth for the contemporary needs of their political project. Their political use of history was part of a rhetorical arsenal aimed at defining 'historical' Europe in terms of the concerns of contemporary European politics: a simplified version of history was essential to the successful creation of a legitimising myth. To an extent, the intricacy of European history, both in terms of its divided and violent nature and in terms of the political, cultural, and social interconnection of European societies dating back long before the beginning of political and institutional integration defied the attempts by Europe's elected representatives to provide a simplified version of 'the common European history' that could be fully convincing to its citizens and future member states. The European narrative remained composed of different myths and the need to justify the fifth enlargement compelled MEPs to bring back references to yet another set of pre-war experiences to overcome the Cold War division. This undermined the coherence of the myth of post-war integration, and the attempt to use 'reconciliation' as the key concept bridging the gap between Western and Eastern Europe fell short of its target when Cypriots failed to resolve their own division and the controversy over the Beneš Decrees, for instance, also remained frozen and both countries joined the European Union in May 2004 without any progress on these issues. The historical narrative of reconciliation was in addition nearly entirely geared to justifying the fifth enlargement: the parallel debates on Turkey would show how it lacked the universal applicability of the European political identity, and how limited it remained to the unique circumstances of the Eastern European enlargement.

Chapter Four: Cultural elements of European identity in the EP's enlargement discourse

European identity is often equated in the public imagination with an idea of a common European civilisation binding together individuals and nations across the European continent through centuries, or even millennia, of shared cultural experiences. Gerard Delanty has indicated in his work on the idea of a European heritage how this idea has been 'bound up with the idea of a cultural tradition that transcends the divisions and plurality of Europe and has provided a connecting thread in European history'[292]. Delanty's work does of course stem from the assumption that such a conception of Europe's cultural heritage is in fact obsolete, yet he also points out that 'for much of the twentieth century [ideas of a common cultural tradition] provided a kind of background legitimation for the European project'[293]. Nonetheless, the idea that a common cultural policy can help to foster a sense of European identity has been present in the minds of European policy-makers at least since the 1970s, when the European Commission introduced a series of cultural initiatives aimed at fostering European identity: Chris Shore's exemplary study of the European Commission's cultural policy shows how the European elites have attempted to build a European identity from above on the basis of the assumption that a common culture is needed for a common identity to take root.[294] Recent attempts to foster European identity have even included the release of video clips from famous European films on EUtube to 'capture the emotional core of being European' and encourage the Union's citizens to identify with these that they all have in common, such as 'love'.[295] The idea of a European culture as part of an existing or potential European identity is thus present both in the minds of European elites and in those of academic observers – and the concept seems to stretch to extremely varied definitions of 'culture'.

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[292] Gerard Delanty, 'The European Heritage from a Cosmopolitan Perspective', p. 6.
[293] Ibid.
[294] Chris Shore, *Building Europe*, (London: Routledge, 2000); see also Chris Shore, 'Imagining the new Europe: identity and heritage in European Community Discourse', in Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble eds., *Cultural identity and archaeology: the construction of European communities*, (London: Routledge, 1996).
[295] Senka Bozic-Vrbancic, '"Strong European Emotions": the politics of culture in the EU", *Emotion, Space and Society*, 2010, Vol. 3:2, pp. 90-94. See also http://www.youtube.com/eutube - part of the European Commission's Media Programme.

The idea of European culture has elicited attention from academics from a variety of angles, and not always or even usually from a Community or EU perspective. Marco Antonsich has highlighted how those scholars who have addressed the issue of European identity within the EU framework can be broadly grouped according to two ways of understanding European identity: on the one hand, scholars have looked at the possibility of the existence or emergence of a European identity from a national view and concluded that the EU lacks the characteristic features of the nation state such as a common language, history and traditions, and thus cannot become a viable polity with a demos[296]. On the other hand, 'post-national accounts of Europe' focus on political values as the basis of a stable democracy forgoing the need for the traditional link between territory, sovereignty and identity at the basis of the nation state, with the 'cultural' and the 'political' becoming two distinct spheres – an approach that Antonsich deems both 'highly suggestive' and 'predominantly normative in character'[297]. He counters this approach with a study of people's views based on focus groups and individual interviews in order to understand whether post-national arguments are in fact also shared by the people. His conclusion is that Europe is not a post-national space, and yet it defines itself vis-à-vis an Other represented by the USA emerging as a Self based on 'a culturally diverse space that shared the same political principles and whose territorial configuration ultimately remains open' and 'narrating itself as an idea'[298]. Others have explored the relationship between a European identity and European culture in its many facets, without reaching a conclusive definition of European culture beyond the perhaps expected conclusion that the many elements of what could be construed as 'European culture' fall short of actually forming a European collective identity.[299]

General works on the idea of Europe have on the other hand worked to identify those cultural elements that can be considered to form a common European culture. Stuart Woolf for instance has indicated the four constituent elements of the idea of Europe that can be extrapolated from histories of Europe as a secular cultural tradition, individual entrepreneurship as the engine of European economy, liberty as the defining quality of

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[296] Marco Antonsich, 'The Narration of Europe in 'National' and 'Post-national' Terms: Gauging the Gap between Normative Discourses and People's Views, *European Journal of Social Theory,* 2008,Vol. 11.4, pp. 505-522.
[297] Antonsich identifies the first approach with the earlier work of Ulrich Beck and the second with Habermas' conceptualisations of Europe.
[298] Ibid. pp. 516-517.
[299] Anthony Pagden, ed., *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

governance, and publicly accepted regulatory mechanisms of the form of social relationships.[300] The 'common classical and Judaeo-Christian heritage'[301], the Reformation, the Enlightenment, the national idea of the nineteenth century, ideas of antiquity, philosophical and artistic movements: any of these very broad categories could be considered to constitute the common European culture[302]. To what extent, however, can these ideas be construed into a collective identity for the purpose of the institutional and political discourse of the contemporary EC/EU? Which of these ideas, if any, should the construction of a European cultural identity focus upon? Parliamentary enlargement discourse shows that, regardless of the different academic views on the existence or even the necessity of a common European culture for the ultimate success and viability of the European process of institutional and political integration, MEPs deemed 'culture' one of the crucial elements binding European states and their peoples together. This basic understanding of the role of culture in the construction of a European identity would however also prove to be nearly the only point on which MEPs could agree upon when it came to a cultural discourse of enlargement.

The cultural elements of the European identity discourse developed by MEPs during their enlargement debates were extremely varied and did not necessarily amount to a coherent or consistent narrative. They showed, in fact, how a cultural definition of Europe was consistently harder to achieve than a political or even a historical one – to the extent that EP President Nicole Fontaine could still declare in November 2000 that Europe's cultural identity sorely needed to be discussed and defined in order to set the limits of enlargement:

> 'Even if the issue still seems to be taboo, we simply cannot avoid discussion of the final frontiers of the Union, by which I mean the geographical and cultural criteria which will determine not only the extent of the Union, but above all, its long-term cohesion and workability'.[303]

Such an exhortation notwithstanding, no shared cultural definition of Europe emerged from parliamentary discourse either before or after 2000. The one exception to this was the set of cultural references that was linked to the discourse on political identity and in

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[300] Stuart Woolf, 'Europe and its Historians', *Contemporary European History*, 2003,12:3, pp. 323-337.

[301] John Burrow, 'A common culture? Nationalist ideas in 19th century Euroepan Thought', *History of European Ideas*, 2006, Vol. 32, pp. 333-344, p. 335.

[302] See P.J.A.N. Rietberger, *Europe: a cultural history*, Second Edition,(Abingdon: Routledge, 2006); Anthony Pagden ed., *The idea of Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002).

[303] Speech by Nicole Fontaine, EP President, to the European Conference, Sochaux, 23 November 2000.

which MEPs identified the European 'political culture': the idea that the core political values of democracy and human rights are derived from the European cultural heritage. The cultural and 'civilisational' foundation of the Community's political identity was a constant sub-theme throughout parliamentary debates on enlargement: ancient Greece and Rome, and the enlightenment, were examples of the cultural references underpinning the political identity discourse. However, often even these cultural references remained no more than an unspoken undercurrent implicit within the use of the phrase 'European civilisation'. Yet other cultural references remained steeped in either the personal experiences or particular national cultures of the speakers, so that it would be difficult to identify a cultural definition of Europe beyond the generalised claims that there was indeed such as thing as 'European culture'. A European cultural identity thus continued to escape a set definition, and the limits of 'European civilisation' were as difficult to delimit as the geographical borders of Europe, just as the differences between European and Western civilisation were shown at times to be quite blurred. Furthermore, MEPs were constantly striving to find a balance between the idea of a common European culture and the perceived need to valorise the national and regional traditions that formed the 'European mosaic' in order to maintain the image of a Europe based on the principle of 'unity in diversity'. Culture is in fact often considered national and has been linked with the idea of sovereignty and the nation state: the idea of a Community 'version' of European culture could thus also potentially create tension – something that the slogan of 'unity in diversity' is meant to soothe.[304] The many and varied cultural elements that interspersed the EP's enlargement discourse fell short of constructing a strong and coherent cultural identity for the European Union. This absence was further compounded by the fact that even when not engaging in a conscious attempt to construct such an identity, the cultural references that MEPs chose to employ in their speeches do not show any kind of convergence that could point to a set of commonalities amounting to a collective cultural identity.

Cultural foundations of Europe's political identity

The cultural foundations of Europe's political identity were perhaps the strongest and most coherent cultural element throughout the EP's enlargement discourse. The link between the democratic political identity and Europe's cultural legacy was established

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[304] D. W. Ellwood, 'Is there a European culture?', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 2009, Vol. 14:1, pp. 109-122.

early on, when the MEPs developed the European Parliament's human rights discourse, and was later included in the enlargement discourse of the 1970s. During their general discussions on human rights within and without the EC in May 1977, for instance, MEPs claimed that the European Community had a right and a duty to focus its interest on human rights issues because these were the cultural principles that inspired European integration in the first place, so that British Liberal Democrat Russell Johnston could call for the Community to exercise concerted action on human rights issues based on the claim that the idea of the European Community itself derived from the concept of human rights:

> 'the Community must contribute, both within its frontiers and beyond, towards greater protection of these principles [human rights] which is the common basis of the European cultural heritage […] democratic politicians are uniting to insist that the ideals by which our civilisation is inspired are indivisible […] It will be ironic indeed if we do not develop our cooperation in these matters [of human rights] from which the whole concept of a European Community, and a parliamentary democracy, derives [we must] tell the whole world that our Community accepts this responsibility to defend, to enhance and to extend the rights of man'[305].

It was a short step onwards for his German Christian Democrat colleague Heinrich Aigner to thus claim that Europe was synonymous with a civilisation based on the concept of human rights:

> 'Europe has always been and will always remain a concept of civilisation in which there is no substitute for human dignity and human rights'[306].

This linkage between cultural tradition or 'civilisation' and political choice enabled MEPs to both positively define the EC as 'Europe', in so far as it was the embodiment of the European cultural heritage, and to negatively define non-member states as non-European, as they did not embody this cultural tradition: this could refer, briefly, to the Greek and Iberian dictatorships before they turned to the EC and democracy, but was especially apt a definition to help relegate the Eastern European countries beyond the Iron Curtain to the status of non-Europe. In reference to the perceived violations of

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[305] David Russel Johnston, Liberal Democrat, UK, EP Debates, Human Rights, 11 May 1977.
[306] Heinrich Aigner, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Human Rights, 11 May 1977. Aigner as a member of the EP from November 1961 until his death in March 1988. He was vice-chair of the Christian Democratic group between June 1977 and July 1979.

human rights perpetrated in Communist Europe, despite the shared commitment to the Helsinki Final Act, Belgian Christian Democrat Alfred Bertrand could thus claim that such violations were not merely a breach of contemporary political values but were in fact also against European culture:

> 'it is an eternal reproach to European culture that human freedom can be violated'[307].

The EP's human rights discourse thus defined the European Community both in terms of a European cultural heritage by which the EC was 'inspired' but also in opposition to the countries on the other side of the Iron Curtain that did not abide by the same core values:

> 'By taking positive measures to defend human, civil, political and social rights, the European Community will not only be remaining true to its inspiration but, by displaying a human face, it will also become the focal point for all those independent spirits who are looking for a valid alternative to the regimes oppressing them'[308].

The 'cultural connection' of the human rights discourse thus served the dual purpose of providing further legitimation for what was effectively a political choice favoured and encouraged by Parliament, namely to put the principles of parliamentary democracy and human rights at the heart of the European Community, and to firmly establish the countries outside the European Community and on the other side of the Iron Curtain as 'other' not because they did not share the same culture, but because they did not base their political systems on this cultural heritage. It legitimised the European Community by making it quintessentially 'European' by virtue of its political choices finding their root in long-standing cultural traditions. It also at the same time made the Central and Eastern European Communist states less legitimate by portraying their violation of human rights principles as a violation of European culture – a heritage which they in fact shared, but did not act upon.

This ideological connection between the Community's commitment to the protection of human rights seeped from the general debates on 'human rights' to the discussion of the potential accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal. Provided that parliamentary discourse

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[307] Alfred Bertrand, Christian Democrat, Belgium, EP Debates, Human Rights, 11 May 1977.
[308] Mario Scelba, Christian Democratic Group, Italy, EP Debates, Human Rights, 11 May 1977.

on the Southern enlargements was already heavy with references to the common political identity, the use of cultural references to underpin political values could only strengthen the idea of 'anchoring democracy' and of membership of the EC being tantamount to 'Europeanness'. As parliamentary discourse weaved in democratic and human rights values with the idea of a common European culture and linked the political values of the Community with a long-term cultural and ideological legacy, MEPs reinforced the association between human rights and 'Europeanness' in the consciousness of both the EEC and its aspiring members:

> 'respect for human rights […] is an indispensable element in our European tradition, culture and civilisation. Any country wishing to join this Community must respect those rights'[309].

The cultural and historical aspects were not institutionalised as part of the political requirements for accession to the European Union, and remained far from being part of the legal set of rights and obligations ensconced in the EU's legal system. Nevertheless, the association between culture, tradition, and civilisation and political identity helped to strengthen the EP's choice of emphasis on certain political values by anchoring it to what was widely accepted as Europe's cultural legacy.

The explicit use of cultural references in direct relation to European political values as part of European civilisation petered out in the 1990s: MEPs hardly made the explicit association between European culture and human rights any more– with a few exceptions such as the written explanation of vote by Socialist Darras on 9 April 2003, when the EP voted on the accession of ten new member states:

> 'the accession of these 10 new Member States has to be supported by all those wishing to stabilise the continent as a whole, consolidate democracy and peace, strengthen the economy and sustainable development and be part of a cultural and human dimension based on shared values of freedom, respect for fundamental rights, good governance and the rule of law. These new Member States have a vital role to play in building an even stronger and more efficient European Union'[310].

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[309] Hans August Lücker, Christian Democratic Group, Germany, EP Debates, Statements of action taken on Parliament's resolution on Spain, 15 October 1975. Lücker was an MEP from 1958 until 1974, chair of the Christian Democratic Group between February 1970 and February 1975, the vice-chair until 1977, and vice-president of the EP from December 1975 until July 1979.
[310] Danielle Darras, PES, France, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003. Darras was an MEP from July 1994 until July 1977.

Even during such a topical debate, a general one that addressed the question of whether to enlarge or not and thus one during which it would be legitimate to expect more emphasis on culture than agriculture, the reference above stood out as an exception. This lessening of the emphasis on cultural foundations in the way that MEPs sought to reinforce the legitimacy of the Union's political identity was potentially due to two reasons: on the one hand, the human rights and democracy discourse was by then firmly established and recognised at the core of the Union's political identity, confirmed by their inclusion in the general membership criteria for any potential new members and confirmed by further institutional developments such as the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. On the other hand, the enlargement discourse of the 1990s/2000s developed within a radically changed international context in which the European Union was no longer contending with an alternative political system east of the Iron Curtain: MEPs no longer needed to claim the superiority of the Western European way by claiming the European cultural heritage for their political choices. MEPs could thus conform to the interpretation of events already articulated by Commission President Jacques Delors in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall:

> 'Central and Eastern Europe [are] to rediscover their cultural roots and
> refamiliarise themselves with the ways of multi-party democracy'[311].

The collapse of the Communist regimes and the CEEC's turn towards membership of the European Union was already confirmation enough that the European Union was, indeed, the only 'Europe' worthy of this name.

The use of cultural references to support the contemporary process of European integration and enlargement was not however limited to the explicit declarations MEPs made over time about human rights and democracy representing European civilisation. On the contrary, an underlying and often unspoken agreement over the cultural origins of the contemporary construction of a united European polity often emerged, for instance in the way MEPs recalled the philosophy and politics of Ancient Greece to identify common European roots. The ancient democratic ideas of the Greek city states were of course called upon in debates on the association with Greece and later on enlargement, to provide further legitimacy for an enlargement that looked, from an economic point of view, to be of doubtful benefit to the Community: already in 1967, it

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[311] Jacques Delors, President of the Commission, EP Debates, Presentation of the annual programme of the Commission, 17 January 1990.

was possible for the President of the Committee for the Association with Greece, Dutch Christian Democrat Wilhelmus Schuijt, to argue for the freezing of the association agreement with the regime of the Colonels while at the same time professing solidarity with the country that was 'le berceau de notre civilisation'[312]. When, nearly fourteen years later, the newly democratic Greece actually became a member of the European Community, EP President Simone Veil could use the same references to greet the new Greek members of Parliament, identifying ancient Greece as the origin of a common European civilisation and thus endowing the Greek accession with a strong symbolic value for the European Community itself:

> 'In welcoming Greece the mother of democracy, the Community becomes Europe in the fullest sense. For all of us your country remained the cradle of our civilisation, the land in which the term 'politics' in its noblest sense was first coined thousands of years ago. We are very happy to be able to join you in the task of forging a European identity that will be enriched by that vision of mankind so dear to the Greece of antiquity […] Greece comes to us bearing its history and its culture which are at the very root of Europe […] this new enlargement brings us closer to the frontiers of our civilisation which will achieve its full flowering in the region around the Mediterranean basin'[313].

Over twenty years later, when finalising the accession of eight Central and Eastern European States and the two Mediterranean islands of Malta and Cyprus, MEPs joined the Greek Presidency of the European Council in hailing the symbolism of signing the accession treaty in the Athenian Agora:

> 'we are going to hold this event next week in the Agora in Athens, which reflects democracy and the market'[314].

In fact, former EP President and Socialist MEP Barón Crespo had already pointed out this symbolism in the historic debate on enlargement held with the representatives of the future member states on 19 November 2002, using a metaphor based on the ancient

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[312] Wilhelmus Schuijt, Christian Democrat, Netherlands, Débats, Question orale n. 4/67 avec débat relative a l'association CEE-Gréce, 8 May 1967.

[313] Simone Veil, EP President, EP Debates, Welcome to Greek Members, 12 January 1981. . Simone Veil, survivor of Auschwitz, was a member of the French Union pour la France and Europe from 1979 until 1984 and later the Union pour la démocratie française until 1993. She was the first president of the directly-elected European Parliament from July1979 until January 1982, and was chair of the Liberal and Democratic Group from July 1984 to December 1985, then Liberal and Democratic Reformist group from December 1985 until July 1989, after which she became vice-chair of the group for the rest of her time in the EP until 1983. She was the French Minister of Health between 1974 and 1979 and was appointed to the Constitutional Council in 1998.

[314] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.

Greek myth of the kidnapping of Europa to represent the historical division of Europe that the fifth enlargement would finally rectify:

> 'Con ello conseguiremos, simbólicamente en Grecia, que Europa se libere del rapto del Minotauro, que la ha tenido tanto tiempo presa'[315].

These cultural references, voiced by Barón Crespo in response to the claims of the Greek representative of the European Council Yannitis and briefly reprised by Commissioner for Enlargement Verheugen, were however not widespread among MEPs during either the 19 November 2002 or the 3 April 2003 debates. The unspoken agreement on the symbolic power of the choice of place for the signature remained precisely that: unspoken. Nor was it discarded in favour of other cultural references: MEPs were simply not quite engaging with a cultural representation of Europe, nor where they embellishing their rhetoric with cultural flourishes.

The idea of a common European culture shared by all members and prospective members, nevertheless, had lingered in enlargement debates through the decades of the European integration process. If there was no actual attempt to define what this common culture actually was, there was nonetheless the perceived need among Europe's representatives in Parliament to claim that acceding states, even when they were not Greece and thus the 'cradle of European civilisation', had indeed contributed to and partaken in the forging of European culture over the centuries of European history. Their accession was thus justified not simply for economic reasons or because of political expediency, but because a shared European culture already provided the glue that allegedly bound the new and old member states together. The Southern enlargement discussed in the late 1970s was thus the occasion for the Italian Communist Amendola to include Spain and Portugal in his claim that the accession of the new states would help to bring together parts of the common European civilisation that had so far remained separate from each other:

> 'these are lands with old and splendid civilisations whose peoples have a very significant spiritual and cultural role in the world, and which bring to Europe something it needs […] Europe is drawing together the strands of its ancient civilisation'[316].

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[315] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, EP Debates, Extraordinary Debate on Enlargement, 19 November 2002. For the full quote see chapter three.
[316] Giorgio Amendola, Communist, Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement of the Community (debate on report doc 323/77), 1 October 1977.

His colleague from the European Progressive Democrats Krieg also claimed that a common civilization united the members of the EC with the candidate states, and that their culture made the three states European:

> 'enlargement will give Europe its true dimension and thus a harmonious balance and will, we hope, be in keeping with the Community's natural vocation, which is that of uniting democratic nations linked by history and the common character of their civilisation. It is obvious that culturally, sociologically and historically Greece, Portugal, and Spain are part of Europe'[317].

In 1985,Klaus Hänsch reprised this theme by claiming that the Iberian countries were credited with contributions to the common cultural heritage of the European Community, and their accession could therefore only strengthen a common European identity:

> 'Spain and Portugal have left their marks in the development of art and religion, science and philosphy in Europe. It was from these countries that Europe's eyes and influence were directed towards other parts of the world. The course of history separated Spain and Portugal from the economic and political development of Europe for a time. With their accession, two European peoples have been reunited politically with the Europe they have always been part of culturally. These countries will reinforce the Community's European identity which would not be complete without the contributions of the Iberian peoples'[318].

German Christian Democrat Otto von Habsburg also highlighted how, culturally, Spain and Portugal belonged to Europe:

> 'Spain is a European country, for European culture without Spain, or indeed Portugal, would not be what it is today'[319].

Similar claims were made for the candidate countries of the fifth round. Nicole Fontaine herself, in the same speech in which she called for a cultural definition of Europe, had claimed that the culture and history binding Europe's countries together made the Union's fifth enlargement a 'natural' occurrence:

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[317] Krieg, European Progressive Democrats. EP Debates, Prospects of enlargement of the Community - discussion of Pintat report Doc 479/87, 1 January 1979.
[318] Klaus Hänsch, Socialist, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement, 8 May 1985.
[319] Otto von Habsburg, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement, 8 May 1985.

'The European Union family of countries, patiently built up over half a century out of the rubble left by an appalling, fratricidal war, is now on the point of opening the door to welcome in all the other nations of Europe, who have, in the last ten years, escaped from bondage. Geography, centuries of shared history, and culture all mean that nothing is more natural than that the current applicant countries of central and eastern Europe should be joining us'[320].

For each candiate country, MEPs emphasised how they were part of Europe's culture and civilization and thus would return or continue to contribute and enrich this common culture by becoming members of the European Union. At the same time, however, they fell short of actually defining what this common culture consisted of, simply maintaining that there existed such a thing as a European cultural identity. Their references to a common European culture thus amounted to little more than the passing comment Swedish EPP Rapporteur Carlsson made about the Baltic countries in October 2000:

'They [the Baltic countries] possess a rich source of culture, diversity and potential which the united Europe cannot do without'[321],

and the Greek Socialist Soulakis offered a similar assessment of Lithuania's place in Europe:

'Lithuania brings with it the same historical baggage of culture, conflict and history that the whole of Europe carries'[322].

In a similar vein, French EPP member Bernard-Raymond expressed his general considerations about Romania's cultural 'Europeanness' expressed in late 1998:

'Romania is close to us – it is European culturally, historically and geographically – and it has returned to democracy. There is no doubt that, in the end, it will be able to join'[323]

echoed by British Socialist Robert Evans:

'Romania is unquestionably European by its history, culture and language'[324].

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[320] Nicole Fontaine, EP President, Speech to the European Conference, Sochaux, 23 November 2000.
[321] Gunilla Carlsson, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, (Rapporteur) Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000.
[322] Ioannis Souladakis, PES, Greece, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003. Souladakis (Panellinio Socialistiko Kinima) was an MEP between 1999 and 2004.
[323] Pierre Bernard-Reymond, EPP, France, EP Debates, Applications for membership (see reports for Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Romania), 2 December 1998. Bernard-Reymond (centre des democrats sociaux) was an MEP from 1984 until 1986, then between 1989 and 1999.
[324] Robert Evans, PES, UK, EP Debates, Applications for Membership, 2 December 1998. UK Labour politician Robert Evans was an MEP from 1994 until 2009.

Jean-Claude Pasty's comment on Slovakia during the same debate also mentioned a general cultural belonging:

> 'we all know that the Slovak people, or at least the overwhelming majority of them, want to join the European Union because their country's history and culture belong to the Greater Europe that we are trying to build together'[325].

Just as the countries of Central and Eastern Europe were deemed to share in this generalised idea of a European culture, Malta and Cyprus were hailed as contributors to the European culture by virtue of the fact that they had been historically placed at the heart of a 'Mediterranean civilisation' which was the foundation of European culture:

> 'the Mediterranean is the cradle of our common European civilization'[326].

Their geographical position as Mediterranean islands had exposed them to the development of centuries of European culture:

> '[Malta] this small island state is a country in an exposed geopolitical position, one that has been profoundly marked by European culture and history'[327].

Greek Socialist Souladakis was perhaps the most articulate and lyrical in linking the ancient cultural references to Cyprus with the idea of a European civilization:

> 'Cyprus, the island of Aphrodite, or in the words of the modern poet, 'the golden green leaf tossed into the sea'. We are all Europe. Not new Europe and old Europe. We are the Europe we have built, the best thing man has given mankind. And a word to the Greek Presidency, given that we all agree it is the element of civilisation that unites us in Europe. There are two important texts, the 'Tomb of Pericles' and the 'Oath of Alexander the Great'; what a good idea it would be to have them translated into all the languages, including the new languages of the European Union, as statements of principles, values and civilisation'.[328]

The few direct references to a common European culture present in the parliamentary discourse on the fifth enlargement thus seem to show a generalised, if superficial, agreement among MEPs that there was indeed such a thing as a European cultural

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[325] Jean-Claude Pasty, group Union for Europe, France, EP Debates, Applications for Membership, 2 December 1998.
[326] Address by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat, Ireland) to the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus, 9 May 2002.
[327] Ursula Stenzel, EPP, Austria, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.
[328] Ioannis Souladakis, PES, Greece, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.

identity, which bound existing and future member states together into a single European family and thus gave further legitimacy to the enlargement process. Yet again, the characteristics of this common culture remained largely unstated: what was it for instance that connected the Mediterranean with the Baltic and the Scandinavian countries, but excluded other countries along the Mediterranean shore and further into the East? The contents and extent of the alleged common cultural identity remained unarticulated, yet the perception persisted that a common culture did in fact tie the EU's member states together – as shown by the mere fact that MEPs did feel the need to state that candidate states were "culturally" European.

The cultural identity linking twenty-five (later twenty-seven) countries together thus eluded a definition in parliamentary discourse. The claims about the cultural commonalities of the candidate states, far from clarifying the questions, did in fact show how far MEPs were from a common understanding of this European identity, even at a purely rhetorical level. Any probing of the phrase 'Mediterranean civilisation', for instance, would show how this concept raised more questions than it provided answers about the idea of a European cultural identity or a European civilization: if the Mediterranean was indeed (one of) the centre(s) of this civilisation, why should this commonality not be shared by the countries along the African shore of the Mediterranean, or the Near East, who were arguably also part of the 'Mediterranean civilisation'? And if this was indeed the case, couldn't they then also accede to the European Union? In cultural terms, they ought to qualify. And yet, Morocco's 1987 application for membership had already been rejected on the grounds that the country was not European. Even Turkey's application was mired with doubt about Turkey's 'Europeanness', in cultural rather than political terms. Was there perhaps an additional characteristic that applied to Cyprus and Malta, but not to Turkey or the Maghreb? And similarly, what about the 'Mediterranean civilisation' evoked in the case of the two islands, which presumably linked them to Spain, Italy and Greece, could in fact also bind them to fellow candidate states, which included countries so far from the Mare Nostrum as Poland and the Baltic States? Christianity is the answer that springs to mind.

The Christian foundations of European cultural identity?

The early 2000s saw the European Union engulfed in a debate on the role that cultural values, and religion in particular, should be assigned within the European Constitution – thus providing an essential backdrop to any cultural discourse MEPs may have wished to develop. In a 2006 volume on 'Religion in an expanding Europe', Peter Katzenstein claims that 'European enlargement will feed rather than undermine the importance of religion in the EU' as 'religious communities in the European periphery are reintroducing religion into the centre of Europe' – quoting as a prime example the 2004 accession of Catholic Poland.[329] The debate on the religious references originally inserted in the Preamble to the Constitution, which was supposed to highlight the foundational values of the European Union, brought into the public light the question of whether religion, or 'Christian civilisation', should even be considered as a direct inspiration for the Union's values. This debate came at a time when European countries were struggling to come to terms with an increasing number of Muslim immigrants and related controversies about their integration within the receiving societies, such as the right of Muslim women to wear the veil in France, and the latent islamophobia in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, combined with the potential accession to the EU of Turkey, a democratic country of overwhelming Islamic majority[330].

The place of Christianity within the contemporary European Union was therefore the subject of controversy and debate. The European Parliament itself was involved in the summer and early autumn of 2004 in the Buttiglione controversy, when MEPs rejected the Italian candidature of Rocco Buttiglione as Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security, who had made no secret of his strong religious and homophobe views[331]. The European Parliament refused to grant its approval for this appointment, eventually leading Commission President José Manuel Barroso to present to MEPs a different team without Buttiglione in October 2004. The EP's position thus seemed to indicate that religion should have no place in the official politics of the EU. At the same time, however, many of the 'founding fathers' that originated the process of institutional integration and to whom parliamentary discourse had given such prominence in its

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[329] Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein, eds., *Religion in an Expanding Europe*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2006), p. 2; see also Philip Schlesinger and François Foret, 'Political Roof and Sacred Canopy? Religion and the EU Constitution', *European Journal of Social Theory,* 2006, Vol. 9:1, pp. 89-81.
[330] See José Casanova, 'Relgion, European secular identities, and European integration', in Byrnes and Katzenstein, op. cit.; Amélie Barras, 'A rights-based discourse to contest the boundaries of state secularism? The case of the headscarf bans in France and Turkey', *Democratization*, 2009, Vol. 16:6, 1237-1260.
[331] The record of the hearing of Rocco Buttiglione before the EP's Civil Liberties Committee can be found at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/press/audicom2004/resume/041005_BUTTIGLIONE_EN.pdf

historical narrative were undeniably linked to Christian Democracy, to the point that Scott Thomas has defined European integration as 'an act of the political imagination of Christian Democracy.[332] The 'founding fathers' such as De Gasperi or Adenauer took their inspiration from their Christian faith in their political life, and made no mystery of this when they pioneered the idea of European integration. Christianity, or at least a Christian culture, was indeed indicated as an essential definer of European identity by a section of MEPs, roughly identifiable as, but not equivalent to, the Christian Democratic Group, later EPP, which was after all based on a grouping of parties that at national level found their inspiration in Christian values.

Nonetheless, interpretations of the influence of Christianity on European culture and contemporary values varied even among those who did point out that there was, in fact, such an influence: on the one hand, some, like the Swedish Lennart Sacrédeus, favoured a more general understanding of the Judeo-Christian tradition as the root of European culture:

> 'We have a common culture and community of values, based upon a Jewish and Christian spiritual inheritance and a culture of humanism. These core values are indispensable to our joint construction of an EU that is to be enlarged to include 25 Member States'[333].

Others were more forceful and clear-cut in their conviction that the European character has its primary root in Christianity: the Dutch Van der Vaal had for instance argued in 1996 that Slovenia could qualify for EU membership application due to its 'Western Christian' culture:

> 'partly by virtue of its culture, which has been strongly influenced by Western Christianity, Slovenia is an obvious candidate for membership'[334].

It is interesting that many of those MEPs who were most insistent on the Christian nature of European culture were also of rather 'Eurosceptic' inclinations, and were either against enlargement because they wished to stop the candidate countries from joining what they considered an unfavourable scheme, as in the case of Gollnisch:

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[332] quoted in Byrnes and Katzenstein, op. cit, p. 17.
[333] Lennart Sacrédeus, EPP Sweden, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003. Sacrédeus (Kristdemokraterna) was an MEP from July 1999 until July 2004.
[334] van der Vaal, Netherlands, Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations, EP Debates, Europe Agreement with Slovenia, 23 October 1996.

'If, however, the candidate countries were to persist in their intended course, we would confine our reservations to this brotherly warning. We should certainly not wish to give some false impression that we were in some way hostile to these nations that belong to our family, these nations that are European in terms of their peoples, languages and geography, that are Christian by faith and Western by civilisation, and, we hope, immune to all modern forms of totalitarianism, including those that are now approaching, after decades of terrible suffering'[335],

or were hoping that enlargement to countries that only recently had re-gained their full sovereignty and independence would strengthen the camp of those who wanted to reaffirm the primacy of the nation over furthering the integration process. The Italian non-aligned Mario Borghezio was among them, and used this idea in order to call on new member states to support a policy based on national and regional identities:

'we do, however, want to take this opportunity to welcome and extend a brotherly hand to the free peoples who succeeded in preserving their cultural identity even through the terrible years of Communist oppression, who are joining Europe, just as we did ourselves, certainly not in order to accept, after so many years of dictatorship, the diktats of the standardisation imposed by globalisation or of political correctness, or to be subjected to centralism once again. We are counting on them to help us in these battles, to help us preserve the Christian nature of the Europe of the peoples and regions which we are trying to create'[336].

The definition of European culture as a fundamentally Christian culture and, by extension, the definition of the European Union as based, however loosely, on Christian values remained a controversial and contested idea. The prickly and extensive debate sparked by the attempt to include a reference to Christianity in the Preamble to the European Constitution exemplified the general debate that involved European political circles and touched the wider public: could Christianity be the explicit and declared cultural reference by which the secular European Union was inspired? The Preamble of the Constitution would eventually refer to the 'cultural, religious and humanist

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[335] Bruno Gollnisch, Non-attached (Front National), France, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000.

[336] Mario Borghezio, non-attached, Italy, EP Debates, Progress eeport on enlargement,19 November 2002 – Borghezio is a member of the Italian Lega Nord, a party originally asking for the secession of Northern Italy from the rest of the country. MEPs from Lega Nord would later enter the Independence/Democracy Group together with other eurosceptic, such as UKIP, and anti-immigration parties for the parliamentary term 2004-2009.

inheritance of Europe'[337], opting for a general reference to religion rather than a more explicit one to Christianity. The Convention debate trickled over into the European Parliament's enlargement debates, with Liberal-Democrats such as Watson urging his fellow MEPs to deny the validity of such claims:

> 'this House would best repudiate Valèry Giscard d'Estaing's outdated model of Europe. Europe is not a Christian club'[338]

As a matter of fact, there was no unanimity on this concept even within the ranks of the EPP itself, as shown by the comment made by Irish EPP member John Walls Cushnahan:

> 'I do not subscribe to the narrow view that the Union is a 'Christian' club, I prefer to see it as a pluralist entity which reflects the diverse nature of the EU as it exists today, even before further expansion'[339].

The idea that Christianity played a role in the definition of Europe was thus by no means shared by all MEPs. Barón Crespo's comments on 19 November 2002 made the position of the Socialist group over the secular nature of the European integration process very clear:

> 'Europa volverá a ser un continente en el que, por primera vez, habrà una unidad basada en valores comunes de democracia y de respeto de los derechos humanos, una uniòn laica en la que habr·una clara separacion entre el poder espiritual y el temporal y un respeto por las creencias filosòficas y religiosas'[340].

European Parliament President Pat Cox, who presided over the last two years of the enlargement process for the fifth round, addressed the controversy in a speech to the join Houses of the Dutch Parliament in November 2003, claiming substantially that there was in fact such a thing as a Christian inspiration in the political and constitutional life of many EU member states, but that these were actually a minority number. He did not, however, quite pronounce himself either in favour or against the introduction of an 'invocatio Dei' in the European Constitution:

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[337] Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe as signed on 29 October 2004.
[338] Graham Watson, ELDR, UK, EP Debates, Progress report on enlargement,19 November 2002.
[339] John Walls Cushnahan, EPP, Ireland EP Debates, progress report on enlargement, 19 November 2002. Cishnahan (Fine Gael party) was an MEP from July 1989 until July 2004.
[340] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain, EP Debates, Extraordinary Debate on Enlargement, 19 November 2002. No official English version exists for this speech: 'Europe will return to be a continent that, for the first time, will experience a unity based on the common values of democracy and respect for human rights, a secular union with a clear separation between spiritual and temporal power, and respect for philosophical and religious beliefs'.

'We have the debate, then, in many states - there is a debate also here - what to do about reference to Judeo-Christianity in that mix? Let me tell you - and I can come back to this in detail if you wish - before I came here today, I had staff in the European Parliament look at the Constitutions of each of the 28 states at the IGC. Only a minority of those, a small minority, has a classic "invocatio Dei". One of the small minority is my own country, the Republic of Ireland, which begins as a preamble with an invocation: " In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, from Whom is all authority and to Whom, as our final end, all actions both of men and States must be referred; We, the people of Éire etc". This, whichever it should be, I just wish to make the point, is actually a minority when you look at the Constitutions today […] Whichever is the outcome on the Judeo-Christian reference in the preamble, these values are still there, and whichever are your personal or political values, values in action are the critically important thing, rather than simply being the more formalistic approach'[341].

The question of whether Christianity was and should be recognized as the cultural foundation of the European Union and its political values remained largely unsolved – as would become evident in the protracted debate over the question of Turkish membership. In spring 2003, MEPs had found a tentative, and temporary compromise on the question when they voted on the Oostlander report on Turkey's application for membership of the European Union:

'The European Parliament recognises that the political values of the EU are chiefly based on the Judeo-Christian and humanist culture of Europe. But, no one has a monopoly on these universal values of democracy, rule of law, human and minority rights, and freedoms of religion and conscience - values which can perfectly well be accepted and defended by a country where the majority is Muslim. The European Parliament believes, therefore, there are no objections in principle to Turkey's European Union membership'[342].

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[341] Address by Pat Cox (Liberal Democrat, Ireland) to Members of the Joint Houses of Parliament (States General), The Hague, 12 November 2003.
[342] European Parliament resolution on Turkey's application for membership of the European Union (COM(2002) 700 – C5-0104/2003 – 2000/2014(COS)). The report had been passed by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy with 55 votes in favour, 5 against and 1 abstention on 12 May 2003.

Despite this declaration, however, the question remained open and parliamentary discourse on a European cultural identity continued to be inconclusive.

Common references and European cultural identity?

It is therefore difficult to identify any single shared definition of European cultural identity in the discourse of the European Parliament, at least in so far as explicit attempts to provide such a definition are concerned. Although shared convictions about some of the traits of such a cultural identity do emerge from the discourse, such as the idea of Europe's political commitment to democracy and human rights being based on a shared cultural heritage and the identification of ancient Greek culture as a common foundation of contemporary Europe, MEPs did not in fact provide any direct descriptions of what this European civilisation consisted of beyond vague generalisations. The fact that no such explicit a definition can be found in the discourse, however, still leaves room for the possibility of piecing together such a cultural identity from the cultural references that MEPs used in general during enlargement debates. Such cultural references could provide a way of understanding the content, if not the explicit definition, of the so-called European civilisation. After all, it may even be possible that MEPs did not engage with the task of defining European culture because they considered European cultural identity to be obvious enough not to warrant such a definition. The cultural references that do appear in the discourse, however, seem to undermine such an assumption: rather than a traceable set of cultural references appearing in the speeches of several different MEPs over time, indicating the existence of precisely such a common European culture, parliamentary discourse showed that, at least in so far as enlargement debates were concerned, MEPs reverted to cultural references that were based more on their own personal background and experience than on a recognisable common European culture.

The philosophy of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution for instance are two of the most obvious cultural and historical references that are generally considered at the basis of modern European culture[343]. Yet parliamentary discourse rarely called upon such references. MEPs who did make use of them did so out of personal inclination rather than as a part of a wider parliamentary discourse on cultural identity. During the March

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[343] Rietberger, *Europe: a cultural history*; J. Tully, 'The Kantian Idea of Europe', in Anthony Pagden ed., *The Idea of Europe*, (Cambridge, 2002).

2002 general debate on enlargement, for instance, the Spanish Green MEP Nogueira Román mentioned Emmanuel Kant in passing as a figure that inspired modern Europe:

> 'there can be no going back on enlargement towards the East. There is a historical basis for that view, but we should not forget that a commitment on our part is called for too. We have just heard a reference to Kaliningrad. At present it is part of Russia, but it was the birthplace of no less a figure than Kant, one of the thinkers who laid the foundations for modern Europe. We should also remember that the Ukraine is as European as Poland. There is a region known as Galicia in Spain, but there is another Galicia in Central Europe with Krakow as its capital'[344].

Nogueira Román's mention of Kant was a way of indicating that the hometown of a philosopher who is unanimously recognised as one of the founders of modern European thinking should by right be considered to be part of Europe, despite its geographic position far into the East of the continent. An earlier mention of Kant however reveals an entirely different reason: Gil-Robles Gil Delgado, who at the time of this speech was President of the European Parliament, declared in January 1997 that the EP's powers needed to be strengthened in order to pave the way to a successful enlargement to the CEECs. He referred to Kant in order to support his demand for wider parliamentary powers within the EU's institutional structure:

> 'this historic objective [enlargement] will not be achieved unless the role of our Parliament is strengthened. It was Kant who most perceptively said that 'the struggle for Parliament is the struggle for freedom'. Yesterday, today and forever, it is, has been and will be also the struggle for equality and solidarity, the struggle for a future of peace'[345].

If Kant was only mentioned twice and for very different purposes in enlargement debates, other philosophers suffered an even worse fate: there are no mentions of them at all. Artists and writers fare little better: Titley's quotes of Shakespeare in April 2003, however beautiful, remained an isolated incident:

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[344] Camilo Nogueira Román, Greens/European Free Alliance, Spain, EP Debates, Enlargement, 13 March 2002. An MEP from July 1999 until July 2004 (elected with the Bloque Naciolaista Galego), Nogueira Román was known for using Galician during his tenure.
[345] José María Gil-Robles Gil-Delgado, EPP, Spain, EP Debates, Addres by the president, 15 January 1997.

'When confronted by all of this I can only echo Shakespeare's words in The Tempest: 'O, wonder!... O brave new world, That has such people in't.' Our job now is to build that brave new world. It will not come by accident. The candidates must continue to strive to be ready for the obligations of membership, particularly in the fight against corruption. We have to show the imagination and courage to embrace institutional, political and economic reform. Failure to do so will see the brave new world collapse into stagnation and mutual recriminations. Today is a new beginning. We must not miss the opportunities this new beginning brings. I can conclude by no better commentary than that of Shakespeare in Julius Caesar: "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries; on such a full sea we are now afloat; and we must take the current ... when it serves, or lose our ventures'.[346]

A few other cultural references are scattered throughout the EP's enlargement debates, yet there are no predominant references that may indicate the existence of a cultural European identity shared among MEPs beyond the few references to Ancient Greece. Literary or artistic references did seem to be the reflection of the personal interests and experiences of the speakers, rather than something binding them together within a specific European cultural identity that could be both unique and exclusive to the member states and the candidate countries. The fact that the idea of a European culture is both difficult to restrict to any well-defined geographical boundaries, let alone coincide with the boundaries of the existing or enlarged European union, was perhaps part of the reason why MEPs remained vague in their considerations of a European cultural identity.

Cultural identity and geographical limits of 'Europe'

Cultural identity and geographical limits also seemed to intersect and overlap at different points in the enlargement discourse. The theoretically well-defined geographical borders of Europe seemed to acquire the fluidity of its cultural borders when it came to the definition of Europe's Eastern and Southern limits, and end of the Cold War and the European Union's expansion into Eastern and Southern Europe only succeeded in bringing this uncertainty to the fore. Liberal Democrat MEP Lamassoure had already

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[346] Gary Titley, PES, UK, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003.

anticipated in the January 1990 debate on the events on Eastern Europe that 'we can no longer avoid discussing the geographical limits of our Community'[347].

Some, like Spanish Socialist Barón Crespo, adhered to the general idea of Europe as a geographical and cultural whole that had only been temporarily and abnormally divided by hostile political circumstances during the last century. Barón Crespo could thus declare in his November 2002 speech that the fifth round of enlargement would allow Europe to 'return' to its geographical unity after the abnormal divisions of the Twentieth Century:

> 'cuando en 2004, se abran las puertas para los nuevos socios, Europa volverá a ser una unión geográfica desde el Atlántico hasta el Báltico y desde Laponia hasta Chipre y atrás quedarán las ignominias de un siglo XX'[348].

The fifth enlargement, bringing together what had for five decades been divided into Western and Eastern Europe, seemed to finally bring an end to the previous division between East and West and somehow restore the alleged historical unity of Europe. The idea of unifying a wrongly divided Europe however seemed to lay a convenient blanket over the undertones that had traditionally carried strong political and cultural connotations behind the allegedly purely geographical terms of East and West. An extreme reflection of this lingering conception was present in the words of Italian (of Polish origin) MEP Gawronski, who claimed that Poland's accession actually constituted a 'return' to Europe in geographical as well as political terms:

> 'Poland […] –'will return to' Europe, for it has occupied its rightful place in Europe for centuries and only a perverse dictatorship was able to deny it its true place in history and geography for many decades'[349].

Gawronski's words may have constituted an exception in their explicit denial of the true 'Europeanness' of Eastern Europe as opposed to Western Europe, but they did in fact reflect the general feeling that the Cold War had denied the countries of the Eastern bloc their true European vocation, and the long-standing idea that the 'East' was culturally and politically 'less European' than the West. The fifth enlargement, in a way, did not do

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[347] Alain Lamassoure, Liberal and Democratic Reformist group, France, EP debates, Liberal Democrat group Commission Statement on Eastern Europe.

[348] Enrique Barón Crespo, PES, Spain 19 November 2002: 'when in 2004, the doors will open for the new members, Europe will again be a geographical union from the Atlantic to the Baltic and from Lapland to Cyprus, and so will end the disgrace of the Twentieth Century'.

[349] Jas Gawronski, EPP, Italy, EP Debates, Progress of the 12 candidate countries in 2000, 4 September 2001.

away with this distinction, but merely pushed the borders of the West further into the Eastern part of the continent, and the debate about where the outer limits of cultural Europe lay as opposed to its geographical ones was by no means exhausted by the EU's enlargement. The inclusion or exclusion of countries that were on the geographical borders of Europe, such as Russia and Turkey, but also the Ukraine, depended very much on the individual understandings of single MEPs. Expansion towards the East and further into the Mediterranean showed how the question of geography had become interwoven with the cultural question in trying to define the outer limits of Europe towards Russia and Turkey: Dutch MEP Johannes Blokland from the Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations could use geography as a way to exclude Turkey, but leave the question of Russia's belonging to Europe open in December 1997:

> 'should it not be clearly specified where the geographical border of the EU is to be? Will countries like Russia or the Ukraine in future be able to lay claim to membership? Should it not be brought home to Turkey that membership of the Union looks unlikely?'[350].

The geographical limits of Europe remained just as open and contested as its cultural limits: a fitting reply to Blokland's declaration was for instance provided by Greek Socialist Katiforis in 2002, when he dismissed Turkey's geographic position outside the European continent in favour of its belonging to Europe in historical and cultural terms:

> 'the enlargement of Europe brings us face to face with the historic question: we talk of enlarging Europe, but what exactly do we mean by Europe? I think that to interpret the Union as a reinstatement of a geographical entity would be excessively mechanistic. The European Union is, I think, a reinstatement of an historical reality which goes back three thousand years and which needs a new basis if it is to continue working. And all those who played a part during those three thousand years will, where they still exist, naturally have a place in modern-day Europe. I say this because questions have been raised recently as to whether Turkey qualifies as a European country on the basis of geographical criteria. But of course the criteria cannot be geographical. Turkey is, without question, part of our history. May I remind you that when the crisis in the Ottoman Empire

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[350] Johannes Blokland,Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations, Netherlands, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Blokland was an MEP from July 1994 until July 2009. He co-chaired the group on Independence for a Europe of Nations from September 1997 until 1999, then the re-named group for a Europe of Democracies and Diversities until July 2004, and chaired the Bureau of the Independence/Democracy group from February 2007 until July 2009.

reached its peak in the nineteenth century, the European powers referred to the Sultan as 'the sick man of Europe', not the sick man of the Middle East or the sick man of Asia Minor'[351].

The idea that Turkey could be considered to be culturally European even though most of its territory lies geographically outside Europe remained a contested one throughout the EP's enlargement debates. The idea that Russia, on the other hand, could be considered to be European was one that recurred at various times in the debate, although the Russian Federation never showed any inkling of wanting to seek EU membership, and thus cultural and geographical ideas about its Europeannes could perhaps be more safely expressed when they were obviously to remain an irrelevant political point. Nonetheless, the idea that Europe did indeed run 'from the Atlantic to the Urals' had a presence in enlargement debates, showing how the cultural and geographic limits of Europe remained undefined:

> 'enlargement [is] quite obviously, a historical inevitability, just as it is a geographical inevitability. Even the very name 'Europe', by definition, includes all the nations from the Atlantic to the Urals, although this has apparently been forgotten by a tiny part of the continent, the most prosperous and, in many ways, the most arrogant part, which appropriated the name half a century ago'[352].

Spanish MEP Marset-Campos, from the European United Left, also claimed that Russia qualified for EU membership by virtue of its historical participation in the construction of 'Europe':

> 'our support for enlargement goes without saying. We are also in favour of a European Union that includes Russia, and which therefore includes all the countries which have built – albeit in conflicting ways – this historical, cultural, economic, social and political reality known as Europe.[353].

[351] Giorgos Katiforis, PES, Greece, EP Debates, Progress report on enlargement, 1 December 2002. Katiforis was an MEP from July 1994 until July 2004, vice-chair of the PES group from July 1999 until July 2004.
[352] Paul Marie Coûteaux, Union for Europe of the Nations, France, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000. Coûteaux was an MEP from July 1999 until July 2004, as a member of the Union for Europe of the Nations group until March 2001, then within the group for a Europe of Democracies and Diversities until July 2004, then the Independence/Democracy group.
[353] Pedro Marset Campos, Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left, Spain, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000. Marset Campos was an MEP from July 1994 until July 2004.

If the Eastern borders of Europe remained blurred, its southern borders shared a similar fate. Thus, the idea of a Mediterranean civilisation was no obstacle for Austrian MEP Stenzel, who welcomed Malta's accession to the European Union with an observation that once again merged culture and geography. Stenzel in a sense set the limit of the EU's expansion into the Mediterranean by identifying Malta as the border of Europe to the South:

> 'because of its geopolitical position as the last outpost of Europe, at the crossroads with the Middle East and North Africa, the importance of Malta goes far beyond its geographical size and its small population'[354]

Geographical and cultural identities were thus interwoven to the point that they shifted and adjusted in their mutual definition and re-definition, reflecting the lingering uncertainty about the future expansion of the process of European integration to new countries beyond the ones that acceded in 2004 (and later in 2007), and the inability of European politicians to define the Union's 'final frontiers'.

Western civilisation, European civilisation, and 'unity in diversity'

In a mirror image of the difficulties of identifying the limits of cultural and geographical Europe, parliamentary discourse also hinted at various times at the difficulty of differentiating the European civilisation that allegedly bound the members of the European Union to a wider idea of Western civilisation. Thus in 1985, Italian MEP Selva, draftsman of the opinion of the Committee in charge of culture (among other affairs), talked about the contribution of the Iberian countries to a Western civilisation, rather than the European civilisation mentioned by his colleagues:

> 'Spain and Portugal have in fact made a substantial contribution to what is known as Western civilization, and enlargement is giving to these two countries the place that naturally belongs to them in the building of Europe'[355]

The identification of Europe with Western civilisation could perhaps find an explanation in the Cold War confrontation: after all, the European Community had not only firmly

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[354] Ursula Stenzel, EPP, Austria, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000.
[355] Gustavo Selva, EPP, Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement to Spain and Portugal,11 September 1985. Selva (Democrazia Cristiana) was an MEP from July 1984 until July 1989.

positioned itself within the Western camp, but it had also largely taken on the mantle of the 'West' in its own confrontation with Eastern Europe for the rightful embodiment of the political and cultural legacy of Europe. The following collapse of Eastern Europe and triumph Western civilisation could therefore easily be understood within this logic:

> 'No nation belonging to our common Western civilization should be excluded from the European Union which we have set ourselves as the final goal of our endeavours'[356].

The idea of a Western civilisation however remained even after the end of the Cold War: the decision of Central and Eastern European countries to join the EU, in particular, seemed to reinforce the idea that the 'East' as a concept was being pushed back, further away from the centre of Europe and its civilisation. This recalled older ideas about the 'East' as alien and non-civilised, Barbarian, other, and non-European, as shown by Stenzel's quotation of Vaclav Havel's words:

> 'let me quote an idea of the Czech President Vaclav Havel, who once wrote that it is not simply a question of Membership of the club of the wealthy but also of an acknowledgment of western civilization and an escape from the vacuum between east and west'[357].

These references show that, at least in the eyes of a cross-section of MEPs over time and across the political spectrum, the ideas of European civilisation and Western civilisation overlapped in a way that made it difficult to extrapolate the distinguishing features of Europe from those of 'the West'. The fact that Eastern Europe was in a way joining Western Europe, and that the boundary of the 'East' was merely being pushed forwards, while the idea of a separation remained, showed how the inter-relation of the two concepts made it even harder to construct a common definition of Europe's cultural identity. Perhaps then, identifying those who were not Europeans was the only way to find out what, by default, constituted Europe: the French Stirbois certainly opted to do so during the enlargement debate of 1985:

> 'for twenty-five centuries, we have undergone our trials: the Asiatics were imprudent enough to challenge Athens; the Carthaginians ravaged the

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[356] Patrick Joseph Lalor, European Democratic Alliance, Ireland, EP Debates, Enlargement, 8 May 1985. Lalor was an MEP from July 1979 until July 1994, vice-president of the EP from January 1982 until July 1984, and vice-chair of the European Progressive Democrats from July 1979 until July 1984, then group of the European Demcoratic Alliance until July 1994.
[357] Ursula Stenzel, EPP, Austria, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.

countryside of Italy; the Huns laid waste to within 150 km of Paris; we were attacked by Muslims in Bordeaux and by Turks threatening Vienna. Several nations have taken turns as leaders of Europe. Spain in the late Middle Ages, which contained and then pushed back the Moors; the Slavs, who repelled the ouslaught of the Tartars; the Habsburgs, who held the Ottomans at bay for three centuries and thus to some extent helped to safeguard Europe. Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, England, France and Italy were subsequently to make Europe's presence felt in the world'[358].

However, such a definition was based on a selective rendering of the construction of Europe over time that overlooked how the Ottoman empire had, for instance, formed part of Europe's system of political and military alliances for centuries, or how Muslims had contributed to life in many part of Europe for many centuries. At the same time, it also referred to imperial experiences that the contemporary Europe embodied by the EU was certainly less than keen to praise or emulate. The push and pull of different cultural experiences over the course of history and the many strands that influenced and made up European civilisation were perhaps then the reason why most MEPs were keen to uphold the much-vaunted EU principle of 'unity in diversity': if the elusive and yet persistent European cultural identity defied definition, it was certainly safer to fall back on the idea that the EU's political project could be based on the exaltation of the many different and intersecting local, regional, national and transnational cultures that constituted 'Europe'. Such an approach allowed Otto von Habsburg to hail Spain's contribution to contemporary European culture on the basis of the religious tolerance that had once upon a time been exercised in the Iberian kingdom:

> 'We should not forget that Spain, despite its reputation, set us the best example for tolerance in earlier times. Peace between Christianity, Islam and Judaism was first achieved in Spain, where there was a miraculous co-existence of these religions which illustrates the exemplary truth that true faith will find a means to communicate'[359].

Nearly twenty years later, Nicole Fontaine could, in a similar vein, bridge the ideas of a Mediterranean civilisation and a European one when talking to a Maltese audience, by

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[358] Jean-Pierre Stirbois, European Right, France, EP Debates, Enlargement, 8 May 1985. Stirbois (Front National) was a member of the EP from July 1984 until May 1986.
[359] Otto von Habsburg, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement, 8 May 1985.

taking the many cultures that had criss-crossed the Mediterranean as the example for the
future internal and external policies of the enlarged European Union of twenty-five:

> 'your archipelago, which has been fought over so often down the centuries,
> remains a melting pot of all the European and Mediterranean civilisations which
> have succeeded one another on these islands over a period of almost 3,000 years:
> the Phenicians, the Carthagenians, the Roman Empire, the Arabs, the Crusades,
> Charles V's multi-ethnic empire, the French led by Napoleon and, finally, the
> English. The source of so many problems in the past is now a source of
> unexpected opportunities at a time when trade and cultural exchanges are taking
> on a global dimension as never before'[360].

When a shared understanding of European culture and European civilisation failed to
materialise, and yet MEPs were united in claiming that such a cultural identity did exist to
bind together Europeans, whoever they may be, the option of highlighting how different
cultures had not only coexisted but also influenced each other in the same fluid
geographical space for many centuries was perhaps the only cultural identity that could
hold the common European political project together.

Caveat

Paradoxically, the most specific and compelling definition of Europe's cultural identity
can perhaps be found in the words of a non-attached French MEP of extreme right-wing
leanings, given that he belonged to the Front National, and would later join the 'Identity,
Tradition, Sovereignty' Group at its formation in 2007. Elected on a Eurosceptic
platform, he firmly opposed enlargement and further European integration and was a
consistent voice of dissent in the European Parliament. It is perhaps evidence of the
paradoxes of European politics and of the fact that the idea of 'European culture' could
be used at will to either support or undermine the idea that a shared civilisation and
consequent political values cut across the national divisions of the European continent,
that Jean-Claude Martinez was the one MEP to systematically identify the common
elements of European culture in order to disprove the idea that this could lead to
common politics and policy and that it could therefore be the foundation of further
integration:

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[360] Nicole Fontaine, EP President, Speech at the University of Malta, Malta, 20 November 2001.

'We are currently experiencing both enlargement and war. Both these events lead us to examine fundamental questions, such as who we are and what Europe actually represents. Europe represents peace but, with qualified majority voting and enlargement, Europe would have voted for war and, today, German, French and Belgian soldiers would be receiving posthumous decorations. Europe also represents the law, the people's law, together with Grotius, Vattel, Pufendorf, Molina and Suarèz. Poland, however, is taking part in a war in violation of international law and the Charter. Europe represents, in particular, Emmanuel Kant's law of nations. The Baltic States, however, which are neighbours of Königsberg, home of the philosophy of the categorical imperative, are failing to respect this law. Lastly, Europe represents memory, the memory of the tanks of the Empire in Budapest (1956) and Prague (1968). Václav Havel and Hungary, however, are supporting the tanks of another empire in Baghdad, which has been turned into a ghetto. Warsaw has forgotten Europe's memories. Should we, therefore, enlarge the Union to include these governments which have accepted war, rejected the law that forbids it, ignored the moral case which condemns it and forgotten the history of invasion they have experienced? Should we enlarge it to include Turkey, on the borders of Kirkuk which is currently being bombed? That would mean a Europe of adventure with adventurer governments, which, doubtless, is all very well, but these are not the values laid down for us by Article 2 of the Constitution. Enlargement would mean a Europe of lies. That is going too far! Mr President, you are Greek. Apollo's temple in Delphi bore the inscription: nothing in excess. Ten more countries is excessive'[361].

Martinez turned the idea of a common European culture on its head: it may exist, but it does not, in his opinion, bind Europeans together, and it has no bearing on the political choices of modern European nations. It should not factor in the European Union's decisions on enlargement either.

Conclusions, or how MEPs failed to construct a cultural identity discourse for Europe's enlargement

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[361] Jean-Claude Martinez, non-attached, France, EP Debates, Enlargement, 9 April 2003. Martinez (Front National) was an MEP from September 1989 until July 2009. He was a member of the Technical Group of the European Right from 1989 until July 1994, then a non-attached one until January 2007, when he joined the newly-formed Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty group.

An exploration of EP enlargement debates with an eye to cultural references reveals very little in the way of a recognisable identity discourse beyond, in the first place, the manifest concern among MEPs that member states needed to be able to identify with a common cultural identity that could flank the EU's political identity and, second, an inability to engage in an actual debate on the contents and role of this alleged common culture. The strongest element of cultural discourse on which it is possible to identify more than a superficial semblance of convergence is in fact somewhat a corollary to political identity, and it is provided by the cultural/historical references underpinning the democratic and human rights values so dear to MEPs. This emerged both in the discursive depiction of what was essentially a recent political choice as the 'cultural heritage' of Europe, which provided further legitimisation to the political construction of the integration process, and in the many references to ancient Greek political practice and philosophy. This was really the strongest, if not the only, binding cultural element that could be considered to amount to the construction of a cultural identity emerging from the EP's enlargement discourse. Other cultural references were either too vague to contribute to a significant definition of European cultural identity beyond reinforcing the notion that such an identity did in fact exist, or were only shared by a certain section of MEPs and sparked controversy rather than engendering agreement, such as the idea of a common Christian foundation as the main cultural reference of contemporary Europe. Yet other cultural references were too personal or isolated to contribute to the construction of a common identity. The EP's enlargement discourse did thus not lead to the emergence of a definition of European cultural identity, nor did MEPs define the idea of European civilisation. In fact, the elusiveness of Europe's cultural identity was akin to the MEPs' perceived difficulty in finding an agreement outer limits of Europe as well as in finding where 'European' civilisation ends and where others, be they a Western civilisation or a Mediterranean one, begin.

The cultural elements of the identity discourse present in the EP's enlargement debates thus fall short of providing a strong and coherent cultural anchor for the European integration process. In spite of its difficulties and limitations, political identity was thus still the strongest binding and defining factor in the MEPs' construction of contemporary Europe. Unlike political identity, which was concrete and definable on the basis of shared political and institutional practices and rules, cultural identity remained

largely undefined: MEPs agreed upon common European cultural traits only in so far as they were connected to the political identity, but they did not find themselves in even partial agreement on other elements. On the one hand, there was a clear, perceived need within the European Parliament for something going beyond political identity, which was ultimately a political choice and could thus potentially be reversed at any time. Unlike political choices, culture and tradition have a quality of perceived permanence and would thus serve as a glue to bind together the increasingly many and varied members of the European Union. Yet such discursive cultural unity could not be achieved.

Falling short of the construction of a single and unifying cultural identity, MEPs tended to fall back onto the EU's declared principle of 'unity in diversity', which did, at least, have some roots in Europe's historical and cultural experience of multiple encounters. Unfortunately, the cultural tolerance and co-existence that could be extracted from the past were just as common an experience as intolerance and conflict, and the two vied for the same place in European tradition. The European Parliament's enlargement discourse would construct a historical narrative largely based on the recognition and contemporary repudiation of just such a tradition.

From as early as the 1970s enlargement debates, thus at the same time as the political identity introduced 1960s was being consolidated, MEPs were certainly concerned enough about culture playing some kind of role in binding the members of the European Community together to make a point of inserting cultural references throughout the debates on the Greek and later on Spanish and Portuguese enlargements. At the same time, however, the foremost concerns of the time in the minds of European politicians, and thus also, those of MEPs, were about the political aspects of accepting these countries into the Western European fold via EC membership – and the Cold War context within which this was taking place also provided the Community, which was firmly anchored within the Western camp, with a limited scope for expansion. A specific discourse about the blurry horizons of European cultural identity would have therefore been relatively irrelevant, as it could hardly have trumped the predominant political aspect of European institutional integration and its enlargement. No cultural case for membership could have been made that would not take second place (at best) to the political dimension – but the compelling case for political identity could benefit from a sprinkling of cultural spice. Any failure to articulate a cultural identity within

parliamentary enlargement discourse was however also largely related to the perceived lack of any urgent need for cultural arguments to justify enlargement. Greece, Spain and Portugal may have been politically far from the Community standards, but they were undeniably linked to the general perception of European culture – and the EP's concerns lay more with their democratic potential and Cold War alignment than cultural compatibility. The European cultural connection could thus be used as a further reinforcement of the EC's democratic identity and shared political values, by associating the Community's political choice with historical roots of democracy and human rights. In the 1990s, on the other hand, the disintegration of the Cold War cocoon may have presented a threat to peace and stability on the continent, but also reinforced the idea that EC was a symbol of what Central and Eastern European countries had been deprived of in political terms and what they could now aspire to – by adopting the EU's political identity. MEPs did feel the need to reinforce this with a historical narrative, but the lack of a strong cultural discourse did not constitute a significant impediment to the legitimising discourse of the second or even the fifth enlargement, which was based on political identity, coupled in the second case with a strong historical narrative. It would, however, prove to be highly significant in the debate on Turkey's eligibility for membership after 1999. Ultimately, the lack of an articulation of cultural identity in the EP's discourse as opposed to its successful construction of a political identity and even a common historical narrative meant that even when the cultural debate gained prominence in the wider debate sparked by the European Convention, the EP did not have a strong common voice to contribute to the debate – as it had successfully done in the past with political values. The debate on Turkey's membership application would show all the shortcomings of the EP's identity discourse.

Chapter Five: The debate on Turkish membership and the meaning of Europe, 1987-2004

The European Parliament's enlargement discourse considered thus far showed a picture in which political, cultural and historical themes were woven together in a changing pattern according to the shifting political circumstances surrounding the MEPs' articulation of ideas of Europe. Throughout the 1962-2004 period, the political element of this European identity continued to be the most prominent feature of parliamentary discourse. Nonetheless, the institutionalisation of the EU's political values with the adoption of the Copenhagen criteria in 1993 was followed by a waning in the focus granted to political identity in parliamentary discussions of enlargement to Central and Eastern European countries. This coincided with a surge in the articulation of historical themes after the end of the Cold War thrust Western Europe and its neighbours together. Finally, the use of cultural references appeared to be the least cohesive, so much so that it would be difficult to speak of a coherent cultural identity emerging from parliamentary discourse, at least in terms of definitions of belonging in relation to enlargement. Remarkably, the one aspect of cultural identity on which MEPs agreed was the notion that the Community's political values emerged from a common cultural heritage that is located in the ancient practices of the Greek states.

Thus far, this thesis has focused on debates regarding enlargements that were both completed and successful: the European identity that emerged from them contributed to the legitimisation of accession by thirteen new member states. Despite the distinct circumstances in which these states entered the EC/EU and the diverse political, historical and cultural circumstances that set each of these countries apart from one another, what the countries of the second, third, and fifth enlargement waves had in common was a perceived commonality in their 'European character', which was never fundamentally called into question during the enlargement process. Whilst their eligibility for membership and thus their adherence to the Community's own definition of 'Europe' in the contemporary sense could be and was in fact a subject of debate, Greece, Spain, Portugal and the Central and Eastern European countries that joined in 2004 were all on a most basic level 'European' in the perception of both European political elites and the wider public. MEPs thus engaged in a discursive exercise aimed at turning a

general European character into a qualifier for Community or Union membership, but were already dealing with countries that could lay claim to a 'European' character in the wider sense.

Turkey, on the other hand, from the very beginning of its association with the EEC, presented a series of questions about the limits of Europe that no other candidate state could stir up in quite the same way. Turkey's position on the geographical limits of the European continent, with a large part of it actually situated in Asia[362], was only one of the elements that contributed to setting it apart from the other states working to join the Community over the years. Historically, Turkey's participation in European politics notwithstanding, its unique culture and religious difference stood out in the European collective imagination as distinctively 'other'[363]. Twentieth century attempts by Kemal Atatürk to modernise and Europeanise the country after the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 only partially dispelled this public perception. The debate on Turkish membership therefore provides an ideal case study of how the EP's identity discourse was elaborated vis-à-vis the prospect of enlargement to a country whose 'European character' was much more open to question than any other candidate's before or since[364]. Morocco's application for membership throws the uniqueness of the Turkish case into even greater relief: far from being quickly rejected on grounds of 'non-Europeanness', as was the fate of Morocco's attempt, Turkey's European character was in fact deemed significant enough for the application to stand[365]. Whether it would be so pervasive as to actually warrant accession remained, and still is, an open-ended question.

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[362] Ninety-seven percent of Turkish territory is actually situated in the Asia continent, with only the parts north of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles situated in geographical Europe.
[363] Kösebalaban, Hans, 'The Permanent 'Other'? Turkey and the Question of European Identity', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 2007, Vol. 18:4, pp. 87 – 111.
[364] Morocco applied for European Community membership in June 1987 and was rejected on the basis that it was a 'non-European state': 'Morocco applies for membership of the EEC', The Times, 21 July 1987; 'Brussels rejects Rabat's bid to join EEC', The Guardian, 21 July 1987; 'EEC ministers seek gentle rebuff for unwanted Morocco', The Times, 14 September 1987 – although the latter article does indeed show how much perceptions have changed since, as one Brussels official was quoted saying 'First Turkey, now Morocco, who will be next? Cyprus? Malta? Norway?' – Cyprus and Malta joined in 2004. Norway was admitted to the EU in 1995, although it eventually rejected membership.
[365] Bahar Rumelili defined the immediate rejection of Morocco's EEC membership application as 'a moment when the EU clearly took an exclusionary stance against an outside state based on its inherent characteristics' and marking Morocco as 'inherently non-European' hence precluding any future reiteration of its membership application – Bahar Rumelili, 'Constructing identity and relating to difference: understanding the EU's mode of differentiation', *Review of International Studies*, 2004, 30: 27-47. Of course, the strategic circumstances surrounding the two applications also differed: unlike Morocco, Turkey's crucial alignment with Europe had secured it a strong and vociferous supporter of its European integration aspirations in the form of the US.

Turkey's aspirations and Europe's scepticism: uneasy definitions in an on-going debate on the limits of Europe

The relationship between Turkey and Europe is largely influenced by the perceived need to define where one starts and the other begins. This concern has been the crux of many academic studies in recent decades, and has long enthralled many among the wider public[366]. Political, cultural and historical elements have all been placed under scrutiny in the attempt to define the 'European character' that Turkey would allegedly need in order to be granted full accession to the European Union. In this respect, the political yardstick is once again the foremost measure against which Turkey's eligibility can be determined. Political scientists have thus examined Turkey's progress towards meeting the economic and political criteria for membership, changes to the legal code and institutional reforms, and progress in the Turkish human rights record – essentially exploring the success of the EU's conditionality in furthering democratisation and economic change[367]. Alongside the political reforms required of Turkey before membership can be granted, however, cultural and historical elements have come under academic scrutiny to an unprecedented extent in the consideration of Turkey's membership bid. Already more compelling to the general mind than sometimes abstract ideas of political or institutional compatibility, questions of cultural unity have been approached from a variety of angles in the existing literature on Turkey and Europe. There have been empirical studies such as John Scherpereel's work on cultural compatibility between Turkey and EU member states[368], and studies concerned with ideational explorations of what it means to be 'European'

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[366] Riva Kastoryano, 'Turkey/Europe: Space-Border-Identity', *Constellations*, 2006 Vol.13:2; Bahar Rumelili has for instance pointed out how Turkey's position vis-à-vis Europe has remained ambiguous in the midst of competing identity discourses articulated within both the EU and Turkey – Rumelili, op. cit.; also see Senar Benhabib and Türküler Iskilel, 'Ancient Battles, New Prejudices, and Future Perspectives: Turkey and the EU', *Constellations*, 2006 Vol. 13:2, pp. 218-233; Le Gloannec, Anne Marie, 'Is Turkey Euro-compatible? French and German Debates about the 'Non-criteria'', *Constellations*, 2006, Vol. 13:2, pp. 263-274.

[367] Chris Rumford, 'From Luxembourg to Helsinki: Turkey, the politics of EU enlargement and prospects for accession', *Contemporary Politics*, 2000 Vol. 6:4, pp. 331-343; Avci, Gamze, 'Putting the Turkish Candidacy into Context', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 2002, Vol. 7, pp. 91-110, ; Ziya önis, 'Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era', *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 4:1, pp. 9-34.

[368] Scherpereel applied Laitin's model of social mobility and cultural repertoires in contemporary Europe to Turkey, concentrating on language, religion and popular culture. He found that, unlike in the case of Central and Eastern European countries who joined the EU in 2004 and 2007, the cultural 'othering' of Turkey does in fact have an empirical basis. However, he also concluded that 'cultural alterity' would not preclude Turkey from successful accession or later integration within the EU, above all in terms of EU 'network politics' and policy-making institutions. John A. Scherpereel, 'European Culture and the European Union's 'Turkish Question'', *West European Politics*, 2010, Vol. 33:4 pp. 810-829.

and whether Turkey does or can indeed belong to this identity[369]. Whether or not to conclude that some level of cultural homogeneity is necessary for membership, academics have certainly expended a great deal of time and effort in trying to assess what, exactly, constitutes Turkey's European connection.

There is of course a great deal of evidence that Turkey has been, at the very least in the second part of the Twentieth century, an integral part of the European political and security sphere[370]. Ever since 1945, Turkey has been firmly anchored to Europe in geopolitical and strategic terms, as a long-standing member of the Council of Europe (it was a founding member in 1949), NATO (since 1952), and the OSCE (also as a founding member since 1973). However, membership of these organisations does not necessarily make Turkey part of the 'European family' in general terms. In fact, its place within Europe, or vis-à-vis Europe, is the main bone of contention in the debate over EU membership. Unlike the other European international organisations to which Turkey already belongs, the European Union has an ideological claim to the representation of Europe's common identity not only in a specific area, such as security or economics, but in a much more holistic and largely 'civilisational' sense. Turkey's 'Europeanness' thus becomes an unofficial criterion by which its application is judged, alongside its economic and political position. Moreover, unlike other candidate states before it, Turkey's application to join the European Union has generated significant debate not just among the political elites but also among its citizens, eliciting a level of interest unmatched by other EU-related issues[371] and becoming often tangled up with other, internal political controversies within the EU and its member states[372]. Consequently, the debate has played out across newspapers and other media outlets, fuelling popular interest in the question of what it means to be European more than other enlargements have done. The (mis)quote attributed to Tsar Nicholas I referring to Turkey as 'the sick man of Europe' is possibly the most famous of the catalysts often employed by those interested in whether Turkey can be considered to be part of Europe, culturally, historically and

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[369] See for instance José Casanova ' The Long, Difficult and Tortuous Journey into Europe and the Dilemmas of European Civilisation', *Constellations*, 2006, Vol. 13:2, pp. 234 - 247 Meltem Müftüler-Bac, 'Through the Looking-Glass: Turkey in Europe', *Turkish Studies,* 2000, Vol. 1:1, pp. 21-35, Hans Kösebalaban, 'The Permanent 'Other'? Turkey and the Question of European Identity', *Mediterranean Quarterly* 2007 Vol. 18:4 pp. 87 – 111; Nilüfer Göle, 'Europe's Encounter with Islam: What Future?', *Constellations*, 2006 Vol. 13:2, pp. 248-262.

[370] David Barchard, *Turkey and the West*, (London: Boston and Henley, 1985).

[371] John Redmond, 'Turkey and the European Union: troubled European or European trouble?', *International Affairs*, 2007, Vol. 83:2, pp. 305-317.

[372] Hakan Yilmaz, 'Turkish identity on the road to the EU: basic elements of French and German oppositional discourses', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 2007, Vol. 9:3

politically[373]. It is merely the best known example of how the question has been present in the collective imagination long before it morphed into the political issue of EU membership.

The ramifications of the ongoing debate on Turkey's 'European character' are of course more far-reaching than a mere intellectual exercise in the definition of Europe for definition's sake. The question does in fact have immediate bearing on whether Turkey should become a full member of the European Union, a controversy that decades of European integration and enlargement have left unresolved. Ever since the 1963 Ankara Agreement establishing Turkey's association with the then EEC, the possibility of membership has emerged at various times over the years[374]. The first official membership application in 1987, whilst never refused outright by the EC, was met by the Commission's negative opinion and the subsequent fall into temporary oblivion whilst the EC and then EU dealt with the more pressing issues unearthed by the end of the Cold War and the prospect of Eastern enlargement[375]. Nonetheless, Turkey's continued goal of entering the European Union has remained a controversial issue in European politics ever since[376]. The Ankara Agreement did, after all, already envisage accession as a clear Turkish goal when the political and economic conditions were met, and Turkey's renewed efforts in the mid-1990s only brought the issue back from its dormant state to the forefront of European politics. Moreover, the EU's commitment to granting membership to Central and Eastern European countries while sidelining Turkey's preceding claim after the end of the Cold War soured perceptions of EU-Turkey relations up until the end of the decade[377]. The debate on Turkish's eligibility has

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[373] Dimitris Livanios pointed out how the origins of the misquotation are not known, so that it is impossible to determine how the Tsar's 'a sick man' turned in the collective imagination into 'the sick man of Europe' – highlighting once again how 'rhetoric matters even when its meaning is not genuine'. Dimitris Livanios, 'The 'sick man' paradox: history, rhetoric and the 'European character' of Turkey', *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 2006, Vol. 8:3.

[374] The Association Agreement between the EEC and Turkey was signed on 12 September 1963 and came into force on 1 December 1964. The official enlargement website of the European Commission describes it as aimed 'at bringing Turkey into a Customs Union with the EEC and to eventual membership'. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/turkey/relation/index_en.htm

[375] The Commission Opinion on Turkey's request for accession to the Community issued on 20 December 1989.

[376] Turkey formally applied for EC membership in 1987, to which the European Commission issued a negative opinion, without however expressly rejecting the possibility of a future Turkish accession.

[377] Ziya Öniş, 'An awkward partnership: Turkey's relations with the European Union in comparative-historical perspective', *Journal of European Integration History*, 2001, Vol. 7:3.

continued to simmer under the surface ever since, re-emerging with full force after the European Council's decision to grant Turkey candidate status at the end of 1999[378].

Establishing whether Turkey is indeed 'European' enough to become a full member of the Union is of course much more than merely an attempt at defining Turkey vis-à-vis Europe: it is also and above all an attempt to understand and define what this Europe actually is. European Parliament debates on Turkey's eligibility should therefore provide an excellent indicator of opinions on what constitutes 'Europe' in the eyes of MEPs. The controversial nature of Turkey's aspiration to join the EU in the eyes not only of the European elites, but also and perhaps above all in the eyes of the European public, makes the debate surrounding it the ideal test-case of emerging concepts of Europeanness, their flexibility, and their limits. It also provides an insight into how the identity discourse developed to legitimise the accession of countries with a widely accepted cultural and historical European character was articulated in the much more controversial Turkish case. In dealing with previous enlargements to Mediterranean and Eastern European countries, the European Parliament's articulation of a European identity was to a large extent an attempt to construct a legitimating identity for the European Community: by conflating pre-existing ideas of Europe with Community values and the process of European integration, MEPs were effectively playing on established, if undefined, notions about the existence of a common 'European character' already binding together existing and prospective candidate states. The EP's identity discourse was therefore essentially aimed at the legitimisation of the political and institutional integration of countries that, on some level, were already perceived as part of a pre-existing concept of Europe. They were therefore able to draw on historical and cultural experiences that, flanked with political choices and notwithstanding the contradictions and paradoxes highlighted in previous chapters, could largely provide the basis of a binding common European identity. MEPs were essentially engaged in the construction of an identity for the European Community, working with pre-existing notions of 'Europe' and bringing them to bear on the process of European integration so as to make the two overlap to such an extent that belonging to the Community would come be considered the final corroboration of a country's European character.

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[378] The Copenhagen Council declared on 12 December 1997 Turkey's 'eligibility for accession to the European Union', to be judged by the same criteria as other candidate states: Conclusions of the European Council, 12-13 December 1997:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/032a0008.htm

Turkey, on the other hand, escaped this logic: whilst a case could be made for shared historical and cultural experiences binding the Ottoman and European states through the centuries, Turkey remained 'other' in the European imagination. If in the Greek case the historical reality of Ottoman rule over an area that lacked any sort of independence for over four centuries was apparently easily overcome by the reference to ancient Greece as the origin and inspiration of contemporary European values, and the Cold War alienation of Central and Eastern Europe could be set aside through recourse to a shared historical narrative prior to the Second World War and a common notion of 'reconciliation', this was largely facilitated by the fact that MEPs were able to draw on existing ideas of Europe in which these countries were somehow included – even in a merely geographical sense, they were all situated in the European continent. Turkey's place within such notions of Europe was, at best, much more precarious. Any identity discourse articulating Turkey's potential membership of the European Union would thus have to tackle the uniqueness of Turkey's situation vis-à-vis pre-existing notions of Europe: whilst with previous enlargements a general idea of 'Europe' had to be brought back to a specific notion of identity within the European Community, Turkey did not belong to generally accepted ideas of Europe to begin with, and thus these could not be used as a starting point to then make the link between general 'Europeanness' and belonging to a common European identity within the European Union.

The debate on Turkish membership: the European media and public opinion

The EP's identity discourse in relation to Turkey's potential accession developed in the midst of an extensive debate in the European public sphere, with distinct identity discourses interacting and overlapping at national and European levels, creating competing perceptions of exclusion and inclusion to European identity in what has been described as a debate in which Turkey has become a 'mirror for Europe': 'Turkey has been the alterity that has transformed a rational political project into an irrational discourse in search of a "collective consciousness" to define European belonging as an idea of unity in diversity'[379]. This was therefore a crucial backdrop to the EP debate, and while some of the arguments trickled into parliamentary discussions, there seemed to be

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[379] Riva Kastoryano, 'Turkey/Europe: Space-Border-Identity', *Constellations*, 2006, Vol. 13:2.

a distinct separation between the way in which the media and public opinion addressed the issue and the manner in which MEPs tackled it in plenary debates.

Analyses of the Turkish membership bid in the European media spanned all aspects of Turkey's and Europe's identity, with a dual focus on political identity on the one hand and 'civilisational' concepts on the other. It was a wide-ranging discussion that essentially revolved around the extent to which Turkey could be considered 'of Europe', both in historical terms and on the basis of the political and social characteristics associated with contemporary Europe[380]. The question featured prominently in the national media of the member states, and at times of heightened political debate within the member states, Turkey's membership bid became a catalyst for debating broader issues related to the direction and purpose of European integration: the rejection of the European Constitution in the French and Dutch referenda of spring 2005 was just the most blatant example of the way in which the Turkish question has seeped into national political debates to become the symbol of the European public's uneasy relationship with the changes at EU level[381]. Controversy over references to the alleged Christian roots of European culture in the proposed European Constitution, the French dispute over wearing the veil and the international outrage over the Danish cartoons in 2006 all contributed to the view that Turkey's culture and religion likely mark it as non-European[382]. Additionally, the timing of the Turkish membership bid has certainly done little to quell existing fears, already heightened by the parallel, and much more fast-paced, enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe, concluded in May 2004 with the accession of eight former Soviet satellites as well as Malta and Cyprus[383].

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[380] 'The European Union must open its doors to Turkey', The Independent, 11 December 1999; 'Turkey must not join the Christian EU: Europe's political and cultural heritage is just too different to accommodate its Eastern neighbour', The Daily Telegraph, 13 December 2002; 'L'Europa e i suoi vicini: il dilemma turco', La Stampa, 12 Agosto 2003.

[381] It was interesting to note, however, that a Eurobarometer survey conducted after the French vote on 30 and 31 May 2005 found that only 6% of the respondents 'spontaneously mentioned' not wanting Turkey in the EU as a reason for voting 'no'. See Flash Eurobarometer, 'The European Constitution: Post-Referedum Survey in France', accessible at http://www.eu-jugendpolitik.de/downloads/22-177-256/reffrance.pdf Raphaël Frank, 'Why did a majority of French voters reject the European Constitution?', *European Journal of Political Economy*, 2005, Vol. 21, pp. 1071 – 1076; Paul Haisworth, 'France Says No: The 29 May 2005 Referendum on the European Constitution', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2005, Vol. 21:1 .

[382] 'Do Muslims not belong in this Christian Europe?', The Independent, 16 December 2002; 'Don't Mention God, Ministers Tell EU Policy Makers', The Independent, 6 February 2003; ""Giuste le radici cristiane nella Costi-tuzione Ue"" ""Nei preamboli vanno inseriti i valori a cui si ispirano le norme""", La Stampa, 28 September 2003; 'Il no di Giscard d'Estaing all'ingresso di Ankara nell'Unione Europea fa affiorare un'atavica paura: L'ottomano alle porte di casa', La Stampa, 24 November 2002.

[383] The 'Polish Plumber' debate was perhaps the most blatant example of the fears and misgivings associated with the EU Constitution and Eastern Enlargement: 'Polish plumber symbolic of all French fear about constitution' Financial Times, 28 May 2005.

The issue of Turkish membership exemplifies much of the mistrust and doubts that plague the public's attitude towards EU enlargement in particular and the role of the EU in general. Economic and social considerations certainly play an important part in the argument against Turkish membership: Turkey has a large population and much lower economic and social standards that already make large inflows of Turkish workers into the EU a common occurrence. Large Turkish communities already exist in many EU member states, Germany being a prime example[384]. However, economic and social conditions aside, the prospect of Turkish entry entails a whole additional layer of contention that revolves entirely around the question of identity and 'Europeanness'. It was this aspect that often emerged in national discourses on Turkey's potential EU membership.

The political discourses of France and Germany analysed by Hakan Yilmaz show how, in these core European countries, the two sides of the debate on Turkish membership were linked to the left-right divide in the two countries. In both France and Germany, the leading centre-right parties (the Union for a Popular Movement, UMP, in France, and the CDU/CSU in Germany) have officially opposed Turkish membership, putting forward an idea of "privileged parternship" instead. The left-wing parties, on the contrary, have by and large expressed themselves in favour of Turkish entry, or at least they have not opposed the idea per se.

Potential Turkish membership turned into a heated topic in the French debate on the Constitutional treaty in 2004-2005. Yilmaz showed how the right-wing opposition to Turkish membership drew on notions of European identity that revolved around geography, history and religion[385]. Geography was used as an exclusionary device, whilst history was understood as classical European civilisation based on the legacy of ancient Rome and Greece. Finally, the right-wing discourse also referred to Europe's religious identity as primarily and undeniably steeped in the Judeo-Christian tradition, understood as an all-encompassing common Christian heritage that shapes Europe as a civilisation idea, a unique political culture and a distinct lifestyle. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's words in the interview given to *Le Monde* in 2002, hence during his tenure as Chairman of the

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[384] See for instance Simon Green, 'The legal status of Turks in Germany', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 2003, Vol. 22:2/3, pp. 228-246.
[385] Hakan Yilmaz, 'Turkish identity on the road to the EU'.

Convention on the Future of Europe, fell within this line of reasoning, when he claimed that Turkey's accession 'would be the end of the European Union' because Turkey 'has a different culture, a different approach, a different way of life… its capital is not in Europe, 95% of its population lives outside Europe, it is not a European country'[386]. This declaration was openly based on the idea that the European Union is formed by states that share a certain set of values that go beyond a formal political or economic structure and are instead rooted in a common "way of thinking", even though the actual content remains unspecified. The media recorded Pat Cox's negative reaction to these words, which he deemed 'distinctly unhelpful'[387]. Whilst not as explicit in declaring Turkey to be non-European, the then German CDU and opposition leader Angela Merkel remarked in December 2004 that Turkey was not European, but could indeed act as a 'bridge' between Europe and Asia: 'A bridge should never belong totally to one side. Turkey can fulfil its function of bridge between Asia and Europe much better if it does not become a member of the EU'[388]. Her words were thus not quite as stark a claim of Turkey's difference as her earlier comments made during an EPP meeting in 1997 ('the European Union is a civilisation project and within this civilisation project, Turkey has no place')[389]. Whilst Merkel's words seem to espouse the view that Turkey does indeed share some traits with Europe, but that this is not enough to make it European: it allows it to act as a bridge between Europe and its neighbouring continent, but can only act as such if it continues to be 'in between', without renouncing its non-European character in favour of embracing its Europeanness in full, even if this were an actually possibility.

The Turkish membership question can be interpreted as a debate between secularists, who believe in a pluralistic Europe in terms of religion and culture as well as politics and would thus support Turkish membership, and traditionalists, who do not see Turkey as part of the European civilisation sharing the common heritage outlined above, hence

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[386] However, he never did refer to Turkey as a 'Asiatic country', as he was famously misquoted later on. Livanios, op. cit.. An important figure in the French centre-right political scene from the 1960s, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing was President of the French Republic between 1974 and 1981, and was later a member of the European Parliament between 1989 and 1993, within the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group. He then returned to the French National Assembly. Giscard was Chairman of the Convention on the Future of Europe from December 2001 to July 2003.

[387] 'Turkey must be kept out of the union, Giscard says: Ankara backers condemned as 'enemies of integration', The Guardian, 9 November 2002; 'Turkey's EU membership challenged by Giscard', The Times, 9 November 2002.

[388] Quoted in Hakan Yilmaz, 'Turkish identity on the road to the EU'.

[389] The claim was at the time immediately reprised by The Guardian and later used as a starting point for one of many studies of the relationship between cultural identity and Turkey's membership bid – thus showing how longstanding this concern was, and how it was shared by political elites, the media, and academic observers alike. See for instance Meltem Müftüler-Bac, 'Through the Looking-Glass'

opposing its entry as a full member of the Union[390]. However, as pointed out by Elisabeth Shakman Hurd, the cultural and religious arguments against Turkish membership have stirred up a fundamental controversy about European identity and the politics of religion within Europe itself[391]. The relationship between cultural and religious Christian roots and European identity calls into question the relationship between European identity and secularism, another, strong element of Europe's cultural and political heritage. The principle of secularism that is widely hailed as one of the core elements of contemporary European political culture, dating back to the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, is also a strong, if contested, element in Turkish contemporary culture[392]. Secularism can thus be considered one of the first common factors that can be found between Europe's political identity and contemporary Turkey. When examined more closely, however, even this idea of secularism as a quintessentially European value equally espoused by all member states becomes much more nuanced: religion and religious identities do in fact play different roles in the political and social realities of the different EU countries, and the debate on inserting a reference to the Christian roots of Europe in the European Constitution clearly shows that the EU itself is not insulated from the influence of religion on political life.

Cultural arguments could therefore be used both to support Turkey's membership of the EU and to oppose it. However, Dimitris Livanios noticed that those who make an argument in favour of membership tend to bypass the question of Turkey's 'Europeanness' and instead base their reasoning on the strategic and political advantages of having Turkey join the Union. The only 'civilisational' argument that was sometimes used in this context was the claim of a religiously pluralistic and secular nature of the EU, an image that could only be reinforced by the decision to let such a large Muslim country join what is often perceived as a "Christian club", hence also enhancing Europe's strategic and political position in the current times. Livanios also pointed out how those

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[390] On the complexities of secularism in contemporary European states, see Amélie Barras, 'A rights-based discourse to contest the boundaries of state secularism? The case of the headscarf bans in France and Turkey', *Democratization*, 2009, Vol. 16:6 pp. 1237 – 1260.

[391] Shakman Hurd, Elisabeth 'Negotiating Europe: the Politics of Religion and the Prospects for Turkish Accession', *Review of International Studies,* 2006, Vol.3:2, pp. 401-418.

[392] See Bassam Tibi, 'Europeanizing Islam or the Islamization of Europe: political democracy vs. cultural difference', and M. Hakan Yavuz, 'Islam and Europeanization in Turkish-Muslim socio-political movements', both in Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein, eds., *Religion in an expanding Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 204-224 and pp. 225-255; David Kushner, 'Self-perception and identity in contemporary Turkey', *Journal of Contemporary History* 1997, Vol. 32:2, pp. 219-233; Ayse Kadioglu, 'The paradox of Turkish nationalism and the construction of official identity', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1996, Vol. 32:2, pp. 177-193.

opposed to Turkish membership do base their arguments on identity, but tend to steer clear of explicitly using religion as a reason to reject Turkey. Their argument tends to be a 'civilisational one', stating that Turkey is not European because it does not share the same, or enough of the same, cultural heritage[393].

Eurobarometer polls regularly assessing public attitudes to enlargement started to include Turkey in 1999, alongside the official candidate countries and Malta (at the time not yet officially a candidate state), Switzerland and Norway[394]. Over the 1999 to 2004 period, responses to Eurobarometer polls repeatedly showed that a majority of EU citizens remained against Turkish membership, with Turkey regularly featuring at the bottom of the scale of all other countries for the number of respondents in favour of Turkish accession, which remained consistently around the 30% mark[395]. A study undertaken on behalf of the European Commission to explore more closely the attitudes shown by the public's response to such opinion polls showed that much of the problem, as perceived by the European public, rested in the differing natures of Turkish and European culture. European citizens saw Turkey as 'non-European' for cultural and historical reasons, and hence they appeared to determine their opposition to Turkish entry on identity-based arguments that had their foundations in a long-standing depiction of Turkey as Europe's cultural 'other'[396]. The study showed how EU citizens, as well as the citizens of the then candidate states in Central and Eastern Europe, did not consider Turkey 'an integral part of Europe'[397]: this applied both to the geographical definition of Europe and to more cultural, social, economic and political aspects.

The main problem with Turkey's membership bid is that it stirs up internal dilemmas about the essence of European identity, about the relationship between religion and politics and private and public life, both within the member states and at EU level.

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[393] See for instance Hasan Kosebalaban, 'The Permanent "Other"? Turkey and the Question of European Identity'. *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 2007, Vol. 18:4, pp. 87-111

[394] The candidate countries at the time were: Hungary, Poland, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania. Eurobarometer Report number 51, Released July 1999 http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb51/eb51_en.pdf accessed on 18 October 2010.

[395] The percentage of respondents in favour of Turkish accession peaked in autumn 2001, with 34% of respondents declaring their support – Eurobarometer Report number 56, Released April 2002, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb56/eb56_en.pdf accessed on 18 October 2010.

[396] *Perceptions of the European Union: A Qualitative Study of the Public's Attitudes to and Expectations of the European Union in the 15 Member States and the 9 Candidate Countries*, 2001 available at: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/areas/studies/optem-report_en.pdf

[397] Ibid.

Turkey allegedly lacks the essential feature that would allow it to be a full member of Europe: the mixture of Christianity, Greek philosophy and Roman law that constitute the so-called common European heritage. This definition of European civilisation, however, could be easily turned in favour of Turkish membership: the three elements that supposedly constitute the roots of Europeanness were never confined to the geographical limits of the European continent, and are in fact an integral part of the heritage of the Near East, which was once part of Asia Minor, as well as all the countries that surround the Mediterranean. The validity of any argument about Turkish membership however will come crashing against the political reality that Turkey's desire to join the Union has acquired a symbolic value in the eyes of politicians and public alike. Turkey's application has become the embodiment of questions that already existed within the European polity about the role of religion in political life, and the role of Islam in the changing social fabric of Europe – the so-called "Islamic Challenge" that many European societies are experiencing with the influx of Muslim immigrants[398]. The public debate on Turkey is therefore to a large extent a debate on the civilisational and cultural factors that shape European and Turkish identity, and on whether there are sufficient common elements between the two to make Turkey as European as its counterparts within the EU. Political, economic and strategic considerations also come into play, but ultimately the strongest feelings among the European public are awoken by cultural and religious references.

This was the context within which the European Parliament discussed the possibility of Turkish membership in the 1990s and 2000s. It would therefore be the foremost expectation of any observer to find that the European Parliament's discourse reflected the same pattern of concerns that permeated the wider public debate on Turkey. And yet, as shown below, the most striking element of these parliamentary debates was that, throughout the 1987 to 2004 period, the focus of the discussions remained on the political aspects of Turkey's identity, whilst the cultural and civilisational elements that took centre stage in the wider public debate were constantly underplayed by MEPs until late 2004, when the cultural issue became much more prominent. There was hence a striking divergence between the way in which the European Parliament approached the Turkish question, and the way in which the same problem was tackled in the wider European public sphere.

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[398] See for instance Jytte Klausen, *The Islamic challenge: politics and religion in Western Europe*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

The European Parliament's discussions on Turkey's membership application could be divided into two periods. The first, from the first membership application in 1987 until 1999, saw MEPs dealing with Turkey within the context of the EC/EU's external relations rather than within the context of enlargement proper. The second stems from the Council's decision at the Helsinki summit on 10-11 December 1999 to recognise Turkey as a candidate for accession: the decision turned the debate on Turkey's 'European character' into a question of far greater political relevance than it had been until then. The European Council's decision to open accession negotiations in December 2004 would open yet another phase – one which is beyond the scope of this thesis.[399]

The European Parliament and Turkey 1987-1999

The European Parliament discussed the Union's relations with Turkey several times in the 1990s and 2000s. However, throughout the 1990s discussion of formal relations between Turkey and the EU revolved either around technical issues related to the Association Agreement or to the establishment of the EU-Turkey Customs Union, which came into force in January 1996. Outside these technical discussions, MEPs mainly debated Turkey in relation to the country's human rights standards and the status of its democracy. Parliamentary discourse left the fact that Turkey had in fact applied to become a member of the European Union largely unacknowledged.

Parliament's first debate on Turkey after the country submitted its membership application to the EEC took place on 15 December 1987, and the discussion concentrated on issues of human rights, especially the use of torture in Turkey's prisons – setting a trend that would shape the MEPs' approach to debating Turkey for the following decade[400]. The general consensus that emerged from this debate was that MEPs deemed Turkish laws and behaviour in the field of human rights and democracy to be decidedly too far from European standards. The Italian Communist Rossetti stated for

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[399] The Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 16-17 December 2004 are available online at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/83201.pdf.
[400] Turkey formally applied for membership in April 1987 – the response by the Commission came in December 1989, when it indicated Turkey's political and economic situation, the unfortunate state of its relations with Greece and the unresolved Cyprus questions as factors preventing the then EC to take the application into further consideration at the time.

instance that the country had been refused accession to the Community 'because there was a very real problem of democracy involved, and of violation of elementary human rights'[401]. Belgian Liberal Democrat Beyer de Ryke claimed that human rights were a crucial criterion in judging a country's suitability for EC membership because this was 'inherent in our philosophy, which is founded on the guaranteed right to exercise democratic freedoms'[402]. This approach to the question of Turkish membership indicated that the European Parliament would be implicitly judging Turkey's 'Europeanness' on the basis of its political identity, namely its adherence to the standards of democracy and human rights that the EP considered necessary for entry. The debate was thus a reinforcement of the political identity that this institution had been promoting and upholding in its enlargement discourse since as early as 1962. By framing the debate on Turkey's eligibility for membership in terms of human rights and democracy, MEPs once again reinforced the image of Europe's political identity as based on these shared values, and at the same time they gave primacy to this political identity over cultural or civilisational aspects. This pattern would be repeated in the EP's approach to Turkey throughout the 1990s, with cultural, historical or civilisational references being relegated to the sidelines in favour of upholding the commitment to human rights inherent in the Union's political identity. Nonetheless, the references to ideas of a cultural or civilisation identity that did make an appearance in parliamentary discourse were interesting in spite, or perhaps all the more due to their scarcity.

The lone voice that emerged from the December 1987 debate on Turkey to bring cultural considerations into the human-rights heavy discussion belonged to the French Bernard Antony, elected with the Front National and a member of the Group of European Right:

> 'this is not to say that we would like to see this setting things in motion, so to speak, towards a treaty of accession between Turkey and the European Community. We have not yet finished building Europe. Its frontiers are scarcely defined. As yet, alas, they are very difficult to defend, and at all events, very little is being done to defend them. And it has to be understood that Turkey is not part of Europe! Turkey has its own history, with its moments of glory and its

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[401] Giorgio Rossetti, Communist and Allies Group, Italy, EP Debates, Protocol to EEC-Turkey Association Agreement, 15 December 1987.
[402] Luc Beyer de Ryke, Liberal and Democratic Group, Belgium, EP Debates, Protocol to EEC-Turkey Association Agreement, 15 December 1987.

dark moments, but its history is not our history. We do not believe that the

Turkish people as a whole is capable of feeling a sense of belonging to the EC.

From time immemorial, Turkey – or the states that preceded it – was the threat

against which Europe was able to unite, out of a shared sense of danger […]. It is

entitled to our friendship, our respect, but spiritually, morally and even physically

Turkey is not in Europe. In particular, today's Turkey is blind to the principle of

freedom of worship and all traces of the great Christian heritage of Asia Minor

have been mercilessy swept from its soil'[403].

This clearly showed that, albeit the very definition of Europe remained elusive, in
Antony's view, its identity was founded on a shared European history, which in turn
engendered a sense of belonging among European citizens. Moreover, it also pointed to
both a shared Christian legacy and secularism as two essential characteristics of Europe.
It also clearly identified Turkey as the 'other' against which, when faced with no other
commonalities, Europe had been able to unite throughout history. This was clearly a
minority view in the EP, or at least it was not expressed by any of the other speakers
during the debate. As a matter of fact, the speakers from the mainstream political groups
who participated in the debate of 15 December 1987 all seemed to converge on the
notion of Europe's political values as the primary or even sole standards that should
govern the Community's stance towards, and relationship with, Turkey[404]. Nonetheless,
Antony's was a view of Turkey as not merely non-European but as Europe's historical
other that widely resonated among the European public, and that many shared even
among the political elites. As shown in the brief review above, cultural and civilisational
arguments of this sort gained prominence over the following decade, in the media and
among the general public alike – whether they be used to agree with Antony's assessment
of Turkey's application or not. Within the European Parliament, however, remarkably

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[403] Bernard Antony, Group of European Right, France, EP Debates, Protocol to EEC-Turkey Association
Agreement, 15 December 1987. Antony (Front National) was an MEP from July 1984 until July 1999. He
was a member of the group of the European Right until 1989, then of the re-named technical group of the
European Right until 1994, after which date he served as a non-attached MEP until the end of his tenure.
[404] Thirteen speakers participated in this debate, including the Rapporteur and at the time chairman of the
Committee on External Economic Relations, Frenchman Jacques Mallet, PPE, and Commission
representative Cheysson. Of these, the British Labour member Richard A. Balfe (Socialist Group), the
British Conservative Bryan M. Cassidy (European Democratic Group), the Italian Communist Giorgio
Rossetti (Communist and Allies Group), the Belgian Liberal Luc Beyer de Ryke (Liberal and Democratic
Group), the German Green Wolfgang von Nostitz (Rainbow Group), the British Conservative Sir Tom
Normanton (European Democratic Group), the Greek Communist Vassilis Ephremidis (Communist and
Allies Group) all focused on human rights and democracy; 15 December 1987, Protocol to EEC-Turkey
Association Agreement.

few MEPs expressed themselves in terms of cultural identity, choosing instead to keep their remarks firmly anchored around the principles espoused by the Union's adoption of the political criteria for enlargement six years later[405].

Discussions of Turkey between 1987 and 1999 were not undertaken within an enlargement framework – although a few references to Turkey's ambition to join did appear, usually to reinforce the idea that parliament needed to exercise pressure on Ankara to improve its democratic and human rights record, as in the case of Italian Communist Castellina's comments:

> 'Turkey is a special case – it is not just another Mediterranean country, but a country that has asked to accede to the Community and continues to press for this, considering itself – and we know how wrongly – sufficiently democratic in character'[406];

Belgian Liberal Democrat Luc Beyer de Ryke also referred to the connection between Turkey's desire to join the Community and the latter's democratic identity:

> 'the Community as a whole believes in democratic pluralism. The Community as a whole obeys the same concept of the law. That is what it asks Turkey to do, and all the more insistently in that Turkey, through a good number of chosen political representatives, has made a choice and that this choice has a name, Europe. And Europe too has made a choice, and that choice is called democracy'[407].

The political identity of democratic values and human rights was thus the central element of parliamentary discourse on Turkey from 1987 onwards[408]. In particular, MEPs seemed intent on exercising whatever pressure they could in order to bring Ankara to improve its human rights records on specific issues, such as the treatment of the Kurdish minority, the use of torture in Turkish prisons, and the continued existence of political prisoners. This constituted a reinforcement of the EU's self-image as well as a specific re-assertion

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[405] See chapter one for a discussion of the institutionalisation of enlargement criteria in 1993.

[406] Luciana Castellina, Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Indipendent Groups and Members (Partito Comunista Italiano), Italy, EP Debates, Protocols to EEC-Turkey Association Agreement, 19 January 1988. Castellina was an MEP from July 1979 until July 1999. She was a member of the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Indipendent Groups and Members until 1984, then of the Communist and Allies group until July 1989, then joined the group for the European United Left.

[407] Luc Beyer de Ryke, Belgium, Liberal and Democratic Group, EP Debates, Protocols to EEC-Turkey Association Agreement, 19 January 1988.

[408] See also Gamze Avci, 'Putting the Turkish Candidacy into Context' p. 98.

of the EP's understanding of its own role as that of an institution in the unique position to demand compliance with the values built into the political self-image of the Union. This translated into actual political acts deliberately aimed at increasing the pressure on Ankara to resolve the issue of the Kurdish minority: the prime example of this came perhaps in 1996, when MEPs delayed ratification of the final agreement on a EU-Turkey Customs Union in response to the arrest of Kurdish politicians. Whilst Turkey officially rejected this interference in its internal affairs, it nevertheless proceeded to modify an article of its anti-terror law to appease the European Parliament[409].

The rights of minorities, the death penalty, women's rights and human rights in general took centre stage in all parliamentary discourse on Turkey. Austrian Liberal Democrat Martina Gredler's intervention in the debate of 17 July 1996 exemplifies the way in which the European Parliament approached the issue of EU relations with Turkey:

'We must look at the political background […]. Last December, we, the European Parliament, took an important decision regarding the EU's relations with Turkey. That decision was based only partially on real changes, for example in the constitution. Much of it was based on promises and hopes which the European Parliament expressed at the time. Mrs Çiller, who was then the Turkish Prime Minister, appealed to us to support her in keeping the fundamentalists out of power. Yet now all that has been forgotten. She shares the government of the country with them, and is now Foreign Minister. Promises, such as respect for human rights, and the positive revision of proceedings against those members of parliament who were condemned on the basis of a very problematical law, have been forgotten.

How will Turkish women retain their equal rights? Why are people still being tortured? Why do people disappear, and why are people still dying after being tortured in police stations or after being interrogated? What, if anything, has changed, and what, if anything, has improved? I feel that Mrs Çiller has disappointed my hopes of a Europe-oriented Turkey'[410].

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[409] Gamze Avci,'Putting the Turkish Candidacy into Context', p. 97; Jolanda Van Westering, 'Conditionality and EU Membership: the Cases of Turkey and Cyprus', *European Foreign Affairs* Revie,w 2000, Vol. 5, pp. 95-118.

[410] Martina Gredler, ELDR, Austria, EP Debates, Customs union with Turkey, 17 July 1997; Gredler was an MEP from January 1995 until November 1996; her colleagues Yannos Kranidiotis, PES, Greece, Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler Greens, Germany, also pointed out the political conditions attached to the customs union.

A cultural aspect to the discussion however did emerge in a few of the comments made about the role of Islam in Turkey's domestic politics. Such comments were made within the context of the December 1995 election in which the Islamic Welfare (Refah) party, of openly religious Islamic inspiration, obtained over 21% of the vote, forming a coalition government with the True Path Party, led by Tansu Çiller, in the summer of 1996[411]. The German Green Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler referred to the Refah party as 'Islamic fundamentalists':

> 'Now the Islamic fundamentalists are in government, and Mrs Çiller has helped them to get there. […] There must be no preferential treatment for a state which does not even respect the most elementary fundamental rights, such as the right to freedom of opinion, and which is waging a dirty war against a section of its population, namely the Kurds'[412].

Whilst the connection between Islamic fundamentalism and the lack of respect for the political values promoted by the EU is clear in Kreissl-Dörfler's words, however, it is not made explicit: the same was true for the other MEP who referred to the religious inspiration of the Turkish coalition partner, the French Socialist Bernard Kouchner:

> 'We voted in favour of Turkey's entry into the customs union because we thought, and because the democrats were asking us to do so, that it would possibly be, or could be, a barrage against the Islamic extremists. What happened was the opposite. We voted in favour of customs union because we thought that entry into customs union would mean an end to the massacres of the Kurds. Well, again the reverse happened: even more of them are dying. So we are becoming desperate. I hope I am wrong'[413].

The two quotes seem to indicate the existence of a shared perception among MEPs that a party inspired by an Islamist philosophy would have inherently different political values from those on which the EU was based. However, neither speaker went so far as to openly state this seeming incompatibility: there was therefore no fully-fledged

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[411] Haldun Gùlalp, 'Political Islam in Turkey: the Rise and Fall of the Refah Party', The Muslim World Vol. 89:1, January 1999; Ergun Özbudun, 'Turkey: How Far from Consolidation?', *Journal of Democracy*, 1996, Vol.7:3, pp. 123-138.

[412] Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler, Green, Germany, EP Debates, Customs Union with Turkey, 17 July 1997. Kreisl-Dörfler was an MEP from July 1994 until 2009 (re-elected in 2009).

[413] Bernard Kouchner, PES, France, EP Debates, Customs Union with Turkey, 17 July 1997. Kouchner was an MEP from July 1994 until June 1997, first within the PES (until December 1996), then within the group of the European Radical Alliance. He is the co-founder of Médecins Sans Frontières and was French Minister for Health between 1992 and 1993, and again in 1997, and would be French minister of Foreign and European Affairs from 2007 until 2010.

civilisational argument, nor was there an open debate on the potential cultural or even religious undertones of the Union's political identity. Whilst an undercurrent of cultural and civilisational concerns was thus present within parliamentary discourse and did indeed emerge in some instances, the fact remained that a majority of MEPs did not touch upon it and that those who did only referred to a potential clash between the political values that stemmed from different religious inspirations. Ultimately, it was the emphasis on political identity that remained the foremost defining feature of the EP's debates on Turkey in the 1990s.

There thus seemed to be some discrepancy between the way in which MEPs chose to approach the Turkish issue within the formal settings of this institution's daily work, and the way in which the debate played out outside the walls of the EP – a debate in which representatives of the political groups within parliament and MEPs themselves did in fact vocally take part. In spring 1997, for instance, many European newspapers reported Wilfried Martens, a former Belgian Prime Minister and a co-founder of the EPP, to have said at the end of a meeting of EPP leaders in Brussels that 'The EU is in the process of building a civilisation in which Turkey has no place', a comment that caused offence in Turkey when not denied by other EPP leaders[414]. The response from leader of the PES, Pauline Green, in a letter to the then German Chancellor Helmut Kohl on the other hand warned that religions or cultural reasons should have no bearing on the EU's consideration of Turkey's eligibility, which should solely be based on its compliance with Europe's political criteria[415]. It would be a legitimate and logical assumption that the same arguments used in the political national and European arena would be reflected in the interventions of MEPs within the plenary debates of the EP. Strikingly, however, civilisational arguments were far from the dominant theme in parliamentary debates: possibly due to a perceived need to be more 'politically correct' in the role of European representatives than outside the constraints of such a role, or perhaps because even

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[414] 'Turkey and Europe. Just not our sort.' The Economist, 15 March 1997; 'Excluded from the Christian family', The European, 3 April 1997. Wilfried Martens was a member of the European Parliament form 1994 to 1999, and had previously served as Belgian Prime Minister between 1979 and 1992. He co-founded the EPP in 1976 and became its president in 1992. While a member of the EP, he chaired the EPP group.
[415] 'European Union urged not to let Islam prevent Turkey membership, Agence France Presse, 10 March 1997. Green also sent a 'letter to the editor' to the Economist, published on , in which she stated that 'I was shocked by the statements of the six Conservative heads of government in Europe who recently declared that Turkey would not be allowed to join the Union, citing Turkey's adherence to Islam as a factor. Religion should not be a criterion of EU membership'. She also, however, reiterated that Turkey's democratic and human rights practices were far from satisfactory. 'Talking Turkey', The Economist, 27 March 1997. Pauline Green was a British member of the EP from 1989 to 1999. She chaired the Group of the Party of European Socialists between 1994 and 1999.

MEPs who were openly against Turkish membership were conscious of the fact that they may one day be sitting in that very chamber alongside Turkish colleagues regardless of their opposition to Turkish entry, many refrained from framing their participation in EP debates in such terms.

Nonetheless, another explanation for such behaviour may in fact emerge from a closer look at the way in which EP debates on Turkey developed. The distinct feel when reading such debates is that there was, in fact, a collective institutional voice that went beyond the single party political or even individual positions on a specific issue – in this case, Turkish membership. As with the development of a political identity and of a historical narrative in other enlargement debates, MEPs were acutely conscious of the role and identity of the European Parliament within the European institutional make-up. The European Parliament was, in the end, the institution that had traditionally championed the idea that European integration should be founded first and foremost on a common set of overarching political values that defined both the origins and aims of the European Union. The European Parliament was, furthermore, the least powerful institution and yet the one that could embody the democratic principle more than any of the other EU institutions. It was also the self-appointed champion of human rights within and without the common borders. Its discourse had constructed a strong political identity for the Community and was in the 1990s and 2000s in the process of constructing a historical narrative as the root of a common European foundation myth. Cultural arguments, on the other hand, had already proved prickly to handle in any cohesive or effective way in previous enlargement debates beyond the connection between political identity and some very specific cultural references. Civilisational arguments had not been prominently used in favour of relatively 'easy' enlargements – such as Spain or Portugal, and only partially used and in a secondary role to political identity arguments in the Greek case. In the debates being held over Eastern Europe at the same time as Turkey, historical elements had gained a prominent role, yet the EP's was a narrative that already presented contradictions and paradoxes in its attempt to include Eastern Europe and could only encounter further problems were it used in the Turkish case. MEPs did not even attempt to engage with the issue on this level. Ultimately, the EP's recognised strength lay in its construction of European political identity and in its institutional self-image as the promoter and embodiment of this identity. Rather than venture into the yet uncharted waters of the civilisational debate

that this institution had as yet explored only sporadically and ineffectively, it seemed that the discourse naturally veered towards the safety of a well-established set of political values to navigate the difficulties of the Turkish debate, rather than attempt an unknown and potentially perilous cultural tack. Perhaps, however, part of the unspoken assumption was that Turkey would continue to fall short of the political goals set to it for many years to come, and hence holding a more candid debate about whether the EU would actually be willing to accept membership seemed unnecessary. This would allow MEPs to maintain their respective positions while also keeping the debate within the accepted common discursive framework, maintaining a relatively cohesive institutional position and avoiding dragging the EP into what was bound do be a highly controversial and likely fruitless search for a shared definition of Europe's cultural identity.

Turkey and the European Parliament on the way to accession negotiations: 1999-2005

In late spring 1999, a devastating earthquake hit Turkey. The disaster unleashed a wave of solidarity among EU states, and led the way for a strong phase of Greek-Turkish cooperation[416]. In the wake of these events, the Helsinki Council of December 1999 opted to review its earlier decision of 1997, when Turkey had been denied candidate status and offered the pursuit of a "European strategy" based on the existing treaties instead[417]. Turkey thus became an official candidate for accession, and in March 2001 the Council adopted the EU-Turkey Accession Partnership, while the Turkish government launched the National Programme for the adoption of EU laws[418]. In December 2002, the Copenhagen Council rejected Turkey's request to set a date to begin accession negotiations, while at the same time approving a place for EU enlargement to include ten new member states. The Council merely agreed to review Turkey's candidacy in 2004.

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[416] The Greek government's traditional opposition to Turkish candidacy stemming from the long-standing rivalry between the two countries was finally reversed at the Helsinki Council of December 1999, in the wake of a rapprochement between Athens and Ankara. See James Ker-lindsay, 'The Policies of Greece and Cyprus towards Turkey's EU Accession', *Turkish Studies*, 2007, Vol. 8:1, pp. 71-83 and Amhet O. Evin, 'Changing Greek Perspectives on Turkey: an Assessment of the Post-Earthquake Rapprochement', *Turkish Studies*, 2004, Vol. 5:1, pp. 4-20.

[417] 'The Council confirms Turkey's eligibility for accession to the European Union. Turkey will be judged on the basis of the same criteria as the other applicant States. While the political and economic conditions allowing accession negotiations to be envisaged are not satisfied, the European Council considers that it is nevertheless important for a strategy to be drawn up to prepare Turkey for accession by bringing it closer to the European Union in every field', Presidency Conclusions, Luxembourg European Council, 12-13 December 1997.

[418] Helsinki European Council, 10-11 December 1999, Presidency Conclusions: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/hel1_en.htm#a.

Amidst the fits and starts that seemed to characterise Turkey-EU relations between 1999 and 2005, the EP discussed Turkey's progress yearly, monitoring the country's efforts to adjust its economic and political infrastructure to comply with the Copenhagen criteria.

The acceleration of Turkey's journey towards EU membership was the occasion for the renewal of a wide-spectrum public debate on the country's European character. The general concern across Europe was that Turkey, despite its efforts to meet European standards, was culturally and historically too far removed from the European experience to be accepted as a full member of the Union without changing the essence of the European project. European Parliament discourse, however, remained firmly focused on Turkey's, and Europe's, political identity, as MEPs strove to assess the country's efforts towards meeting the political criteria for membership. Most MEPs from across the political spectrum continued to assess Turkey in terms of its achievements concerning human rights, specifically pressing for the abolition of the death penalty. Culture and religion were also largely addressed within the language of human rights: MEPs discussed Turkey's approach to cultural diversity as, for instance, in the case of the Kurdish minority, or in the case of non-Muslims and their right to follow religious practices as part of a different cultural legacy to that of the majority of the Turkish population. However, parliamentary discourse focused on these cultural elements in so far as they were considered to fall within the realms of human rights standards that the EU abides by and that it promotes in other countries too. Any purely civilisational arguments remained outside the mainstream of the EP's discourse on Turkey. This was only partially belied by two debates, one on 4 June 2003 on the Oostlander Report and one held two days before the European Council meeting of December 2004 that would decide to open accession negotiations[419].

The trend of European parliament discourse on Turkey was exemplified by the use of certain words and their recurrence in the debates. The recurrence of words such as 'democracy', 'human rights', the 'rule of law', 'minority', 'culture', 'history' and 'religion' can show how much the balance of the arguments was weighted towards political identity, and in particular the perceived need to conform to certain standards of human rights and democracy in order to be 'European'. Furthermore, it indicates how the European Parliament's discourse veered away from the wider public discourse on

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[419] Brussels European Council 16-17 December 2004, Presidency Conclusions, available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/83201.pdf.

Turkey, by not focusing on concepts of civilisation that were at the heart of the debate outside the EP.

On 1ˢᵗ December 1999, European parliamentarians held a general debate on Turkey, with the participation of Commissioner for Enlargement Günter Verheugen. Human rights and democracy were at the heart of the debate, and out of twenty speakers, only one talked about religion, in the sense of religious freedoms, hence placing even this reference firmly within the human rights discourse rather than the civilisational argument. Thirty-six references to human rights, twelve to minorities and their rights, and eleven to democracy were made. The only time that the word culture was even used, was in reference to the SOCRATES programme and Turkey's participation in it: it was thus a reference to a specific set of policies and Turkey's ability to implement them, but there was no discussion of culture in terms of identity, whether this be a shared European one or not[420].

The same pattern is discernable in the next debate on the *Situation in Turkey*, which was held in April 2000. Fifteen speakers took part in the debate, and no one referred to culture in terms of civilisation as a way of defining Turkey or Europe. In fact, the only two references were again part of the human rights discourse and specifically cultural rights. There were however twenty-two references to democracy, made by ten of the speakers, and twenty-three to human rights by twelve speakers, and no references to history or religion. The same focus on democracy and human rights remained in the debate of November 2000, with twenty-nine references to democracy, twenty-six to human rights, and thirteen to minorities. However, there was one instance in which Turkey's culture was used in a civilisational argument against its inclusion into the Union:

> 'Turkey is not a European country, its culture is not European, and its values are not European. Turkey must not, therefore, join the European Union. That is no obstacle, moreover, to Europe's developing economic, diplomatic, political and peaceful relations with a free and independent Turkey. Such a clear stance would, among other things, at least have the merit of no longer blowing hot and cold with regard to Turkish Governments, no longer telling them, "yes but later", "yes but on certain conditions", "yes but this or that". Europe's contradictions and

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[420] SOCRATES was an educational programme ran by the European Commission from 1994 until 2006, when the Lifelong Learning Programme was launched in its stead: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm.

prevarications only lead to incomprehension and humiliation. We cannot play about with the dignity of nations'[421].

This, however, was very much the exception that proved the rule, since the speaker, Carl Lang, was a non-attached member elected within the lists of the Front National in France, thus already outside the main European political families, and his argument remained outside the mainstream of parliamentary debate on Turkey. Whilst others did mention the problem of identity in relation to Turkey's accession, they refrained from making a cultural argument along such lines and the debate reverted once again to the broader issue of human rights, as exemplified by the French Rapporteur and EPP member, Morillon:

> 'As matters stand, it is also up to the European Parliament to tell the Turkish people that there are, today, at least three conditions for accession which Turkey must meet. […] the need for identity must be respected: this need has been demonstrated particularly clearly in Europe by its citizens who wish to preserve their origins in the face of the ineluctable progress of globalisation. Aware that its diversity constitutes its wealth, Europe is determined to recognise this need for identity, and that is why it insists on the rights and also the obligations of minorities'[422].

This shows how Turkey's eligibility for EU membership was dependent on its adherence to the EU's political values, which included a certain view of cultural and religious differences as part of modern Europe's pluralistic political identity.

German socialist Schulz also addressed the question of cultural identity, but only to reinforce the idea that the European Union's defining values were political values, and that culture and religion were irrelevant to membership in so far as the same political principles were respected by all, as those were the real foundation of Europe's identity:

> 'Mr Morillon says that Turkey should try not to perceive the European Union as an exclusive Christian club which wants to keep it, Turkey, out. This premise presupposes that the opposite holds true within the European Union, i.e. that we are not an exclusive Christian club which wants, can or should exclude Turkey on

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[421] Carl Lang, TDI, France, EP Debates, Turkey,14 November 2000. Lang (Front National) was an MEP from July 1999 until July 2009.
[422] Philippe Morillon, EPP, France, EP Debates, Turkey, 14 November 2000, Turkey – the other two conditions being the resolutions of the Cyprus problem and an acknowledgement of the Armenian genocide. Morillon (Union pour la démocratie française) was an MEP from July 1999 until July 2009.

relativistic religious or cultural grounds. The premise should be that a country

with a laicistic constitution inhabited predominantly by Moslems which is based

on the values on which the European Union itself is founded – i.e. freedom,

equality and tolerance – could enrich the European Union. The European Union

is not founded on religious values, it is founded on values which we owe to the

Enlightenment and which, quite independently of the religious leanings of a

person or a country and its inhabitants, find their way into the constitutions of

the Member States and, as we have seen during today's debate on the Charter of

Fundamental Rights, into the EU's perception of fundamental rights. This means

that, as a democratic state under the rule of law with separation of powers and

fundamental values as we understand them, Turkey will enrich the European

Union'[423].

Schulz was thus putting forward a definition of Europe's identity which was essentially

political, based on a pluralistic vision of society in which cultural and religious differences

are an asset and do not essentially affect the core identity of Europe, which is a political

one and gives precedence to shared political values. He also however implicitly denied

the relevance of civilisational arguments against Turkish membership. EPP and PES

representatives thus on the one hand converged in their definition of Europe's identity as

a primarily political one, which allowed for different religious and cultural identities

precisely because these were subsumed into a larger definition of Europe based on

political values. On the other hand, they did not quite engage in a debate on the

underlying assumptions of this political identity and its alleged cultural roots – something

that would have likely opened a Pandora's box of interpretations of European culture.

This view applied just as much to religious differences as to cultural and ethnic ones, and

all mentions of religion were woven into the human rights discourse, itself based on the

idea of diversity and pluralism as the basis of European integration and hence something

that all member states needed to recognise:

'neither religious objections nor geo-strategic considerations are the decisive

factors for Turkey's accession. The challenge for Turkey in fulfilling the

Copenhagen criteria is to reform not only the constitution but also its political

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[423] Martin Schulz, PES, Germany, EP Debates, 14 November 2000, Turkey. Schulz was an MEP from July 1994 until July 2009 (re-elected in 2009). He was chair of the PES group from 2004 until 2009. He became famous in July 2003 when Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, President-in-Office of the Council, replied to his heavy criticism by telling him he would 'recommend him for the role of Kapo in a film on concentration camps'.

and intellectual inspiration. In Western Europe ideas of pluralism and differentiated identities within the same State have led to recognition of cultural, linguistic and political rights and devolution. Turkey needs to adopt these modern European notions of diversity and the right to be different. The Kemalist ideology that was modern in 1930 is not so in 2000'[424].

Greek socialist Giorgos Katiforis confirmed that religious diversity and pluralism were at the heart of Europe's values, and that Turkey's willingness to abide by this value must be matched by Europe's actions in disregarding religion as a discriminatory factor in its enlargement policy:

> 'Turkey's candidacy puts not just Turkey, but the European Union to the test. It is not just Turkey, ladies and gentlemen, which is sitting exams in order to become a member. In this particular case, the European Union is also sitting exams, in numerous subjects. First of all, in the subject of religious tolerance. The opinion which, I think, prevails among most European citizens, is that a different religion should not be an obstacle to the accession of a new member. In democratic Europe, we are proud of our religious tolerance, but we have never been asked to put it to the test as we are now. It is a crucial test of the sincerity of our declarations and we must not flunk it'[425].

Katiforis's words openly acknowledged how the decision on Turkey's accession was very much a decision about Europe's self-identity: accepting Turkey had very much to do with the idea that religious identity was, according to the value-based framework on which the EU was based, both relevant and irrelevant for accession. It was relevant in the sense that the right to different religious identities was part of the Europe's primary political identity, and it was irrelevant because only by overlooking religious identities when accepting a new member state would the EU confirm its secularist vocation and thus re-enhance its very political identity.

Whilst the purely cultural arguments were not prominent in the debate and did not provide the primary definition of European identity, cultural and even historical references did emerge, even if they were generally couched in human rights terms, as was for instance the case of the Armenian genocide of 1915-1917. The European Parliament

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[424] Baroness Sarah Ludford, ELDR, UK, EP Debates, Turkey, 14 November 2000. Ludford was an MEP from 1999 until 2009 (re-elected 2009).
[425] Giorgos Katiforis, PES, Greece, EP Debates, Accession Partnership with Turkey, 14 February 2001.

had passed a resolution in June 1987 in which, contrary to Turkey's long-standing position on the matter, it asserted that 'the tragic events in 1915-1917 involving the Armenians living in the territory of the Ottoman Empire constitute genocide within the meaning of the convention on the prevention and the punishment of the crime of genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948'[426]. Following this resolution, the EP's position remained that acknowledgement of the genocide was a necessary step for Turkey, yet MEPs could not agree to make this an official requirement for Turkish accession. Recognition of past wrongs was, to a large extent, something that was seen by MEPs as an inherent characteristic of the new Europe embodied by the Union. Much of the EU's foundation myth, and one that was constantly reinforced by parliamentary discourse over the years and especially in relation to the Eastern Enlargement that was being discussed alongside Turkey, was based on the concept of overcoming a shared history of violence and conflict in favour of reconciliation among former enemies, between winners and losers, victims and perpetrators – the EP's historical narrative analysed previously in this thesis was largely based on a series of contrasts between negative past and positive present, and European integration as the embodiment of a historical reconciliation among European peoples. MEPs thus urged Turkey to recognise the Armenian genocide, even when their different positions with regards to the desirability of Turkey's accession made some, such as the socialists, argue against pressuring Ankara to do so as a condition for membership. Acknowledging the past had more to do with the way in which European states had come to terms with their own violent past, and how they viewed reconciliation as a key to both the origin and the goals of the European project:

> 'Unfortunately, however, a number of people are using the motions on Armenia and the massacre of the Armenians as a pretext to question, in a roundabout way, the very notion of Turkey's joining the European Union. I think that is wrong and I think it is dangerous. Nonetheless, I would urge Turkey to take this issue seriously, whatever the outcome of the vote. We all have to come to terms with our own history and with the actions of our antecedent countries and states openly and honestly'[427].

The sentiment was echoed by French Communist Yasmine Boudhenah:

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[426] European Parliament, Resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question,Doc. A2-33/87 – 18 June 1987.

[427] Hannes Swoboda, PES, Austria, EP Debates, Turkey, 14 November 2000. Swoboda was an MEP from November 1996 until 2009 (re-elected 2009). He was vice-chair of the PES group between February 1997 and July 2009.

'Acknowledging this act of genocide does not mean that the present-day Turkey is a barbaric nation. Quite the contrary, a nation only grows in stature by facing up to its past. How could Europe maintain its credibility with regard to the state violence perpetrated in the world today, even, at times, including genocide, if it were to embrace Turkey as a Member while brushing aside its history?'[428].

Thus, whilst Turkey's past would not be held against it in the sense that the EP would not ask for Ankara to acknowledge the Armenian genocide as a binding condition for accession, the EP's discourse clearly showed that coming to terms with past violence and accepting responsibility for it would make Turkey more European in terms of the value-system that the EP had constructed for the European Union. This view of history's role in the making of modern Europe's identity was very much part of the European Parliament's wider discourse at the time – as shown in chapter three with the discourse on the fifth enlargement. Whilst the two processes ran parallel to each other and MEPs usually refrained from even mentioning one whilst discussing the other, the EP was in fact trying to deal with the question of Turkey's Europeanness at the same time as it was constructing an identity discourse that could accommodate the accession of the countries of the former Eastern Bloc. History and culture featured prominently in the EP's discourse on the Eastern European enlargement, and MEPs used them to strengthen the foundation myth of Europe as the process of 'bringing about the coexistence and collaboration of peoples who have had very different histories, for a long time mutually hostile'[429] and thus asked that the Turkish people accept the same view of history in order to become truly European: in the words of EPP member Sacrèdeus, 'it is necessary for Turkey, in the same ambitious way as Germany, to deal with the dark and sombre chapters of its twentieth century history'[430], or, again according to Katiforis, 'Turkey is a Third World European country that needs to learn the same lesson as France and Germany, that is, that if we want to move on, we have to stop waging the wars of the 1920s or the wars of the 1940s in the present day'[431]. In the EP's construction of Europe's identity, the process of integration is akin to a process of reconciliation that overcomes negative historical experiences in favour of a shared identity projected into the future: in dealing with the Turkish question, MEPs thus projected onto Turkey the

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[428] Yasmine Boudjenah, GUE, France, EP Debates, Turkey, 14 November 2000. Boudjenah (Parti communiste français) was an MEP from July 1999 until July 2004.
[429] Alain Lamassoure, EPP, France, EP Debates, Turkey, 24 October 2001.
[430] Lennart Sacrèdeus, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, Turkey, 24 October 2001.
[431] Giorgios Katiforis, PES, Greece, EP Debates, Turkey, 24 October 2001.

need to go through the same process of acknowledging historical wrongs in order to become truly European in the contemporary sense of the idea, as embodied by the Union.

However, unlike in the EP's discussions of Central and Eastern Europe, this historical narrative did not have a prominent place in discussions of Turkey's potential accession. The European Parliament's final report on Turkey before the Council's decision to open accession negotiations only gave a brief nod to the historical controversy over Armenia and the need to 'heal past wounds' in the midst of a report that was overwhelmingly concerned with Turkey's compliance with political criteria[432].

Parliamentary discourse thus constructed a view of European identity based first and foremost on a set of political values that revolved around democracy and human rights, enveloping all other characteristics that defined Europe within this overarching set of values. Concerns over the differences between Turkey's and Europe's cultural and religious identity could thus be resolved in a discourse largely couched within the frame of Europe's political identity:

> 'The challenge for Turkey in fulfilling the Copehnagen criteria is to reform not only the constitution but also its political and intellectual inspiration. In Western Europe ideas of pluralism and differentiated identities within the same state have led to recognition of cultural, linguistic and political rights and devolution. Turkey need to adopt these modern European notions of diversity and the right to be different'[433].

The political identity constructed within this discourse was, of course, a strictly Western European one and extremely selective in its content: parliamentary discourse shaped a European political identity that was both highly selective and highly exclusive, without being 'political incorrect'.

Moreover, the fundamental tenets of this political identity were universal values that can hardly be deemed to be an exclusively European prerogative, either in their origin or above all in their appeal. Concepts of democracy and human rights are, by their very nature, universal values that are not necessarily inherent to Europe. Denying their applicability to the whole of mankind would deny their very nature, and they cannot

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[432] The report was adopted by the Committee with 50 votes in favour, 18 against and 7 abstentions.
[433] Baroness Sarah Ludford, ELDR, UK, EP Debates, Turkey, 24 October 2001.

therefore be used in an exclusionary fashion to create an exclusively European identity. However, the difficulty of basing Europe's identity on values that are by definition universal was largely overlooked in the EP's discussions of Turkey. In fact, dissent over this notion only became apparent when the Oostlander Report on Turkey's application for membership came to be debated in June 2003. The report by the Committee on Foreign Affairs include a paragraph stating that

> 'the European Parliament recognises that the political values of the European Union are chiefly based on the Judaeo-Christian and humanist culture of Europe, but no-one has the monopoly on these universal values of democracy, the rule of law, human and minority rights and freedoms of religions and conscience which can perfectly well be accepted and defended by a country where the majority of the population is Islamic; believes, therefore, that there are no objections of principle to its EU membership'[434].

The inclusion of this paragraph within the Report was bound to attract attention, especially when the radical members of the Committee included a minority opinion attacking 'moralistic, ideological attitude in which there is a tendency almost to replace the political values and principles underpinning the Community with precepts of a parareligious nature'[435]. In presenting his report to the plenary, Arie Oostlander expressed a wish for an 'open debate about religion, culture and politics'[436]. His wish was only partially fulfilled: whilst the paragraph clearly stirred controversy among MEPs, only four speakers directly addressed this clause out of the twenty-one parliamentarians that took part in the discussion. The German Feleknas Uca, member of the Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left, expressed her clear dissent with the very notion that the modern political values adopted by the EU are in fact rooted in a long-standing historical tradition:

> 'I find it unspeakable that the report refers to the humanist and Judeo-Christian culture of Europe, making out that Europe has always been a stronghold of democracy, the rule of law, human and minority rights, and freedom of religion and conscience. It patronisingly adds that an Islamic country too can accept and defend these values. Completely aside from the fact that Islam too has always

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[434] Report on Turkey's application for membership of the European Union (COM(2002) 700 – C5-0104/2003 – 2000/2019(COS)).
[435] Minority opinion, Report on Turkey's application for membership of the European Union (COM(2002) 700 – C5-0104/2003 – 2000/2019(COS)).
[436] Arie M. Oostlander, EPP, Netherlands, Turkey's application for EU membership, 4 June 2003. Oostlander (Christen Democratisch Appèl) was an MEP from July 1989 until July 2004.

played a part in Europe, I would like to recall, as a German especially, that the values that are allegedly so typically European are not quite so deeply rooted in Europe. European history ranges across the Christian Crusades to the crimes of the colonial era – not to mention the horrors of fascism.

Moreover, the reference to religion is utterly superfluous. The EU is a political and economic union. For a country to accede to it, there are clear criteria that must be fulfilled. Whether they are fulfilled against a Christian, Muslim, Jewish or atheist background is irrelevant'[437].

The immediate response to Uca's comment came from Dutch Green Joost Lagendjik, who both supported the idea that European values do have their roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition, and highlighted the Report's emphasis on the fact that they are in fact universal values that can be embraced by any country, including a largely Muslim one such as Turkey:

'Mrs Uca, I am afraid that – if you listen – you have still not understood the precise implications of paragraph 3. In it the rapporteur in my view rightly makes a distinction between the Judaeo-Christian and humanist roots on the one hand, the universal values to which they have led on the other hand, and the fact that this is no barrier to the accession of an Islamic majority country – a formulation that I can share with all my heart'[438].

Uca's position was however echoed by Belgian Socialist Véronique De Keyser:

'Paragraph 3 invokes a set of European values rooted essentially in Judaeo-Christian culture. If this paragraph is not amended, it will be a slap in the face for an essentially secular country under Muslim government. It will also be unacceptable to us Europeans, as it will mean the return of old scourges and the renewed influence of religion in political affairs.

If we must mention Judaeo-Christian values, why do we not also mention Judaeo-Christian crimes? A re-reading of The Gospel according to Jesus Christ, by the Portuguese Nobel Prize Laureate José Saramago, is necessary to remind us how many crimes have been committed in the name of our gods. Well, let us take the gods out of the running. Let us acknowledge once and for all that Europe is

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[437] Feleknas Uca, Germany, GUE/NGL, EP Debates, Turkey's application for EU membership, 4 June 2003. Uca was an MEP from July 1999 until July 2009.
[438] Joost Lagendijk, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, Netherlands, EP Debates, Turkey's application for EU membership, 4 June 2003. Lagendijk (GroenLinks) was an MEP from September 1998 until July 2009. He chaired the delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee from February 2002 until July 2009.

secular and contains many different religions. Let us also deal firmly but fairly with Turkey's application to join the European Union'[439].

German Christian Democrat Werner Langen on the other hand praised the Report and also maintained that the phrasing of paragraph 3 did not in any way preclude the accession of a Muslim country to the EU:

> 'It is not – as is written in the minority opinion – about precepts of an almost parareligious nature; clause 3 states specifically that fundamental European values, although based on the Judeo-Christian legacy, but also encompassing the values of the Enlightenment, do not stand in the way of the accession of a Muslim state in principle'.

Langen's interpretation of the cultural and universal aspects of the Union's political values did not of course preclude him from following up his declaration with an expression of his misgivings about Turkey's eligibility not in view of its religion, but in view of its secularism, which he questioned. Turkey's secularism was on the other hand praised by Liberal Democrat Norman, who claimed that Turkey's adoption of such a European value made it eligible for membership:

> 'as Turkey applies to join the European Union (and it is natural for that application to give rise to discussion and even argument), any pride it can take today in its positive historical legacy is attributable to that very attempt to introduce our European secularism into a Muslim society. For that, as some of the honourable Members have said, is the challenge, or one of the challenges, of the twenty-first century'[440].

Both sides in this debate thus agreed that secularism was a key European value and part of the human rights discourse that defined Europe. They disagreed, however, on the practical implications of this value, and thus on Turkey's adherence to it and, by extension, to Europe's system of values.

This was, however, the extent of the debate on paragraph 3 of the Oostlander Report or on the potential implications of Turkey's accession for Europe's cultural identity. The rest of the debate concerned democracy, human rights, constitutional and legal reforms,

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[439] Véronique de Keyner, PES, Belgium, EP Debates, Turkey's application for EU membership, 4 June 2003. De Keyner (Parti socialiste) was an MEP from September 2001 until 2009 (re-elected 2009).
[440] Jean-Thomas Nordmann, ELDR, France, EP Debates, Turkey's application for EU membership, 4 June 2003. Nordmann was an MEP from April 1982 until July 1984 (Union pour la France et Europe), and from 1984 until 1994 (parti radical), then from May 1995 until July 2004 (union pour la démocratie française).

the role of the army in Turkish political life, and Turkey's general compliance with the EU's political criteria. Voting on the Report the following day showed that, whilst more MEPs than the two that had spoken against the clause during the debate may have disagreed with it, the Report was eventually approved with the paragraph on 'Judeo-Christian roots' still in place.

The controversy raging in the wider European debate was thus starting to seep through into parliamentary debate: however, after the peak of the Oostlander report in June 2003, when MEPs revisited the Turkish application on 1 April 2004, only three speakers used cultural arguments to argue against Turkey's accession. Danish far-right UEN MEP Mogens Camre was particularly forceful in his statement that Turkey was not, and could not 'turn itself into', a European country:

> 'the admission of Turkey would lead to massive immigration of Turks into the EU, and even bigger parallel Islamic societies would take shape. There has recently been a series of very unsettling reports of threatening, anti-Western attitudes in extensive sections of the Islamic societies within the EU, and unfortunately this applies particularly to young, second-generation Turks. Europe simply cannot live with large population groups in the EU rejecting our culture. What the adherents of Turkish membership are really requesting is for Turkey to jettison its entire Islamic culture, and I do not see this as realistic. It is important not to confuse the attitudes represented by Turkish diplomats and certain intellectuals and politicians with those found in the rest of Turkey's very class-divided society. Turkey is basically an Islamic society, regardless of the formal separation of church and state imposed from above. If Turkey were thoroughly democratised, as the EU wishes, the people would, unfortunately, without doubt take a democratic decision to introduce an Islamic state without democracy. There is not an Islamic country in the world that meets the Copenhagen criteria, and Turkey is hardly likely to do so either, even if the EU asks it to'[441].

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[441] Mogens Camre, Union for Europe of the Nations Group, Denmark, Progress towards accession by Turkey, 1 April 2004. Camre was a member of the Dansk Folkeparti and was first elected to the European Parliament in 1999. From 1999 to 2002 he served on the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs, on the Committee on Budgetary Control from 2002 to 2004, and would then serve on the Committee on Employment and Social affairs and the Delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee.

French member of the euro-sceptic Group for a Europe of Democracies and Diversities Véronique Mathieu expressed her group's opposition to Turkish membership on cultural grounds:

> 'we are opposed in principle to Turkish accession. As General de Gaulle remarked, there is no getting away from the facts. Geographically, historically and culturally, Turkey is not a European country. The fact is that, under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, any applicant for membership of the European Union must be a European State. I should just like to raise two further points, in addition to the many that have already been made.
>
> […] Turkey is an Eastern power; it plays a dominant role among the Turkish-speaking peoples of Central Asia and shares lengthy borders with Iran, Iraq and Syria. Such an unstable region, in our view, is no place for the European Union'[442]

Finally, the Italian EPP member Michi Ebner (from the Tyrolean German-speaking minority) also claimed that Turkey did not belong to the EU for cultural and historical reasons, although his characterisation of Turkey's ineligibility was not quite a forceful as those of his two colleagues:

> 'We have different conceptions of the future of the European Union; ours is that this Europe, this European Union of ours, must have borders, and that is why we conclude special agreements with our immediate neighbours. With this in mind, I believe that Turkey, be it for reasons of history, geography or culture, would not fit in as a direct member of the European Union, and I hope that we will go on along this third way with the courage it deserves'[443].

French communist Sylviane Ainardi did on the other hand claim that Turkey's 'history and geography make it part of Europe', whilst its political system was the real crux of the problem[444]. Nonetheless, four speakers is a very small number compared to the forty-one MEPs who took part in the debate. Whilst the cultural arguments made by the four MEPs were indeed interesting and clearly evocative of the debate raging outside the walls of the European Parliament, the vast majority of MEPs chose to dedicate their attention,

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[442] Véronique Mathieu, Group for a Europe of Democracies and Diversities (Chasse, Pêche, Nature, Traditions), France, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by Turkey, 1 April 2004. First elected to the European Parliament in 1999, she would be re-elected in 2004 as a member of the EPP.
[443] Michi Ebner, EPP (Südtiroler Volkspartei), Italy, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by Turkey,1 April 2004. First elected to the EP in 1994, Ebner was a member of the delegation for relations with Slovenia and 1999, then the delegation to the EU-Slovenia Joint Parliamentary Committee until 2004.
[444] Sylviane H. Ainardi, Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (Parti communiste français), France, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by Turkey,1 April 2004. First elected to the EP in 1989 (Left Unity).

as customary, to Turkey's progress towards fulfilling the EU's political criteria. Thus, even though the four who did chose to refer to cultural identity belonged to four distinct political groups and were thus indicative of the fact that concerns and disagreements about Europe's cultural identity and Turkey's place within it remained and cut across political groups, it still showed that a majority of MEPs preferred to focus their assessment on the basis of the EU's political identity.

The cultural debate only really entered the EP's discussions of Turkey in the new parliamentary term following the June 2004 elections, with debates held in October and then December, three days before the Council's decision to open accession negotiations. Eighty-seven speakers took part in the December debate, which also saw the participation of Olli Rehn as Commissioner for Enlargement and Azto Nicolai on behalf of the Council[445]. Following the official accession to the EU of ten new member states in May and elections in June, this was a parliament whose composition reflected an entirely new set of national and personal backgrounds as well as a relatively more euro-sceptic one.[446]

The change in climate had already become evident in the EPP's election manifesto of 2004, which, unlike the 1999 document, which made no mention of culture beyond a general statement about cultural diversity[447], had a section dedicated to Europe's 'values' that identified the cultural and Christian roots of the EU's modern identity:

> '[the EU] is primarily a political community of citizens and their nations. Unablienale [sic] human rights, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, solidarity, justice, equal opportunities, and the equality of women and men, are the cornerstones of our values. They reflect our conception of man, which has above all been influenced by Christianity and the Enlightenment. […]
> Despite much we have in common in terms of culture, the EPP acknowledges, indeed celebrates, the variety of national, regional and local cultures that have developed over many centuries. We seek unity in diversity. The different cultural

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[445] Azto Nicolaï (member of Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) was Dutch State Secretary for Foreign Affairs between November 2002 and July 2006.
[446] Sara B. Hobolt, Jae-Jae Spoon and James Tilley 'A Vote Against Europe? Explaining Defection at the 1999 and 2004 European Parliament Elections', *British Journal of Political Science* 2009, Vol. 39, pp 93-115; Simon Hix and Michael Marsh, 'Punishment or Protest? Understanding European Parliament Elections', *The Journal of Politics*, 2007, Vol. 69, pp 495-510.
[447] EPP Election Manifesto 1999, 'A Europe of opportunities' available at http://www.eppgroup.eu/group/en/manifesto.asp.

traditions in the European Union are an important framework of reference and orientation for people'[448].

Interestingly, there was no comparable change in the PES manifesto – with no special attention dedicated to either Turkey or common cultural roots in either the 1999 or 2004 documents. The debate stirred by the Convention however was finally if slowly making its way into the EP: potentially fuelled by the controversy over Rocco Buttiglione's comments that led to his withdrawal from Barroso's Commission team in early autumn 2004, the EP's Turkey debate in December showcased the gamut of opinions MEPs held on the relationship between political identity, cultural identity, and eligibility for EU membership[449].

Rapporteur Camiel Eurlings, a Dutch Christian Democrat, presented a report based entirely on the assessment of Turkey's compliance with the EU's political criteria: over half of his presentation concentrated on Turkey's efforts to improve its human rights record, including both religious freedom and women's rights, and on legal and Constitutional reforms[450]. The report itself only addressed the question of religion in Turkey within the context of human rights and did not contain any references to a European cultural identity[451]. The debate, however, did show a level of concern about the 'cultural question' that was considerably higher than in previous parliamentary debates on Turkey, to the point that it seemed that the arguments that had so far been played out outside the EP suddenly burst through its walls three days before the decision to open accession negotiations became official. The debate was particularly interesting because cultural and religious arguments were made on all sides of the house both in favour and against Turkish membership – and were interwoven with considerations about the Copenhagen political criteria that clearly showed how the – thus far largely unarticulated – relationship between political identity and cultural identity was in fact as crucial to the European identity discourse as it was underdeveloped.

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[448] EPP Electoral Manifesto (Approved by EPP Congress of 4-5 February 2004) available at http://www.32462857769.net/EPP/e-PressRelease/PDF/04-02-2004%20en%20EPP%20Electoral%20Manifesto.pdf.

[449] For more detail on the Buttiglione controversy see chapter four.

[450] Camiel Eurlings, EPP-ED (Christen Democratisch Appèl), Netherlands, Turkey's progress towards accession. Eurlings was first elected to the European Parliament in June 2004 and was a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee.

[451] Report on the 2004 regular report and the recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession – available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A6-2004-0063&language=EN.

Hans Pöttering opened the debate on behalf of the EPP and alluded to the identity implications of Turkey's accession by observing that 'should Turkey become a Member State of the European Union, that Union will undergo a change in character' – and went on to explain how the EPP would leave its members to vote on the issue according to their conscience[452]:

> 'Those in our group who either do not want negotiations or want them to tend towards a privileged partnership – among whose number I include myself – are gravely concerned that, should Turkey join the European Union, this enlargement might prove fatal and Europeans might lose their identity, that it might be detrimental to the sense of being 'us' on which solidarity in the European Union is founded'[453].

His socialist counterpart, Martin Schulz, immediately responded with an intervention that addressed the heart of the debate on Turkey's and Europe's identity:

> 'Firstly, why is it so simple for Mr Pöttering to float his theory that the EU would undergo a change in its nature if Turkey were to join it? If Turkey were to join the EU as it is, it would have to make itself subject to the EU's *acquis communautaire* as a whole. If Turkey joins the EU, then, because we all want the Constitution, it would have to make it the basis of its internal policies as soon as it has been ratified. The European Charter of Fundamental Rights will then become constitutional law and binding in a Member State, namely Turkey. It will then be demonstrated that the values defined in that Charter, which are the fundamental values of our Union, can be accepted by a country of whose population 99% or 98% are Muslims.
>
> If we succeed in integrating Turkey into the European Union, then it will effectively demolish the Islamic fundamentalists' theory that Western – that is, our – values and Islam are mutually exclusive, for it would then provide the proof that the fundamental values for which we contend are fundamental values for all people, whether they be Jews, Muslims, Christians or unbelievers. It is this advance, Mr Pöttering, pure and simple, that compels us to commence these negotiations.

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[452] Hans-Gert Pöttering, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004.
[453] Ibid.

[…] if we succeed in making Turkey democratic and stable, if Western values succeed in putting down roots in its society, if we give the Turks the chance to become what they want to be, in other words, people in Europe, accepting European values for themselves, then we will be creating a European Union that will be making a reality of its peace process, its potential for peace and for the stabilisation of democracy in a region that more than ever needs democracy, human rights, social security and peace. It is these very things that we in the European Union should be exporting to Turkey – if all goes well! That it will is not a given. Nobody can say at the outset of this process whether it will really be successful, but it would be negligent not to try, and so, Mr Eurlings, we, as a group, will be voting in favour of your report'[454].

Schulz effectively identified the EU's political identity as the only criterion by which Turkish eligibility should be assessed, presenting it in fact as a test for the universality of its values as well as the original claim that Europe could promote and stabilise peace and democracy – regardless of any cultural roots that such values may originally have stemmed from.

Emma Bonino, speaking on behalf of the Liberal Democrat group, also tackled the issue of the EU's identity and its cultural roots head on, essentially re-enforcing the centrality of political values vis-à-vis cultural or religious concepts of European identity:

'Ladies and gentlemen, let me say that the debate today is not so much about Turkey but rather about Europe. It is about finding out whether this Europe is a trustworthy partner in international relations. It is about finding out whether we still keep to our word after forty years. It is about finding out what our identity is, Mr Pöttering. I believe that the identity of the European project consists in its being a political project and not a geographical project or a religious one.

I also believe that our identity does not reside so much in our past and our roots – which some would claim to be completely Christian or Catholic – as in our present and, especially, our future. Our past has seen not only glories but also wars and bloodshed. Ladies and gentlemen, I believe instead that our identity is represented by the last fifty years, in which we have tried and to some extent succeeded in bringing about the rule of law, the separation of powers and the secularisation of our institutions, as well as the protection of human and political

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[454] Martin Schulz, PES, Germany, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004.

rights as an essential part of human development. That is our identity, and that is the project in which the Turkish people and government are asking to take part. I believe the stakes are these: either we choose a self-confident Europe that is able to deal with the problems and challenges that it faces – which range from difficult relations with the Islamic world to immigration and lasting differences – a Europe which is starting the negotiations not lightly or ingenuously but fully aware of their political consequences, or we choose a Europe which, perhaps out of respect for its Catholic-Christian identity, curls up into a ball and thinks it can best defend the well-being we have obtained by shutting itself off from the challenges that it faces.'[455]

The Dutch Green Lagendijk concluded his presentation of his group's position by backing the socialists' claim that religious identity and political identity were not interwoven in either the European or the Turkish case, and that shared political values could in fact form the foundation of European cooperation regardless of religion:

'As Mr Schulz has already pointed out, Turkey can demonstrate that democracy and Islam very much go hand in hand. That is the best antidote against the sceptics who are monopolising the issue in Europe at the moment and who claim that this will never be possible. Turkey can demonstrate that it is possible, and Europe can demonstrate that it can contribute to preventing a clash of civilisations between the West and the Islamic world, a clash for which many fundamentalists in the East and West are hoping. Europe can show that, based on shared values, there is room for more than one culture and that in the Europe of the twenty-first century, there is room for more than one religion'[456].

The clash of opinions about the relationship between cultural and religious identity on one side and political identity on the other was evident: Polish UEN MEP Szymaski, also speaking on behalf of his group, stated that

'if we wish to avoid migration-related conflicts, we should not turn a Muslim country into the European Union's largest Member State'[457]

(hence presumably associating the freedom of movement that would potentially come from membership with the growth of Muslim communities across European member

[455] Emma BoninoALDE (Lista Emma Bonino), Italy, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004. A member of the EP since the first direct elections in 1979 (with a hiatus between 1988 and 1999), Bonino was Commissioner for humanitarian aid, consumer policy and fishing in the Santer Commission (1995-1999).
[456] Joost Lagendijk, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, Netherlands, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004.
[457]

states), whilst the Italian Battilocchio (NI, but speaking on behalf of the small New Italian Socialist Party) stated that

> 'Turkey's accession would confirm the nature of the European Union as an open, tolerant society that draws strength from its diversity and is bound together by shared values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law and respect of human rights. Furthermore, since it offers an alternative model to the closed, sectarian society proposed by Islamic fundamentalists, Europe could play an invaluable role in future relations between the West and the Islamic word'[458].

The Green Özdemir, a German of Turkish descent, was quick to underline how culture and religion should not have any bearing on the EU's identity:

> 'if you follow [the cultural argument opposed to accession negotiations] to its conclusion, you end up attributing differing status to religions and cultures in the European Union, and that bears no relation whatever to the European Union that most of us want. A European Union in which one religion is worth more than another, one in which there are superior and subordinate cultures, has nothing to do with the Treaties of Rome'[459].

The Polish IND/DEM simply stated that 'Turkey is not a European country in terms of geography, religion or culture'[460], and the Italian Angelilli countered with the observation that

> 'we cannot close the door on a Muslim country with secular institutions that is seeking to take a European path of modernisation and development'[461]

a statement that both accepted Turkey as having the potential of becoming European and seemed to work on the unspoken assumption that democracy and human rights were culturally European.

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[458] Alessandro Battilocchio, Socialist group in the EP, Italy, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004. Battilocchio (Partito socialista nuovo PSI) was first a member of the EP from July 2004 until July 2009.

[459] Cem Özdemir, Greens/European Free Alliance, Germany, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004. Özdemir (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) was first elected to the EP in July 2004. He was an non-attached member until he joined the socialist group in the EP in October 2007.

[460] Miroslaw Piotrowski, IND/DEM, Poland, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004. Piotrowski (Liga Polskich Rodzin) was an MEP from July 2004 until 2009 (re-elected 2009).

[461] Roberta Angelilli, EPP, Italy, EP Debates, Turkey's progress towards accession, 13 December 2004. Angelilli (alleanza nazionale) was an MEP from July 1994 until July 2009 (re-elected 2009). She would be vice-president of the EP from July 2009.

The back and forth between those who thought Europe's cultural and religious roots were at the basis of the EU's identity and those who deemed the universality and primacy of its political identity just as applicable to a Muslim country continued.[462] And yet, even with the flare of cultural controversy present in the December 2004 discussions, many MEPs still used the political criteria of democracy and human rights as their fall-back – in particular those from the three major political groups that constituted the core of the identity consensus. The phrase 'human rights' appeared 64 times, democracy/tic 72, culture/al 38 (two out of those referred however to cultural rights and one to cultural programmes). The difficulties and disagreements on the Turkish issue were further highlighted by the request presented by 147 MEPs to hold a secret ballot on the issue, which was eventually granted in spite of the protests from Socialist and Liberal Democrat MEPs[463]. Eventually, the EP approved the Resolution on the Eurlings Report by 407 votes to 262, with 29 abstentions – effectively agreeing on the fulfilment of the political criteria as the only measure of Turkey's fitness for membership.[464]

This debate showed above all else that the European Parliament had not elaborated an identity discourse in which political and cultural aspects had been reconciled. On the contrary, whilst the political elements of the EU's identity had been introduced and articulated over time and institutionalised into a self-image to which candidate states must comply if they wanted to accede to the Union, there had been no similar debate or deep articulation of the potential cultural and historical roots of the EU's chosen political values and certainly no discussion on the potential content and role of a European cultural identity. In previous enlargement debates, whether they be debating Greece, Spain and Portugal, or Central and Eastern Europe, common cultural roots had been cited by some and taken for granted by most – even if with the latter group MEPs did perceive the need to construct a strong historical narrative that would justify bringing into the European Union countries that had been on the opposite side of the Iron Curtain for the entirety of the Cold War. Turkey was the case in which all the contradictions inherent in the European identity discourse came to a head: with the previous enlargements, historical and cultural circumstances meant that a political

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[462] See for instance the interventions by MEPs Camre, Allister, Malström, Karatzaferis.
[463] See Debates of 15 December 2004, Voting Time.
[464] European Parliament resolution on the 2004 regular report and the recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession (COM(2004)0656 - C6-0148/2004 - 2004/2182(INI)); for details of vote, Official Journal of the European Union Vol. 48, Information and Notices, European Parliament, Minutes Wednesday 15 December 2004 (1957/C 226 E/03) and Annex I, Results of Votes.

discourse could be developed and institutionalised as the core of European identity and the cultural roots of this identity could conveniently remain implicit – and a tacit consensus meant avoiding messy confrontations on what were clearly very different understandings of European culture. In fact, this discourse was institutionalised to the point that the EP could add a further dimension to its identity discourse by bringing a strong historical narrative into its debates on Central and Eastern European enlargement – when dealing with countries that were on an implicit and possibly subconscious level perceived by a large part of Europe's elites and people as part of an undefined 'European culture'. The cracks in the identity armour however became evident when the combined pressures of Eastern enlargement, the debate on the Constitution, and Turkish accession acted as catalysts for an increasing disaffection with the direction of European integration on the part of the European public.

The emergence of cultural concerns in the debates of June 2003 and December 2004 was hardly surprising, given the wider context within which the European Parliament's discussions took place. In fact, the surprise was that they took so long to become the focus of the EP's discourse. Ultimately, however, the broad consensus among MEPs was that democracy and human rights, as expressed in the Copenhagen criteria, remained the essential element of European identity on which MEPs could maintain a broad consensus. Nonetheless, what the debate of December 2004 showed was that agreement on the broad principles underpinning Europe's identity did not necessarily mean that MEPs would elaborate such principles in the same way or come to the same conclusions as to Turkey's Europeanness.

Conclusion: political identity as a safe harbour

The image of Europe that emerges from the EP's discussions of Turkey during the 1990s and early 2000s is firmly centred on political identity. MEPs based their discussions of Turkey's eligibility for EU membership on its adherence to principles of democracy, respect of human rights and the rights of minorities, relegating civilisational, cultural and religious considerations to a secondary role. Parliamentary discourse was couched in the language of human rights, which provided the framework for discussion of all other considerations, from Turkey's history vis-à-vis Europe to religious and cultural considerations. Mentions of religious differences between Europe's primarily Judeo-

Christian tradition and Turkey's Islamic one were thus often subsumed into the human rights discourse: MEPs talked about the need to guarantee freedom of religious expression, and about secularism as an essential element of European identity and a point of convergence with Turkey's modern political identity. However, apart from rare exceptions, they did not refer to religion in the context of cultural or civilisational identity, in spite of the fact that the public debate outside the EP made ample reference to religious and cultural aspects as key elements of both Europe's and Turkey's identity. The EP's discourse was in fact squarely focused on the identification of Europe as a land of pluralism be it cultural, religious, or political. It was only in the second half of 2004 that parliamentary debate finally addressed the question of culture and civilisation in full, and in doing so it showed both the depth of disagreement on European cultural identity and its place within the EU and the different interpretations of the European political values that lay beneath the surface of consensus.

The EP's discourse on Turkey was thus nearly exclusively constructed around the Copenhagen political criteria, leaving aside the issues that were being discussed in the wider public debate on Turkish membership and that seemed to be at the core of the European public's misgivings about Turkish accession. Turkey's ability to become 'fully European' was more easily discussed on grounds of political identity regardless of whether the claim was to be for or against membership. The Copenhagen political criteria were recognised and accepted by all member states and they were already being applied to the Central and Eastern European countries undergoing the process of accession. All candidate states, including Turkey, recognised them and accepted to comply in order to join the Union. Using them as a basis for discussion and framing all other issues within that discourse was thus both 'politically correct' and easily justifiable for politicians across the political spectrum. Of course, this approach meant that MEPs found themselves in the position of tackling an issue that was clearly very close to their voters' concerns, without actually addressing those cultural elements that made Turkey such a significant question to begin with. European citizens were alert to the problem of whether to allow Turkey entry to the Union because of the perceived cultural and civilisational questions that such a decision brought to the fore. Addressing the question of cultural identity was thus what MEPs, as direct representatives of the citizens of Europe, ought to have done in order for parliamentary debate to be in tune with the debate outside the walls of their institution. When they eventually did turn to the

question of Turkey's eligibility in cultural and civilisational terms, including the issue of religion, the very real disagreement among and within the party groups became undeniable. By straying outside the well-trodden path of constructing Europe's identity on an entirely political basis, and venturing into the much trickier question of Europe's culture and its boundaries, the EP showed that, unlike with its earlier successful construction of a political identity, finding common ground on a cultural definition of European identity was impossible in the face of the very real differences that existed within the EP itself regarding the idea of European identity when confronted with such a controversial counterpart as the Turkish 'permanent other'. Eventually, by maintaining a basic consensus on the idea that Europe's contemporary identity was an essentially political one based on human rights and democracy, MEPs were able to both hold on to the self-image of the European Parliament as the champion of human rights and democracy within and without the European Union, building upon the well-established political values that had already been successfully portrayed as synonymous with the European Community for close to four decades.

Conclusion: The European Parliament's enlargement discourse and the construction of European identity, 1962-2004.

This thesis has analysed the European Parliament's enlargement discourse in order to shed new light on the construction of a contemporary European identity as well as on the extent to which the ideas elaborated by this institution influenced the wider process of enlargement. Whilst it does not claim to provide an all-encompassing analysis of the various rounds of enlargement over the forty years taken into consideration, nor of the idea of European identity in general, it will have helped to bridge some of the gaps in the existing literature on enlargement, the history of the European Parliament within this process, and the construction of a European identity by the Community and later the Union. Finally, it has also tried to show that the questions asked by political scientists working on contemporary developments within the European Union and those asked by historians of European integration do not necessarily have to remain the domain of one or other discipline: looking at the long-term development of parliamentary discourse on enlargement and identity can help to better understand how concepts of European identity morphed into contemporary ideas about Europe, and how the European Parliament came to be what it is today.

Much of the existing literature about the European Parliament is written by political scientists, who have taken an interest in this institution after the introduction of direct elections in 1979 and, more importantly, the increase in the EP's powers vis-à-vis other institutions with the Single European Act and the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties[465]. The rise in the influence and role of the EP within the institutional make-up of the European Union has led many political scientists to look for the reasons for such a transfer of powers from the national to the supranational level (described as a process of 'constitutionalisation' of the EU), and especially for the willingness of the member states and the Council as their representative body, to agree to such a change in the European balance of power[466]. At the same time, others have scrutinised party politics among

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[465] Simon Hix, 'Fifty Years On: Research on the European Parliament', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2003, Vol. 41:2 pp. 191-202 for an overview of the status of research on the European Parliament.
[466] *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2006, Vol. 13:8 – special issue on 'The constitutionalisation of the European Union'; Berthold Rittberger, 'The creation and empowerment of the European Parliament',

MEPs and studied election and voting patterns[467]. This recent interest in the European Parliament among political scientists has not been coupled so far with a corresponding surge in interest on the part of historians of European integration, who remain on the whole rather uninterested in an institution that for the first three decades of European integration had little decision-making power. If political scientists have been very specific in their analysis of the EP, therefore, historians have largely neglected it altogether. There are a few indications that the tide may be turning, and historical research has recently begun to encompass the EP: the workshop held in September 2010 in Geneva and forthcoming special issue of the *Journal of European Integration History* is an example of historical research turning towards a closer scrutiny of the EP[468]. However, historians of Europe and European integration are still reluctant to tackle the study of what many still perceive as a barely relevant body – and those who are laying the groundwork are understandably addressing issues such as the historical development of political party groups, political alliances, and the role of a few striking individuals within the plethora of MEPs, certainly all crucial factors in furthering our understanding of the development of this institution[469]. The first challenge that this thesis set itself was therefore to take a closer look to the history of the European Parliament not from a theoretical point of view, or not even with the aim of explaining the reasons why the EP was able to gain more power and why other actors allowed this to happen, but simply to better understand the development of this institution over the long-term. By looking at how the EP discussed certain key questions facing the Community and the Union – successive rounds of enlargement and their meaning for the purposes of integration – the EP's self-image vis-à-vis the other institutions and actors within the community also emerged, contributing additional layers of understanding of fluid institutional dynamics.

The subsequent rounds of EC and EU enlargement are as well-researched as the European Parliament is under-studied, especially in the history of European integration. The first three rounds, in particular, have received much, certainly deserved, attention, especially from the national angles of the candidate states and the existing members, if

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Journal of Common Market Studies, 2003, Vol. 41: 2, pp. 203-225.

[467] See for example Simon Hix, Tapio Raunio, Roger Scully, 'An institutional theory of behaviour in the European Parliament', EPGR Working paper no.1, 1999 and all work for the European Parliament Working Group.

[468] Le Parlement européen et les transformations de l'Europe communautaire, 16-17 September 2010, Université de Genève: the resulting articles are forthcoming, in *Journal of European Integration History*, 2011.

[469] For instance, Anita Pollack, *Wreckers or Builders? A history of Labour members of the European Parliament 1979-1999*, (London: John Harper Publishing, 2009).

not yet quite as closely from the point of view of the Brussels institutions[470]. There is therefore a wealth of literature detailing the events and decision-making processes surrounding the enlargements of 1973, 1981, and 1986, and more is being written on decision-making within the European institutions to complement the work on national policy-making. Once again, if new research is making inroads into the inner workings of the executive bodies of the Community to further the multi-dimensional understanding of the enlargement process, the European Parliament remains the Cinderella of the situation: it did not, after all, wield any formal powers with regards to enlargement until 1987 and its direct impact on the decisions taken as part of the enlargement process does instil a large dose of rightful scepticism. Most of these existing studies, moreover, focus either on the high politics of enlargement or on the economics, on the reasons behind membership applications and the corresponding reasons why they were accepted by the existing member states, or on the details of negotiations. Few are specifically or solely concerned with the, admittedly less clearly identifiable and more airy, ideational aspects of enlargement: what concepts of integration and understandings of future purpose lay at the back of politicians' minds when they discussed the possibility of including new countries into this process? Finding the answer to this question in the records of Council or Commission meetings would probably prove difficult, as such answers would need to focus on general discussions about grand ideas rather than more practical and pressing ones about the immediacy of decisions that policy-makers are faced with on a daily basis. The dinner tables or the back corridors of Brussels probably provided better fora for such existential conversations, but these would most likely not have been recorded for posterity. Where the ideas behind the policy positions of Council and Commission officials remain largely beyond reach, the European Parliament is revealed as the most likely source for exploring just such a question: a parliamentary assembly is, by its very nature, the locus for debate of political ideas and existential questions. The European Parliament in the 1960s and 1970s had little in the way of actual powers, yet irrespective of this its debates are reveleaving of the ideas that were floating around in the European political quarters of the Belgian capital

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[470] See *Journal of European Integration History*, Special issue on enlargement, 2005, Vol. 11:2; Wolfram Kaiser and Jürgen Elvert eds, *European Union Enlargement: a comparative history*, (London: Routledge, 2004); further examples in footnote 48.

The European Parliament's self-perception as the 'voice' and the 'conscience' of Europe, on the other hand, meant that MEPs repeatedly engaged in broader debates about the meaning and purposes of European integration

> 'We, the European Parliament, which today represents 370 million people must be the advocate of the peoples of the whole of Europe. If we are not the advocate then who will be? We, the Members, must be the advocate.'[471]

The EP's quest to define Europe stemmed in part from this institution's wider concern with carving a significant and specific role for itself within the institutional make-up of the European Community. Dissatisfied with their role in the initial distribution of powers within the Community, MEPs set off on a quest to rectify the perceived imbalance from the very beginning. The pressure for direct elections and greater power fitted with the self-image of the EP as the democratic core of the European Community, a forum in which the desires and interests of European citizens were voiced by their representatives. It also led MEPs to take on the role of public champions of the values that the EC/EU should stand for and hence the nature of the enlarging Community. Self-perception within the EC and within the future advancement of the integration process, as well as within the enlargement process itself, was a striking feature to emerge from parliamentary discourse throughout its forty-year arch. MEPs saw themselves and their institution as the embodiment of the political, cultural, and historical essence of European integration. This self-image provided much of the drive behind the discussions held by European parliamentarians on the question of enlargement, as round after round MEPs discussed not merely whether a country should or should not be allowed to join, but what the ultimate purpose of this expanding process of European integration was, and what role the European Parliament would assume within it. The European Parliament's powers did, of course, increase over time[472]. The change, if slow, was significant, influencing both the way in which MEPs perceived the role of their institution and the way in which they debated enlargement and identity. Analysis of parliamentary discourse over the long-term thus allows for the observation of the potential interaction between institutional changes and shifts in discourse, be it in terms of content or merely in terms of emphasis or one or another set of ideas. It thus becomes possible to trace the fate of an idea within the discourse as the institutional

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[471] Hans-Gert Pöttering, EPP, Germany, EP Debates, Enlargement - agenda 2000, 3 December 1997
[472] Berthold Rittberger, 'The creation and empowerment of the European Parliament', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2003, Vol. 41: 2.

circumstances change alongside a transforming geopolitical situation, and to establish whether such ideas fare any differently, and if so, how, in a changing context.

This thesis is thus an attempt to explore the intersection between different literatures on enlargement and on the European Parliament. It was, however, also an attempt to draw yet a further line towards this junction, by exploring not just the European Parliament's enlargement discourse, but the identity discourse within it. Works on the idea of European identity abound from both the historical and the political science sides, as well as sociology[473]. Admittedly, the kind of questions related to identity diverge in the two disciplines: on the one hand, most historical analyses of this issue are broader intellectual explorations of concepts of identity developed over centuries of European history, or are in fact highly specialised studies of the role played by the idea of Europe within national or local identities[474]. What they mostly have in common is a broad focus on 'Europe' rather than a specific one on the European Community or the Union. Historical works on European identity within the context of the EC or the EU are few and far between[475]. Political scientists, on the other hand, have largely concerned themselves with European identity in relation to the question of whether a European demos already exists, or can emerge, for the new type of polity embodied by the European Union. They may go about it in very different ways – some looking at citizens' perceptions of Europe and sense of allegiance, others dissecting the possibility of the emergence of a European identity at a more purely theoretical level[476]. The driving question, however, is similar: can a common European identity emerge, or be constructed, to create allegiance to the EU, in a way like that in which national identities engender allegiance to national governments? Yet again, the historical and the political science literatures do not quite meet: not in the questions they pose, at least explicitly, but above all not in the sources

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[473] Amongst many others, Jeffrey T. Checkel and Peter J. Katzenstein, *European Identity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: idea, identity, reality* (London: Macmillan, 1995); Cathleen Kantner, 'Collective identity as shared ethical self-understanding: the case of the emerging European identity', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2006, Vol. 9:4, pp. 501-523;

[474] Mikael af Malborg and Bo Strath eds., *The Meaning of Europe: variety and contention within and among nations*, (Oxford: Berg, 2002).

[475] Apart from Shore's work, a few studies are now emerging: Cristina Blanco Sío-López ed., Richie Europa Newsletter, Special Issue: 'European Memories and the construction of a collective European memory', 2010, No. 8; Marloes Beers and Jenny Raflik eds., *National Cultures and Common Identity – a Challenge for Europe?,* (Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2010).

[476] Klaus Eder, 'A theory of collective identity. Making Sense of the debate on a 'European identity', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2009, Vol. 12:4, pp. 427-447; Michael Bruter, *Citizens of Europe? The emergence of a mass European identity*, (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Richard Robyn, *The changing face of European identity*, (London, New York: Routledge, 2005); Jürgen Maier and Berthold Rittberger, 'Shifting Europe's boundaries: mass media, public opinion and the enlargement of the EU', *European Union Politics*, 2008, Vol. 9:2 ,pp. 243-267.

within which they seek to find the answers. Far from trying to provide reconciliation for this schism, this thesis tried to ask a similar question to those asked by political scientists, while using a historical method to find an answer: it thus looked at the identity question within the EP's enlargement discourse over successive rounds to see how MEPs, who for their own political survival have a vested interest in fostering allegiance to their institution and thus to the European political system of which it is part, grappled with the wider questions of the meaning of 'Europe' which are the subject of many a historical study, within the highly specific political context of trying to explain and legitimise both the process of European integration and its expansion to new member states. Essentially, MEPs were asking questions such as 'what is the meaning of Europe and is there a European identity?' whilst driven by the reasons unearthed by political scientists 'can such an identity glue together the citizens of the member states within the political boundaries of the European Union?'.

Politics, history and culture do not a European identity make. Quite. Yet?

The potency and influence of EP identity discourse in the enlargement context varied depending on the themes and circumstances that this discourse operated with. Possibly the most common claim about the identity of the EC/EU is that it is a primarily political identity, based on a liberal democratic conception of politics derived from the political cultures of its member states and loosely codified in enlargement terms with the fundamental principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law – which are after all, or have become, the key political requirements for any country wishing to join the Union[477]. Schimmelfennig highlights how the EU's identity as a liberal democratic international community leads it to enlarge to include those states that share these values, thus making enlargement the reflection of shared liberal democratic norms[478]. Ulrich Sedelmeier, in his fascinating work on the Eastern enlargement, shows how the discursive construction of the EU into a role of responsibility vis-à-vis the Central and Eastern European countries provided policy-makers with a collective identity based on the two aspects of the EU's 'self-proclaimed pan-European vocation' and the 'liberal democratic identities of the member states' that significantly influenced the enlargement

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[477] See Helene Sjursen ed., *Questioning EU enlargement: Europe in search of identity*, (London: Routledge, 2006).
[478] Frank Schimmelfennig, 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union', *International Organization*, 2001, Vol. 55:1, pp. 47-80.

process[479]. A close scrutiny of the European Parliament's enlargement discourse provides both a confirmation of these claims and, at the same time, a clearer picture of how this political identity is articulated vis-à-vis other aspects of European identity that are also present within the discourse, as well as tracing the ways in which political identity was woven in with cultural and historical identities in a changing and uneven pattern that varied at different points in time – sometimes barely resisting coming undone only to be woven together again much like Penelope's web.

The European Parliament's elaboration of political identity around the concepts of democracy and human rights started as early as 1962 and remained a core tenet of parliamentary discourse throughout the following four decades. Articulated at first to deal with the hypothetical, but not unfounded, case of a dictatorial Spanish regime applying for membership, the exclusively democratic identity of the Community became a battle horse of European parliamentarians[480]. MEPs reiterated their case when calling for a freezing of the association with the Colonels' Greece in 1967, and then clamoured in favour of accepting the new democracies of Southern Europe in the 1970s as a sign of the Community's commitment to democracy within and without its borders – but ideally within, through the concept of 'anchoring democracy' via EC membership. In the EP's definition of the EC's political self-image, democracy and human rights went hand in hand as the former was deemed to be the only viable political system for the adequate protection of the latter. Moreover, democracy was not to be limited to the political systems of the member states, it was also to be the defining element of the Community per se:

> 'the political goal of the European Community is the unification of Europe in an
> institutional system based on the principles of freedom and democracy and
> inspired by the ideals of peace and political, cultural, social and economic
> progress'.[481]

With the collapse of the Communist regimes and the CEECs' immediate re-orientation towards Western European institutions in general and eventual EC membership in particular, the affirmation of the EC's political identity appeared but a formality. The

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[479] Ulrich Sedelmeier, *Constructing the Path to Eastern Enlargement*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

[480] Charles Powell and Pilar Ortuño Anaya had already highlighted the role of the EP, and the socialist group in particular, in bringing the question of a democratic regime as a pre-requisite for participation in the European Community.

[481] Pietro Lezzi, Socialist, Italy, EP Debates, Enlargement of the Community (debate on report doc 323/77), 1 October 1977.

institutionalisation of the political identity with the introduction of the Copenhagen criteria seemed indeed a confirmation of the triumph of the EU's democratic and human rights credentials: the acceptance of the political criteria by the candidate states only a further confirmation that the EU's self-image of its political identity was apparently reflected in the eyes of its beholders.

Parliamentary discourse on the Eastern enlargement showed, nonetheless, that the political identity of the EU was not quite as solid and compact as it would appear at first. Of course, this is largely because no identity is in fact ever less than fluid: successful identities need some degree of flexibility[482]. Beyond this, however, MEPs showed in the way they discussed the Eastern enlargement that there was a perceived need in the 1990s and early 2000s to complement the political identity with further elements based on the cultural and historical roots of Europe – and not just Western Europe's political choices of the previous fifty years:

> 'throwing open the doors of the Union to the countries history has divided from us for too long because of ideology and nationalism condemned by that same history, is perhaps the greatest political act of the Union […] It means finally sealing over those divisions which have brought destruction, poverty and marginalisation to many parts of continental Europe; it means helping the young democracies to consolidate and recover a spirit of solidarity, friendship and supporting that part of the continent which has inspired democracy and provided models of development for the whole planet; it means uniting peoples belonging to the same continent, whose history and culture are intertwined by centuries of history.'[483]

The expected emphasis on questions of human rights, of which the EP had after all been a champion throughout and that could now be legitimately posed to the candidate states, was curiously rather understated in the discourse. Rather than use their new-found monitoring role to reiterate and develop the political identity discourse based on democracy and human rights, MEPs were restrained in their observations and did not quite concentrate their attention solely or even predominantly on political identity. On the contrary, the enlargement discourse of the European Parliament over the course of

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[482] Klaus Eder, 'A theory of collective identity', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2009, Vol. 12:4.
[483] Claudio Azzolini, Group Union for Europe, Italy,EP Debates, Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997. Azzolini (Forza Italia) was an MEP between 1994 and 1999, and chaired the group Union for Europe from December 1996 until June 1998.

the fifth enlargement saw political elements flanked by an increased number of historical references, especially in the latter years, when enlargement to the CEECs and Cyprus and Malta drew closer. Thus, while it would be legitimate to expect MEPs to follow-up the institutionalisation of the political identity constituted by the Copenhagen Criteria in 1993 with an even stronger emphasis on democracy and human rights than before, this consolidation did not materialise. There was, of course, no denying or backtracking from the principles that the EP had upheld since the inception of the enlargement discourse, and MEPs were decidedly engaged in the monitoring of the candidate states' compliance with the political criteria of accession. At the same time, however, it appears that MEPs no longer felt the urge to reiterate the EU's commitment to democracy and human rights that had been present when this political identity was not quite as widely accepted within and without the Community, such as when the accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal was being discussed. Instead of delving deeper into the articulation of what this now institutionalised identity entailed, beyond the general commitment to common principles of democracy and human rights, the EP's discourse remained what it had been, minus the sense of drive and urgency that had been present when political identity still needed to be consolidated. This is not to say that the political identity did not continue to represent the core of the EP's image of contemporary Europe and the Union as its institutional expression. It was however remarkable that MEPs gave unprecedented attention to a set of historical references that essentially came to constitute the backbone of a historical narrative for the EU – and that came to provide much of the legitimacy attributed to the 2004 enlargement.

Historical references, and especially the myth of the 'founding fathers' as the statesmen who had been at the origin of the decisions that led to the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 and then to the Rome Treaties in 1957, had already emerged in parliamentary discourse well before discussions of an Eastern enlargement were under way. In previous enlargements, however, such references had been sporadic and were not part of a wider historical discourse about the past, present and future of Europe. When discussing the Eastern enlargement, on the other hand, MEPs devoted much more space to the idea of a common European history as the foundation of and propelling force behind the accession of the CEECs to the European Union. The combination of the myth of the founding fathers with ideas of a continent-wide European Union as the culmination of a progressive development of European

history and the rejection of negative legacies constituted the core of an emerging historical narrative, possibly the most striking aspect of parliamentary discourse on the fifth enlargement:

> 'through its successes the European Union has changed the path of world history. Former arch enemies now make up the Union's backbone instead. A trusting cooperation characterizes the members of the Union, and the Soviet threat has been out-competed. Its successes make the Union an example in the new historic era.'[484]

In previous rounds, MEPs had certainly used historical references, but had not quite engaged, consciously or otherwise, in the construction of a shared historical narrative for the Community. Between 1996 and 2004, on the other hand, the emphasis on the historical aspect of the discourse was so pronounced that it seemed to nearly displace more purely political constructions of European identity in favour of a historical justification of the enlargement process.

Parliamentary discourse on the fifth enlargement exuded an air of near inevitability, of history galloping towards the unification of Europe which – however artificial and inaccurate such an idea might be – seemed to pervade parliamentarians' understanding of the enlargement process to Central and Eastern Europe in a way that had not characterised previous enlargement rounds. The historical narrative constructed by MEPs to help justify and give meaning to the Eastern enlargement provided a re-definition of enlargement as the extension of a process of reconciliation to the countries of the former Communist Bloc:

> 'We have exorcised the ghosts of the past. Although the twentieth century was marked by the greatest possible disunity in Europe, with two terrible wars, the twenty-first century will see the peoples of Europe unite, if we want this to happen. They will unite in a common project, which is unmistakably a project of peace between Europeans and between Europe and the rest of the world'.[485]

It also constructed European history as both a negative legacy of war and conflict that needed to be countered by a forward-looking European Union, and a positive legacy of alleged unity and commonality before the upsets of the twentieth century. The pitfalls of this narrative lay in the attempt to reconcile an essentially Western European historical

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[484] Staffan Burenstam Linder, EPP, Sweden, EP Debates, , Enlargement – Agenda 2000, 3 December 1997.
[485] Maria Carrihlo, Portugal, EP Debates, Progress towards accession by the 12 candidate countries, 3 October 2000. Carrihlo (Partido socialista) was an MEP from July 1999 until July 1994.

experience (that of the process of integration) from which the CEECs had been entirely excluded, with a more long-term view of Europe as a single entity on which divisions and conflict had been superimposed by external actors and circumstances. The result was a rather convoluted narrative of positive post-1950 experience in contrast to negative pre-1950 history, combined with an alleged positive pan-European unity pre-world wars yet also marred by conflict. This somewhat contradictory and largely superficial reading of European history was nonetheless a dominant theme in the EP's fifth enlargement discourse. Historical references that had been scattered few and far between in previous decades were picked up and amplified to construct a historical narrative of European integration. Furthermore, this narrative was far from being confined to this institution: on the contrary, MEPs appeared to reflect a more generalised feeling of 'history in the making' that was also present in the rhetoric of Commission and Council officials. Representatives of member governments, Council and Commission all participated in the EP's enlargement debates by talking to the same rhetoric and tracing the same historical narrative. Parliamentary discourse thus exemplified the wider climate in the European Union at the time – showing the ideas that predominated amongst European politicians and providing a further insight into the place of the EP within the European political and institutional arena.

It is remarkable that both the political identity discourse and the historical narrative that emerged from the EP's enlargement discourse were shared by the large majority of MEPs across the political spectrum, in particular when looking at representatives of the three mainstream political groups: the EPP, the PSE, and the ELDR. Whilst there were of course voices that remained outside the chorus, such as the French Communists or, later on, the more eurosceptic MEPs on both the left and right of the political spectrum, the majority of MEPs used sets of political and historical references that were unexpectedly similar, thus showing that the fundamental consensus that underscored the way in which European identity was constructed within the EP's enlargement discourse. Whilst outside enlargement debates MEPs even from the mainstream parties may have expressed diverging views about the meaning of European integration, for instance on fundamental economic or social doctrines, this was not the case when it came to constructing an image of Europe in the context of general debates on enlargement – or rather, on the role of the EC/EU in Europe and vis-à-vis potential member states. This consensus was reflected in the wide majorities with which many resolutions regarding

general principles of enlargement were approved, and it also allows for the possibility of referring to a 'parliamentary' identity discourse on enlargement. The striking convergence of MEPs from different political backgrounds on a set of ideas shows that there was indeed an institutional position on certain themes. At the same time, it may also go some way towards explaining the general vagueness and sometimes outright superficiality of the discourse in question: it was much easier to find consensus on general concepts of democracy and human rights, or even on a rather self-serving interpretation of European history, than would have been the case had MEPs started to truly debate the ins and outs of what lay beneath the surface of such political and historical identities. Of further interest is the fact that there was no detectably significant change in the fundamental elements of parliamentary discourse before and after 1979: both the appointed parliament and the representatives directly elected to the EP spoke to the same tune when dealing with the essence of the political identity, and the foundations of the historical narrative developed in the 1990s can already be found in the previous three decades. What was significant however was that, despite the relative consistency of the mainstream discourse, direct elections and the accession of new states strengthened the ranks of the Eurosceptics on both the right and the left, and introduced MEPs from very different national and political backgrounds to the main party groups. These changes notwithstanding, it is remarkable that the discourse remained so essentially consistent over time, only evolving on the foundations laid in the 1960s and 1970s in political terms – especially with regards to the political identity.

The existence of a mainstream consensus did not impede the emergence of clear divergences when other elements, namely cultural references, were introduced into the discourse. After all, agreement could easily be reached on the foundations of the Community's political identity because it essentially represented the actual political choices made by the member states: principles of democracy and human rights were in fact the bases of their national political systems and thus the principles within which MEPs operated. They could hence be transferred to the Community level with relative ease. At the same time, a historical narrative that selected certain elements of the past could find its justification in the fact that the integration process had, after all, presided over forty years of peace and prosperity. Although extending this to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe proved harder and arguably less successful than extending political principles, it was still possible to find applicable principles within the historical

narrative that would provide a further sense of legitimacy to the enlargement process. Cultural references, on the other hand, were much more difficult to turn into a relatively approachable and coherent identity upon which politicians from different national and political backgrounds could agree. Whilst there was certainly a measure of unanimity in the way that many MEPs identified ancient Greece as the common cultural root of the EC's political identity, other elements of cultural identity were essentially dependent on the personal inclinations of the speakers. The lack of a 'cultural' consensus was in itself interesting: on the one hand, MEPs did feel the need to mention cultural ties as a further reason for the enlargement and 'unification' of Europe. On the other hand, however, any real definition of this common European culture escaped them, again in a striking reflection of the wider public debate on the alleged cultural (and religious) foundations of Europe and controversies over whether such references should be formalised within the EU's Constitutional Treaty. A lack of even a superficial cultural consensus, however, did not pose a particularly tricky hurdle to overcome in the justification of the second and fifth enlargements, which included countries whose 'Europeanness' was somehow only recognised in common perceptions, and could thus merely be hinted at without delving into the specifics of such alleged commonality.

Turkey provided a most interesting case for the analysis of the identity discourse vis-à-vis a country whose potential accession to the EU has sparked heated controversy and gathered much attention from the wider European public ever since its first application in 1987. The question of Turkish membership touches upon questions of identity to an unrivalled extent: its political, cultural, and historical 'Europeanness' has been questioned repeatedly with a vehemence that could find no match in any other enlargement debate, and yet its application has garnered enough supporters that the EU, and thus the EP, have given it serious consideration for the better part of two decades. Although to date no final decision has been made, the debate on a potential Turkish enlargement provides an interesting case study of the way ideas that were being articulated in parallel enlargement debates were played out when the same people discussed the more controversial and open-ended possibility of accepting Turkey into the European fold. It also clearly shows where the problems and contradictions of the EP's identity discourse that could be glossed over in previous enlargement debates came to a head in the much more open-ended Turkish case.

The Turkish enlargement debates feature a remarkable shift from the Eastern enlargement debates that were being carried out in the same period. If the latter show how MEPs were interested in adding a strong historical narrative to support the political identity as a means of legitimising the accession of the CEECs, debates on Turkish membership were on the other hand greatly dominated by a concern with Turkey's compliance with the EU's democracy and human rights principles. This was unexpected because it was largely out of step with the wider public debate about Turkey's eligibility for membership, which flanked questions about Turkey's political identity with concerns about whether Turkey had a sufficiently 'European' character in cultural, religious and historical terms to be accepted as a full member of the Union. The question of whether Turkey can be considered to belong to Europe in cultural terms is in fact also clearly reflected in much of the academic literature on Turkey and Europe, thus revealing that the concerns of the wider public are reflected in the work of many a specialist. Parliamentary discourse however diverged from both, thus countering expectations and offering a complex picture of the way in which MEPs conceived of the Turkish question and of enlargement and identity questions more generally. EP discourse did in fact only catch up with the wider debate after the 2004 enlargement was finalised, and when the other raging debates on the place of culture and Christianity in the EU had already seen the heavy involvement of the EP, as with the Buttiglione controversy. The patterns of parliamentary discourse on Turkey diverged from the patterns of the Eastern enlargement discourse in the different degrees of emphasis granted to the political identity (of which there was less than expected in relation to the CEECs while it was predominant in discussions about Turkey) and to a historical narrative (which was prominent in the Eastern enlargement discourse and largely absent in the Turkish enlargement discourse). Nonetheless, the cultural references used by MEPs when discussing Ankara's application did recall to a large extent the elements of cultural identity that emerged from the wider enlargement discourse. Essentially, MEPs showed in both instances that the definition of a common cultural identity was the most controversial aspect of identity construction – yet one that remained a powerful if implicit element of MEPs' perceptions of 'Europeanness'. Far from being able to find the same kind of consensus reached over the foundations of the common political identity or even to some extent with the construction of a common historical narrative, MEPs struggled to find common ground on a definition, however loose, of European cultural identity, showing instead how national and party political differences still

coloured their cultural references. At the same time, the political sensitivity of the Turkish debate surpassed even that of the Eastern enlargement: the question of Turkey's European character remained unresolved, while there was little controversy over the fact that the CEECs belonged to Europe. This may explain why, when debating Turkey, MEPs tended to fall back onto the political identity, which enjoyed widespread consensus, rather than non-political elements and especially cultural ones, which remained more divisive. Arguing for or against Turkish membership on the basis of its adherence to the EU's political identity allowed MEPs to remain within the confines of the widely acceptable, rather than venture into the less defined territory of history and culture. It also shows how, over the years, EP discourse created a powerful consensus over the 'accepted rhetoric' in which arguments of belonging and exclusion could be couched, and how MEPs seemed rather reluctant to abandon the common grounds of political identity and break the united institutional front that had allowed them to enhance the image of a strong parliamentary voice within the wider institutional arena of European politics.

The EP's enlargement discourse was therefore certainly characterised by an emphasis on the meaning of 'Europe' – intended as the political, cultural and historical aspects that defined the Europe represented by the European Community and later on the European Union. It was a discourse that was very much aimed at providing legitimation for the enlargement process and that was therefore adjusted to contemporary institutional and political circumstances, so that different aspects received more or less attention and articulation depending on the countries in question and the general geopolitical climate within which enlargement was being discussed. The specific function of this discourse – providing legitimacy for enlargement and articulating a common institutional position on behalf of the European Parliament that could gain a wide consensus within its ranks – also accounts for the vagueness and superficiality that often characterised the discourse. A deep, meaningful and nuanced exploration of the concept of Europe and of the reasons why certain political, historical and cultural characteristics constitute a shared collective identity justifying the existence of the EU was probably not the aim to which MEPs aspired in the first place, when a relatively simple set of principles would work just as well, if not better. Ultimately, however, the success of the political identity was not quite replicated when parliamentary discourse delved into the folds of historical or cultural identity. This reflected the wider political discourse outside parliament, where the

views of Council and Commission representatives also showed the relative ease of forging a credible political identity vis-à-vis the difficulties of defining the historical and cultural boundaries of Europe to fit the institutional and political realities of the European Union.

The MEPs' search for a powerful historical narrative that would flank political identity in their legitimisation of the fifth enlargement was an example of a partially successful if ultimately contradictory discourse. In focusing on history, whether negative or positive, real or imagined, MEPS effectively demonstrated that whilst a common adherence to shared political principles and practices may be a sufficient condition for EU membership, they felt a compelling need to appeal to the corollary of a common past in order to truly bind such different peoples together beyond the mere legal and economic ties of integration. The case of Turkey and of cultural identity, on the other hand, showed how this identity discourse was very much tied to specific needs presented by each enlargement challenge. The fact that a common cultural identity was often alluded to yet never articulated, until MEPs found themselves unable to agree on the issue in their Turkey debates of late 2004 showed that, on one level, MEPs deemed that a solely political identity was not in the immediate term a sufficient or even accurate binding factor, yet disagreed vehemently on whether a cultural identity should even be taken into consideration when discussing criteria of inclusion and exclusion from the Union.

The discourses on the fifth enlargement and Turkey show MEPs being pulled in different directions by opposing conceptions of what a modern European identity is, or ought to be. Furthermore, they seem to indicate that normative conceptualisations of European identity presented in much of the recent academic literature do not quite correspond to the reality of what European politicians perceive to be necessary aspects of an identity discourse in order to induce the allegiance of the Union's citizens. The EU may work on the understanding that a 'civic identity' is a sufficient basis for legitimacy and that a separation between cultural identity and political identity is in fact the European reality, but MEPs do not seem to operate according to this assumption, at least not consistently[486]. On the contrary, their repeated attempts to identify and articulate a common European identity beyond the political one indicate that, in spite of being the very ones who had pushed for the establishment of a Community political identity in the

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[486] See chapter four for a discussion of academic analyses of the nature of cultural and political elements in the emerging European identity within the EU.

first place, MEPs were uncomfortable with relying on political values as the sole binding elements of a common European identity after 1989.

Ultimately, the EP's identity discourse on enlargement shows both the capabilities and limits of this institution within the European political landscape. Firstly, the MEPs' determination to assert the relevance of their institution as more than a forum of mere deliberation was evident in their decades-long focus on making the principles of democracy and human rights the core defining elements of the EC's political identity, and placing the EP at the core of this image as the champion of human rights and democracy within and without the Community. In reiterating political requirements set in the 1960s with every enlargement, MEPs helped to forge a rhetoric that framed the terms of the debate not just for the EP, but for the Commission, Council and member state representatives as well – and culminated in the institutionalisation of the political criteria for accession at Copenhagen in 1993, thus providing an example of the importance of rhetoric in framing what are perceived as politically acceptable policy options as well showing how this kind of question can be explored via a historical analysis of discursive choices and their development over the long-term[487]. Secondly, it shows how it is possible, at least in this instance, to speak of the EP as a somewhat unitary actor, not because there were no differences among or even within political groups, but because the three main political groups, at the very least, were in fact engaged in the creation of a consensus that would enhance the influence of the EP, providing it with a common voice in the construction of Europe's self-image. The creation of such a consensus-based discourse did of course have its drawbacks: what could work for political principles was not quite as effective for other aspects of identity, as shown with the construction of a historical narrative and the struggles of over cultural identity. However, when looked at in the long-term, parliamentary discourse shows that there was a common thread unifying the rhetoric used by MEPs beyond the party political divisions that may have existed on specific policy issues – a further reason for historians to look at this institution and bridge the current gap with the work carried out by political scientists on more short-term voting dynamics, for instance.

The EP's identity discourse on enlargement thus shows how it is possible to address questions about EU institutions and political ideas from a different angle. Throughout

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[487] Ulrich Sedelmeier, *EU Enlargement, identity and the analysis of European foreign policy: identity formation through policy practice*, EUI working paper, (San Domenico di Fiesole: European University Institute, 2003).

four decades of enlargement debates, MEPs continued to perceive their collective role as one of crucial importance to the articulation of an identity that could provide legitimacy to the process of European integration and its expansion to new member states – by asserting the principles and ideas that bound the Union and its people together over and beyond legal and economic ties. This perception of their role clearly affected the way in which MEPs discussed certain matters by fostering the desire to give voice to a common institutional position on fundamental principles of European identity based on a general consensus – a feat that was clearly successful in the case of political identity and largely historical narrative, but remained unfulfilled in the case of cultural identity. Nonetheless, parliamentary discourse on identity and enlargement showed how the EP is indeed an institution that played an important role in the generation of political ideas within the European arena, influencing the wider discourse about the meaning and purpose of European integration and about concepts of European identity, as well as showing the pitfalls and drawbacks inevitably encountered in the construction of a common identity. Its history is worth exploring.

Appendix 1

COMPOSITION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 1979-2004

Historical data available at:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/archive/elections2009/en/hist_compositio
n_en_txt.html

Changes in the total number of seats within one legislature are due to the appointment of new members of the European Parliament following enlargement.

Political groups are indicated by their official acronyms, with the full name of the group also noted next to the first time an acronym appears.

1979-1984 – First Legislature	Political Group	Incoming Parliament - Seats
	(S) Socialist Group	112
	EPP (Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group))	108
	ED (European Democratic Group)	63
	COM (Communist and Allies Group)	44
	L (Liberal and Democratic Group)	40
	DEP (Group of European Progressive Democrats)	22
	CDI (Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members)	11
	NI (Non-attached)	10
	Total	410

24 Greek members joined in 1981	Political Group	Outgoing Parliament – Seats
	S	124
	EPP	117
	ED	63
	COM	48
	L	38
	DEP	22
	CDI	12
	NI	10
	Total	434

Second Legislature – 1984-1989	Political Group	Incoming Parliament – Seats
	S	130
	EPP	110
	ED	50
	COM	41
	L	31
	Group of the European Democratic Alliance (RDE)	29
	ARC (Rainbow Group: Federation of the Green Alternative European Links, Agelev-Ecolo, the Danish People's Movement against Membership of the European Community and the European Free Alliance in the European Parliament)	20
	DR (Group of the European Right)	16
	NI	7
	Total	434

60 Spanish members and 24 Portuguese members joined in 1986	Political Group	Outgoing Parliament – Seats
	PES (Group of the Party of European Socialists)	166
	EPP	113
	ED	66
	COM	48
	LDR (Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group)	45
	RDE	30
	ARC	20
	DR	16
	NI	14
	Total	518

Third Legislature – 1989 - 1994	Political Group	Incoming Parliament – Seats
	PES	180
	EPP	121
	LDR	49
	ED	34
	V (The Green Group in the	30

	European Parliament)	
	GUE (Group for the European United Left)	28
	RDE	20
	DR	17
	CG (Left Unity)	14
	ARC	13
	NI	12
	Total	518

	Political Group	Outgoing Parliament – Seats
22 Swedish, 21 Austrian and 16 Finnish members joined in 1995		
	PES	198
	EPP-ED (Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats)	162
	LDR	45
	V	27
	RDE	20
	ARC	14
	CG	13
	DR	12
	NI	27
	Total	518

Fourth Legislature – 1994 – 1999	Political Group	Incoming Parliament – Seats
	PES	198
	EPP-ED	156
	ELDR (Group of the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party)	44
	GUE	28
	FE (Forza Europa Group)	27
	RDE	26
	V	23
	ARE (Group of the European Radical Alliance)	19
	EDN (Europe of Nations Group (Coordination Group))	19
	NI	27
	Total	567

	Political Group	Outgoing Parliament – Seats

	PES	214
	EPP-ED	201
	ELDR	42
	UPE (Group Union for Europe)	34
	GUE-NGL (Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left)	34
	V	27
	ARE	21
	I-EDN (Group of Independents for a Europe of Nations)	15
	NI	38
	Total	626

Fifth Legislature – 1999-2004	Political Group	Incoming Parliament – Seats
	EPP-ED	233
	PES	180
	ELDR	50
	GREENS/EFA (Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance)	48
	GUE-NGL	42
	UEN (Union for Europe of the Nations Group)	30
	TDI (echnical Group of Independent Members - mixed group)	18
	EDD (Group for a Europe of Democracies and Diversities)	16
	NI	9
	Total	626

	Political Group	Outgoing Parliament – Seats
	EPP-ED	295
	PES	232
	ELDR	67
	GUE-NGL	55
	GREENS/EFA	47
	UEN	30
	EDD	18
	NI	44
	Total	744

Sixth legislature –2004 – 2009	Political Group	Incoming Parliament – Seats
	EPP-ED	268
	PES	200
	ALDE	88
	GREENS/EFA	42
	GUE-NGL	41
	IND/DEM (Independence/Democracy Group)	37
	UEN	27
	NI	29

	Political Group	Outgoing Parliament – Seats
	EPP-ED	288
	PES	217
	ALDE	100
	UEN	44
	GREENS/EFA	43
	GUE-NGL	41
	IND/DEM	22
	NI	30
	Total	785

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