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European Integration and the Treaty on European Union

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1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out the central features of the European integration process, which provide the historical and political context for European Union law. It also introduces some of the central concepts, ideas and developments in EU law.

2 European Union Law

Section 2 explores how EU law is centred around an interplay between two themes. The first is the government of many contemporary problems through law. The second is the development of the ideals of Europe and European union. This interplay lays the ground for many of its debates. The European ideal conceives of Europe as the central place of progress, learning and civilisation, placing faith in humanity and its capacity to improve. Its dark side is its arrogance and its dismissal of 'un-European' ways of life or thought as violating these virtues. The idea of European union sets up a political community in competition with the nation-state but one, nevertheless, through which government policy is carried out.

Section 3 considers the establishment of the three Communities, the European Economic Community (EEC), the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). It sets out the central institutions: the Commission, the Parliament, the Council and the Court of Justice. It also considers the central policies, most notably the common market. This section also compares two developments of the 1960s that set out the two dominant models of political authority in EU law: the Luxembourg Accords which set out an intergovernmental vision with political authority and democracy vested in the nation-state, and *Van Gend en Loos* which set out a supranational one in which these are vested in supranational institutions and the rights of European citizens. Finally, this section evaluates the Single European Act (SEA). This established the internal market, and transformed the legislative and political culture surrounding the European Communities by setting out both an ambitious legislative programme and providing for significant amounts of legislation to be adopted free from the national veto.

Section 4 looks at the establishment and early years of the European Union. It considers the three dominant strategies used to justify the authority of the Union, and how these were deployed in the various treaty reforms. These strategies involve increasing EU competencies to allow it to offer more benefits to its subjects, attempting to generate a sense of common identity, and democratic reform of its institutions. At Maastricht, the treaty which instituted the European Union, the central elements of each was, respectively, the establishment of economic and monetary union, European Union citizenship and increased powers for the European Parliament. The Treaty of Amsterdam, signed in 1997 to deal with unfinished business from Maastricht, established the area of freedom, security and justice. Its central features were the abolition of internal border controls between all Member States other than the United Kingdom and Ireland; the establishment of a supranational immigration and asylum policy; and police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal and civil matters. Amsterdam sought to orient Union identity more strongly around fundamental rights. In terms of democratic reform, it increased the powers of both the European Parliament and national parliaments.

These strategies were only partially successful. Devices were also introduced to offset tensions generated by the increased centralisation and supranationalisation of law-making. The subsidiarity principle provides that the Union should only act when Member States cannot realise its objectives unilaterally and by reason of the nature or scale of the action, these are better realised through Union action. Differentiated integration was also introduced. In some instances, such as economic and monetary union, it took the form of special regimes for individual Member States. At Amsterdam, a more general form of differentiation was adopted, enhanced cooperation, which allowed a majority of Member States to enact EU laws where others were unwilling.

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Section 5 considers the enlargement of the Union. Initially agreed between six Member States, the Union had grown to fifteen Member States by the mid-1990s. Almost all were prosperous and almost all came from Western Europe. The accessions from 2004 onwards brought the number of Member States to twenty-eight, with most of the new Member States being from Central and East Europe and having a post-communist past. This has made the Union a genuinely pan-European organisation but it has made it much more heterogeneous, posing new preferences and challenges, and raising the question of whether it is possible to have a 'one size fits all' EU law.

Section 6 analyses the period of institutional reform which led up to the Lisbon Treaty. It looks, first, at the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights (EUCFR). This pioneered the convention method for institutional reform, where instead of everything being decided by governments behind closed doors a body was established meeting in open session, taking evidence from civil society, to put forward proposals. The section then goes on to consider the limited institutional reforms agreed at the Treaty of Nice in 2004 and the failure of the Constitutional Treaty. It is then given over to discussion of the Lisbon Treaty.

The Treaty settles the European Union around two treaties, the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The Treaty catalogues EU competencies, for the first time. In addition, whilst special arrangements are made for foreign and defence policy, all other policies are brought within a common supranational framework. The Treaty next orients the collective identity of the European Union around a particular mission, respect for democratic values and democratic identities. In this regard, the Union must now respect the values set out in the EUCFR and is to be founded on representative democracy. It must also respect the fundamental democratic structures of Member States. Finally, the Lisbon Treaty continues the process of democratic reform with yet further powers for both the European Parliament and significant power for national parliaments, who can now police the subsidiarity principle. As a counter-weight, it accelerates the process of differentiated integration, with a number of special regimes provided for under both the EUCFR and the area of freedom, security and justice.

Section 7, finally, considers how the financial crisis has affected the European Union and led to its re-evaluation. It, first, considers the mechanisms, notably the European Stability Mechanism Treaty, set up outside the formal structures of EU law to provide financial support to those Member States which were no longer able to sustain their public finances. It looks at the limited controls on these, and how these have moved the Union more directly into the world of fiscal and welfare policy, albeit in an asymmetric way where some Member States have considerably more influence than others. It then looks at the more general vision now set out by both EU legislation (the 'six-pack') and by the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (the fiscal compact). These put in place a series of extensive controls on fiscal and macro-economic policy for the euro area Member States in particular. It ponders the nature of this vision in these, and the challenges posed for democratic politics by it. Finally, the crisis has led to a re-evaluation of the Union. Some see the crisis as a reason for stronger EU institutions with wider competencies whilst others consider the crisis exposes the difficulties of European integration and throws the project into further doubt.

2 EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

This book is about the European Union. The phrase itself suggests an interplay between two things. On the one hand, the European Union has been established to deal with a series of contemporary problems and realise a set of goals that individual Member States feel unable to manage alone. That idea is conveyed by the word *Union*. Its other feature is its claim to be *European*. In this, its mission is to lay claim to and further a European heritage. This is contentious. Some may disagree with its interpretation of this heritage, the need to further it or that the European Union should claim ownership of it. Nevertheless, the opening words of the Preamble to the Treaty on European Union establishing the European Union state:

RESOLVED to mark a new stage in the process of European integration undertaken with the establishment of the European Communities,

DRAWING INSPIRATION from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.

To understand EU law, one has to realise that at its core is a constant interplay between these two agendas: the claim to develop European ideals and the government of the problems of contemporary Europe. Elements of both permeate all the chapters of this book. In some areas, there is a tension, imbalance or dysfunction between the two. In other areas, each is being revised in the light of concerns provoked by the other. The balance is constantly changing as political beliefs change, the European Union's institutional settlement evolves and the challenges of the outside world alter. However, each development is considered in the light of a long legacy: be this the history of the European ideal, the institutional settlement of the European Union or a policy whose inception and development goes back many years.

Different chapters of this book consider different legal problems and goals. Yet it is worth pausing at the beginning of the book to consider some of the central elements of this European inheritance, so we know the sort of venture upon which the European Union is embarked. If discussion of the Ancient Greeks and Charlemagne seems rather removed from that of discussion of the single currency, it is, however, worth considering what broader vision of life that currency is tapping into. Is it somehow distinct because it is European and, in turn, does it change our understandings of Europe that 'Europe' is now associated with a series of laws and policies established by the European Union?

(i) The idea of Europe

There is nothing fixed about the meaning of the term 'Europe'. It has been used for a variety of purposes. Its roots, like many things, are curious. The first references to 'Europe' depict it as a woman and the sun. The most famous early reference to Europe is that found in Greek mythology. Europa was a Phoenician woman seduced by the Greek god, Zeus, to come from Lebanon to Crete.¹ Europa was also, however, a Phoenician word that referred to the setting sun. From this, Europe was associated in Ancient Greece with the idea of 'the West'. Originally used to designate the lands to the west of Greece, usage shifted as the Ancient Greek territorial

¹ D. De Rougemont, *The Idea of Europe* (New York, Macmillan, 1965) 6–19.

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centre of gravity changed with incursions into modern Turkey and Iran. In his wars, Alexander the Great used it to denote non-Persians and it became associated with the lands in Greece and Asia Minor (today's Turkish Mediterranean coastline). Following this, the term was to lie largely dormant for many centuries. The Roman Empire and Christianity dominated in the organisation of political life, and neither had much use for the term.

Europe re-emerged as an important political idea from the eighth century AD onwards. It was here that it began to acquire many of the associations that we currently make when we use the word 'European'. In part, it became an expression of a siege mentality. The advance of Islam from the South and the East led to Europe being associated with resistance to the religion. An army of Franks, which fought against the Moors, was referred to as a 'European army'.² At this time Europe also became associated with the idea of Western Christianity. The Frankish Empire stretched across much of West Europe under the rule of Charlemagne in the ninth century AD. He styled himself as the father of Europe and sought to impose a political system across the region, based on communication between a large number of political and administrative centres. Alongside this, common economic practices were developed: shared accounting standards, price controls and a currency. Finally, he also sought to build a common Christian culture, which fostered learning, Christian morality, the building of churches and the imposition of a single interpretation of Christianity.³

These elements are all associated with a European identity. However, it was only from the twelfth century onwards that Europe was used to refer to a place whose inhabitants enjoyed a shared way of life based on Christian humanism, revolving around images of God and Christ portrayed as human.⁴ Alongside particular religious beliefs, Europe also became associated with a particular form of political economy, namely, that of rural trade.⁵ Increasingly, the rural town became the centre of the local economy. Trade relations between towns expanded across Europe, so that from the fifteenth century onwards, trade flourished between the Italian ports in the South and Flanders in the North, in which the role of the merchant was pivotal. The final feature of this European region was the persecution of non-Christians, be they pagans or followers of other faiths, such as Judaism or Islam. Those whose conduct offended the central values of Christianity were also maltreated, such as heretics and homosexuals, as were those perceived as socially unproductive, in particular, lepers.

Developments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were to set out the dominant institutional context for the subsequent evolution of the European idea. The establishment of the modern nation-state consolidated power in centralised, impersonal bureaucracies and led to certain core policies, such as tax, law and order and foreign policy being the exclusive competence of these bureaucracies.⁶ This hegemony of the nation-state over political life led

² D. Lewis, *God's Crucible: Islam and the Making of Europe 570–1215* (Norton, New York, 2008).

³ The most extensive exposition is to be found in R. McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁴ J. Le Goff, *The Birth of Europe* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2005) 76–80.

⁵ On the earlier origins of this in the developments of crops of rye and oats which led both to new divisions of labour within agriculture, to trade and to sustaining centres of population see M. Mitterauer, *Why Europe? The Mediaeval Origins of Its Special Path* (G. Chapple (trans.), Chicago, IL, Chicago University Press, 2010) ch. 1.

⁶ C. Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of Nation-States in Europe* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1975); G. Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State: A Sociological Introduction* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1978); M. Mann, 'The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results' (1984) 25 *European Journal of Sociology* 185; H. Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors: An Analysis of Systems Change* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1994).

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to Europe acquiring new associations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It became, increasingly, an 'aesthetic category, romantic and nostalgic', associated with utopian ideals. Authors such as Rousseau and Kant saw Europe as an expression of certain ideals: be it a social contract between nations or as a form of perpetual peace. Europe was also considered to represent a shared aesthetic tradition:⁷ be this a common form of high culture, institutionalised through the growth of elite tourism in Europe at that time, or that of a historical civilisation, distinguishing it from the New World and justifying its colonialism.

The final twist came in the twentieth century and derives from the United States' involvement in Europe. The role of the United States in two World Wars, the Cold War and in the regeneration of Europe after the Second World War heavily influenced European identity.⁸ For those reverting to market democracy after forty-five years of communism, a 'return to Europe' means a turn to the West and to values that are associated, unashamedly, with the United States, namely, those of free markets and constitutional democracy. In today's Western Europe, Europe has acquired an alternate meaning where its values are similar to, but different from those of the United States. Although there is a shared commitment to markets and constitutional democracy, these take a different form from those in the United States. There is an emphasis on the social market and on supposedly 'European' values, such as opposition to the death penalty, which are not present in the United States.

J. Habermas and J. Derrida, 'February 15, or, What Binds Europeans Together: Plea for a Common Foreign Policy Beginning in Core Europe' in D. Levy et al., *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe: Transatlantic Relations after the Iraq War* (London, Verso, 2005) 5, 10–12

...the spread of the ideals of the French revolution throughout Europe explains, among other things, why politics in both of its forms – as organizing power and as a medium for the institutionalization of political liberty – has been welcomed in Europe. By contrast, the triumph of capitalism was bound up with sharp class conflicts, and this fact has hindered an equally positive appraisal of free markets. That differing evaluation of politics and markets may explain Europeans' trust in the civilizing power of the state, and their expectations for it to correct market failures.

The party system that emerged from the French revolution has often been copied. But only in Europe does this system also serve an ideological competition that subjects the socio-pathological results of capitalist modernization to an ongoing political evaluation. This fosters the sensitivities of citizens to the paradoxes of progress. The contest between conservative, liberal and socialist agendas comes down to the weighing of two aspects: Do the benefits of a chimerical progress outweigh the losses that come with the disintegration of protective, traditional forms of life? Or do the benefits that today's processes of 'creative destruction' promise for tomorrow outweigh the pain of modernity's losers?

In Europe, those affected by class distinctions, and their enduring consequences, understood these burdens as a fate that can be averted only through collective action. In the context of workers' movements and the Christian socialist traditions, an ethics of solidarity, the struggle for 'more social

⁷ A. Chebel d'Appollonia, 'European Nationalism and European Union' and J. Tully, 'The Kantian Idea of Europe: Critical and Cosmopolitan Perspectives' in A. Pagden (ed.), *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002). Recent examples of this tradition are Z. Bauman, *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure* (Cambridge, Polity, 2004); U. Beck, *Cosmopolitan Europe* (Cambridge, Polity, 2005).

⁸ G. Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1995) 115–55.

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justice', with the goal of equal provision for all, asserted itself against the individualist ethos of market justice that accepts glaring social inequalities as part of the bargain.

Contemporary Europe has been shaped by the experience of the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century and by the Holocaust – the persecution and annihilation of European Jews in which the National Socialist regime made the societies of the conquered countries complicit as well. Self-critical controversies about the past remind us of the moral basis of politics. A heightened sensitivity to injuries to personal and bodily integrity reflects itself, among other ways, in the fact both the Council of Europe and the EU made the ban on capital punishment a condition for membership.

The excerpt from Habermas and Derrida conveys, amongst other things, the view that, since the eighth century, Europe has been seen as a place where there are multiple political communities with a shared way of life. For them, this shared way of life involves both a questioning of the excesses of the market and, since the Second World War, the excesses of the nation-state.⁹ This questioning and commitment to pluralism is attractive. However, this way of life is also based on a commitment to progress, civilisation, learning and culture and a belief in the value of humanity and its capacity to better itself and to resolve any problems.¹⁰ Europe is not only associated with this commitment and this belief, but they are often seen as something particularly European, to the irritation of many non-Europeans. Europe has, thus, historically posited itself as the centre of the world.¹¹ It has been its job to civilise others, to spread progress or human values. There is also an intolerance of things 'non-European'. For if they are not European, there is a chance that they do not represent the good things Europe represents. At its worse, this arrogance and intolerance has led to racism and colonialism, yet it is also present in the European integration process. Time and again, the *sui generis* nature or specialness of the process is emphasised as a form of particularly enlightened cooperation between nations. This leads to an assumption about the desirability of its policies, with opponents of integration, thus, often dismissed as unreasonable or nationalistic (i.e. un-European). It may be, however, that they simply disagree with the policy or the procedure, or that they believe there to exist other forms of value or ways of life beyond those expressed in the European ideal.

(ii) The idea of 'European Union'

The idea of European union has different associations from that of Europe. After all, many self-avowed Europeans oppose European union! Independent proposals for a 'united Europe' first emerged at the end of the seventeenth century. However, they were still firmly confederal in nature. Ultimate authority was vested in the state, with pan-European structures acting as little more than a fetter upon the autonomy of the states. In 1693, the English Quaker, William

⁹ J.-W. Müller, *Constitutional Patriotism* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2007) ch. 3.

¹⁰ This contradiction is present in the famous 1935 lecture presented by E. Husserl, 'Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity' reprinted in E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Chicago, IL, North Western University Press, 1970) Appendix I.

¹¹ On the hegemonic force of this see R. Kanth (ed.), *The Challenge of Eurocentrism: Global Perspectives, Policy and Prospects* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2009).

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Penn, wrote *An Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe*. Penn suggested that a European Parliament be established, consisting of representatives of the Member States. Its primary purposes would be to prevent wars breaking out between states and to promote justice. A more far-reaching proposal was put forward by John Bellers in 1710. Bellers proposed a cantonal system based upon the Swiss model whereby Europe would be divided into 100 cantons, each of which would be required to contribute to a European army and send representatives to a European Senate.

The first proposal for a Europe which replaced the state system with a sovereign central body came from the Frenchman, Saint-Simon, and was published in a pamphlet in 1814, entitled *Plan for the Reorganisation of the European Society*. Saint-Simon considered that all European states should be governed by national parliaments, but that a European Parliament should be created to decide on common interests. This Parliament would consist of a House of Commons peopled by representatives of local associations and a House of Lords consisting of peers appointed by a European monarch. Saint-Simon's views enjoyed considerable attention during the first part of the nineteenth century. Mazzini, the *éminence grise* of Italian nationalism, allied himself with Proudhon and Victor Hugo in declaring himself in favour of a United Europe. Yet, the nineteenth century represented the age of the nation-state and the relationship between that structure and that of a united Europe was never fully explored.

The balance was altered by the First World War, which acted as a stimulus for those who saw European union as the only means both to prevent war breaking out again between the nation-states and as a means of responding to increased competition from the United States, Argentina and Japan. Most prominent was the pan-European movement set up in the 1920s by the Czech, Count Coudenhove-Kalergi.¹² This movement not only enjoyed considerable support amongst many of Europe's intellectuals and some politicians, but was genuinely transnational, having 'Economic Councils' both in Berlin and in Paris. During the 1920s, the idea of European unity received governmental support in the shape of the 1929 Briand Memorandum. This Memorandum, submitted by the French Foreign Minister to twenty-six other European states, considered the League of Nations to be too weak a body to regulate international relations, and proposed a European Federal Union, which would better police states, whilst not 'in any way affect[ing] the sovereign rights of the States which are members of such an association'. This proposal, despite acknowledging the authority of the nation-states, was still regarded as too radical and received only a lukewarm response from the other states.

A further shock, in the form of the Second World War, was needed to arouse greater governmental interest in the idea of a united Europe. The coming into being of the European Communities and its transformation into the European Union are explored in greater depth in the rest of this chapter. It is useful to consider for a moment how the creation of this powerful organisation, which now adopted the term of 'European Union' for itself, changed the context within which the idea was understood.

In the first place, the European Union has become an independent centre of government in its own right, generating its own understandings about European union and European values and symbols. In some instances, to do this, it has tried to replicate the symbols and tools of nationhood at a pan-European level – be it through the (re)discovery of European flags, anthems,

¹² N. Coudenhove-Kalergi, *Pan-Europe* (New York, Knopf, 1926). An excellent discussion can be found in C. Pegg, *Evolution of the European Idea 1914–1932* (Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 1983).

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Cities of Culture or common passports.¹³ Other activities cannot be characterised in this way. We shall see in Chapter 11 that the European Union idea of citizenship, for example, takes a very different trajectory from that of national citizenship. The European Union is projected as a model of political community which is an alternative to the nation-state and not a mimic of it.¹⁴ Both understandings of European union, that as mimic and that as alternate to the nation-state, are opposed by 'Euro-sceptic' groups, who see each as something equally destructive of local self-government.¹⁵

In the second place, European union has become a vehicle through which national governments pursue their understanding of the national interest. Here it does not sit in opposition to national governments, but is used to justify and redefine national government policy. Bickerton has argued that this has led to a subtle and not unproblematic shift in national government understandings of what they are about. They have moved from being nation-states to Member States.

C. Bickerton, *European Integration: From Nation States to Member States* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012) 60, 68–9

The more traditional elements of statehood remain – central government, identifiable territory and a population – and member states retain a monopoly on the legitimate exercise of violence. But the integrated state-society relationship of the modern nation state is increasingly relativized and seen as only part of what makes up the state. The other part is membership of international organizations, regional organizations, and generally the participation in a multitude of activities that appear as external to the state itself and function as material constraints upon its liberty...

...we can point to two critical features of member statehood that stand out in terms of how they contrast with dominant assumptions and practices of modern nation states. The first is that central to member statehood is a presumed *opposition* between state and society. The purpose of limiting national power in ways that appear external to the national polity is in order that domestic populations are distanced from policy-making and decision-making. National elites seek to insulate themselves from the force and compulsion of public opinion because of the risk that 'vile people', as Weiler puts it, will generate vile policies. The idea of membership thus belongs to this sought-for separation between state and society. The contrast with modern nation states is striking: here the goal was to achieve a unity in what was a fractious and divided social space. Problems of economic and ideological conflict have generally been sublimated through unifying categories such as the people and the nation, even if those categories have themselves been subject to long-standing disagreements about their precise meaning.

Whilst modern nation states have sought unity, member states assume division. The state-society relationship is thus reconfigured in a way very alien from traditional thinking about the state: a presumed relationship of representation is replaced by one of insulation and separation.

¹³ C. Shore, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration* (London/New York, Routledge, 2000).

¹⁴ U. Beck and E. Grande, *Cosmopolitan Europe* (Cambridge, Polity, 2007) 225–40; J. Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response* (Cambridge, Polity, 2012) 1–53. In some cases, EU policies adopt elements of both models. For a discussion of the European Cities of Culture and European Landscape Convention see M. Sassatelli, *Becoming Europeans: Cultural Identity and Cultural Policies* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2009).

¹⁵ A flavour is provided in M. Holmes (ed.), *The Eurosceptical Reader* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1996).

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The second feature is the way constraints upon the exercise of national power are based not upon a political ideal or principle but rather on an institutional and bureaucratic understanding of such limits. The picture we thus have of the member state, where its central principle of legitimization resides in the actions of public officials, is one of an administrative machine rather than a political community.

European union, for Bickerton, is thus something which allows national governments to distance themselves from their citizens and thereby acquire a stronger say in controlling and imposing different policies by saying that these are both necessary and externally required. It is a divisive notion.

The third vision of European union flows in the opposite direction. It argues that debates about European union invariably also involve debates about national identity and what it means. These debates act as vehicles for citizens and communities to articulate understandings of themselves and their place in the world through asking themselves how they relate to Europe.¹⁶ This, in turn, shifts their ideas of national identity. The extract below considers the case of Finland, in which the authors argue that by placing itself within the European Union many Finns were able to resolve a prior dichotomy about whether Finland was more 'Western' or more Russian.

M. Malmborg and B. Stråth, 'Introduction: The National Meanings of Europe' in M. Malmborg and B. Stråth (eds.), *The Meaning of Europe* (Oxford/New York, Berg, 2002) 1, 20

Finland's national history has been characterized by a strong awareness of being either on the brink of Europe or on the margins of Russia or somewhere in between... Meinander traces two basic conceptions of Finnish national identity: the Fennomans that stresses the indigenous features of Finnish culture and sees Finland as a cooperative borderland between the West and Russia, and the liberal that is akin to the Russian *zapadniki* in the sense that it prescribes close integration with the Western and European cultures.^[17] For the Fennomans, Russia was in a cultural sense never outside Europe, but the feeling of standing at the edge of Europe was reinforced by the Russian revolution, the Finnish civil war and the foundation of the Soviet Union, which effectively precluded any acknowledgement of the eastern layers of Finnish identity. The Finnish notion of Europe became increasingly polarized not least due to the experiences of Finland being left very much alone in the Second World War. Forced into a policy of friendly neutrality with the Soviet Union after the war Finland rediscovered its role as a mediator between East and West. The Finns began to admit that Russia, even in its Soviet manifestation, was a part of European civilization.

The accession to the EU in 1995 was supported by a feeling that the Finns had at last found an answer to two centuries of uncertainty and identity-searching. Finland had, as it were, ultimately found a synthesis of its two historical roles, to be both on the brink of Western Europe and serve as a bridge-builder toward a Europe that stretched to include Russia and Slavonic Europe. EU membership implies both an improvement of national security and an emotional homecoming.

¹⁶ See J. Diez Medrano, *Framing Europe: Attitudes to European Integration in Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2003).

¹⁷ H. Meinander, 'On the Brink or In Between? The Conception of Europe in Finnish Identity' in M. Malmborg and B. Stråth (eds.), *The Meaning of Europe* (Oxford/New York, Berg, 2002).