Part I

The History of European Integration

COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL

1

The Idea of Europe

Foundations and Justifications for Unity

Contents

1.0 Introduction: What and Where Is Europe? 14
1.1 The Historical Background to Thinking about European Unity 16
1.2 Early Ideas and Pioneers of Unity 18
- 1.2.1 William Penn 19
- 1.2.2 Abbot Saint Pierre 19
- 1.2.3 Immanuel Kant 20
- 1.2.4 Aristide Briand 21

1.3 The Peace or Civilizing Justification for Unity 22
1.4 The Prosperity Justification for Unity 24
1.5 The Strengthening State Capacity Justification for Unity 26
1.6 Concluding Summary 28

Learning Objectives

- to identify different political definitions of Europe;
- to analyze the reasons why thinkers called for European unity to replace the balance of power;
- to evaluate why plans for European unity all failed prior to 1945;
- to distinguish between different justifications put forward for European unity;
- to analyze the reasoning behind three different justifications for European unity;
- to evaluate why the idea of uniting to strengthen state capacity is controversial in the context of European social democracy.

The Politics of European Integration: Political Union or a House Divided?, First Edition. Andrew Glencross.
© 2014 Andrew Glencross. Published 2014 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Timeline of Key Events 1.1: The Historical Background to European Integration

circa 50–400 CE	Roman Empire provides common political and legal order for much of Europe
circa 800	Charlemagne, king of the Franks, unites Western Europe by conquest
1095	Pope Urban II calls for Christian crusade to help Byzantium in war with Turks
circa 1460	George of Podiebrad, king of Bohemia, calls for Christian kings to unite to drive Turkish forces out of Europe
1648	Peace of Westphalia establishes sovereign state as basic political unit in Europe
1693	William Penn writes *An Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe*
1700–1800	Europe as a political concept (continent of sovereign states) replaces earlier notion of Christendom (continent with a common religious identity)
1713	Abbot Saint Pierre writes *Project for Perpetual Peace in Europe*
1789	French Revolution challenges monarchical rule throughout Europe
1795	Immanuel Kant publishes *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*
1815–circa 1890	Concert of Europe whereby powerful European countries try to manage their disputes cooperatively, in *ad hoc* conferences
1914–1918	First World War
1919–circa 1939	League of Nations, collective security organization established for peaceful resolution of inter-state conflicts
1923	Count Coudenhove-Kalergi publishes *Pan-Europa*
1929	Aristide Briand, president of France, calls for a European Union
1939–1945	Second World War

1.0 Introduction: What and Where Is Europe?

Europe is a commonly used geographical term, referring to the western part of the Eurasian land mass. In the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean, and the Arctic Ocean it has clear maritime boundaries respectively to the west, the south, and the north. This peninsula lacks an equivalently clear boundary to the east – a fact that remains a source of controversy to this day, since uncertainty over Europe's borders means uncertainty over which countries can become members of the European Union. As a result, who and what counts as European is contested, especially in the case of Russia and Turkey, countries with territory in both Asia and Europe (see Box 1.1).

The notion that Europe is a geographical and cultural entity separate from Asia was articulated already by the ancient Greeks, who sought to distinguish themselves from their fierce rivals and neighbors, the Persians. Indeed the very word "Europe" derives from a Greek myth recounting how Zeus, father of the gods, abducted a princess named Europa. So, as well as being a continent, Europe is a concept used to explain and justify separateness. Hence this chapter first sets out the reasons behind the development of Europe as a political idea indicating separateness from Asia – which, by the seventeenth

Box 1.1 Key Debate: Where Are the Boundaries of Europe?

With 28 current member states, the EU clearly does not encompass all the countries that make up modern Europe. For instance, the Council of Europe (a human rights organization) consists of 47 countries, thereby including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey in its definition of Europe. Identifying a geographical boundary between Europe and Asia is inherently problematic. Physical features of the landscape have been used to this end, notably the Caucasus mountains and the Urals in Russia. Yet relying on these features means excluding Turkey, which actually has a land border with the EU, and splitting Russia into two. Moreover, for many centuries the Mediterranean was a common cultural and economic space, with North Africa and the Levant closely tied to Southern Europe – a tradition begun under the Roman Empire, which called this body of water *mare nostrum*, "our sea." Morocco's unsuccessful application to join the EEC in 1987 suggests that the possibilities of EU enlargement south of the Mediterranean are slim. However, the EU is ambiguous about how it defines Europe; the founding treaties do not provide a formal definition as to which countries are considered European, and hence potential EU member states. Hence the EU's frontiers in the East remain rather uncertain, at least until one reaches Russia – which, for reasons of size, prestige, and sovereignty, can realistically only be an EU partner rather than a member state. Many of the countries in post-Soviet Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Caucasus would like to reap the economic and political benefits of EU membership. Moreover, Turkey has been negotiating to join since 1987 – so far without success (see Section 5.6 for a discussion of enlargement).

century, also meant a common political space with unique characteristics. In fact, as explained in Section 1.1, this political vision replaced an earlier religious definition, which based separateness on a common religious identity.

Historically, the political understanding of Europe arose in tandem with proposals for uniting the continent. Early ideas and pioneers of integrating rival European countries into a single political system were concerned with security, for states and citizens alike. A continent divided into rival states was free from the menace of absolute rule by one leader or country, but this carried a high cost. States frequently resorted to war in order to defend their territory, the dynastic claims of their princely rulers, or the freedom of religious expression. Section 1.2 outlines how schemes for integration were designed to put an end to violent competition between those countries. Through the creation of common political institutions, European unity came to be seen as a way to keep a certain degree of autonomy without suffering the depredations of inter-state warfare. These proposals continued until the 1930s, just before Europe tore itself apart again, in the Second World War.

Although the idea of European unity has always presupposed building institutions to allow cooperation beyond the state, different justifications for integration have been put forward. Hence, in addition to charting early models for uniting Europe that predate the institutional developments after 1945 discussed in Chapter 2, this chapter surveys the history of different ideas about what integration is actually for. As analyzed in Section 1.3, the oldest justification for unity is the concern to bring peace, or to civilize a continent that has struggled to protect citizens' rights. Beginning in the period between the two world wars, another justification was articulated. This was the idea that looking beyond the nation-state would bring not only peace but also economic benefits. This prosperity justification, examined in Section 1.4, also played a key role after 1945, as states sought economic reconstruction. Finally there is the justification that common institutions can actually equip national governments to tackle complex cross-border problems more effectively. This idea, discussed in Section 1.5, grew in popularity as the Second World War was coming to an end and states were looking to new instruments for governing complex societies. Indeed, to various degrees, all three justifications have been present during the institutional development of integration examined in the subsequent two chapters.

1.1 The Historical Background to Thinking about European Unity

In ancient times, Europe was a cacophony of tongues spoken by a multitude of ethnic groups with differing religious and cultural practices – a rich diversity still reflected in the heterogeneity of EU member states today. There were certain notable periods of unity, as during the Roman Empire, which at its peak (around 100 CE) ruled the greater part of Europe, and at the time of King Charlemagne's conquests (768–814 CE). These were short-lived though, and they left religion – not a common ruler – as the principal object for European self-identification (Le Goff 2005).

Christianity began to form the basis of European identity as the Germanic and other tribes that overran the Roman Empire converted to the religion of the cross. The Christian element of Europe was underscored in 1095, when Pope Urban II called for volunteers to travel to Byzantium (Constantinople, modern-day Istanbul) to wage a holy war – that is, a crusade. Muslim warriors had for several centuries taken control of Jerusalem and were now threatening the chief city of the Byzantine Empire, formerly the Eastern capital of the Roman Empire. Kings, princes, knights, and even peasants across Western Europe participated in crusades to the Holy Land until the thirteenth century. Crusaders set out with the intention not just of preventing the fall of Byzantium but also of "liberating" Jerusalem and other biblical lands from under non-Christian rule.

Religion thus served to differentiate Europe from the peoples further east. Even after the end of large-scale crusading, Catholic popes such as Pius II (1458–1454) renewed calls for a holy war to fight non-believers in the East. With the fall of Constantinople to Turkish forces in 1453, the Muslim Ottoman Empire began its incursions into Greece and the Balkans, eventually reaching what is today Hungary. The Europe the Popes wanted to defend against this invader was the *respublica christiana*, the "Christian

republic" also known as **Christendom** (den Boer 1993). Indeed it was in this period that George of Podiebrad, the king of Bohemia, appealed to his fellow monarchs to unite in order to protect Christianity – a plea sometimes seen as the first project of European union (Le Goff 2005, 158–159).

If Christendom was considered separate on religious grounds, a secular political interpretation also came to be attributed to the geographical expression Europe. As the Ottoman threat receded, European Christianity was further divided by the sixteenth-century Reformation, so that it was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth century that thinkers discussed the "natural republic of Europe" (Deudney 2008, 136–160). By this they meant that the territorial units into which Europe was divided produced a sort of republican order, whereby no single state dominated. Like in a republic rather than in a monarchy, there was no single ruler, and combinations of states could check the hegemonic ambitions of a powerful monarch such as the French King Louis XIV – a process resembling institutional checks and balances found in republican constitutions. Of course, this so-called order contained a great deal of violence: states, led mostly by kings, would often resort to war in their disputes. Nevertheless, this understanding of Europe as a shared political space with unique characteristics – notably territorially bounded states led by secular leaders – replaced the older notion of Christendom (Schmidt 1966).

The seventeenth century also gave rise to the first projects for uniting the European continent under a common political system. Thinkers and statesmen grappled tentatively with the question of how to overcome the division of Europe into rival territorial units, often in bloody conflict with one another. This timing was no coincidence: the rise of a new political unit, the sovereign state, brought about constant preparation for war, ushering in more instability and violence.

The European sovereign state, organized as a hierarchical order of rule whereby all citizens in a certain territory owed allegiance to one ruler alone, was largely a product of the Peace of Westphalia (1648). This peace settlement was an attempt to end the religious warfare sparked by the sixteenth-century Reformation, when Protestant cities and territories sought to gain independence from Catholic rulers in order to obtain the freedom to exercise their reformed version of Christianity. Under the terms of the peace settlement, the dynastic rulers of various territories (kings, princes, emperors) agreed not to interfere in the affairs of the others and to respect their religious convictions.

In theory, rulers were supposed to recognize one another's sovereignty – that is, territorial independence. In practice, states such as France, England, Spain, Sweden, and the Dutch Republic engaged in an often violent competition for land, wealth, and even prestige. Joined eventually by new powers such as Prussia and Russia, this inter-state competition took place under a framework known as the balance of power, whereby the most powerful states cooperated to prevent any one great power from becoming so strong as to be able to impose its will on the whole continent (see Box 1.2). Typically this arrangement took the form of shifting diplomatic alliances. Just as often, the process of balancing power required military action to counter the hegemonic ambitions of a Louis XIV or Philip IV (the Spanish king). It was this process of power balancing that made certain thinkers see Europe as possessing features of a common political system, albeit a highly dysfunctional one, which privileged state sovereignty over peace.

Box 1.2 Key Concept: The Balance of Power

Both international relations theorists and political leaders have long argued that the key to a stable international order – in the absence of a world government – is the balance of power between the most powerful states (Nexon 2009). This theory holds that no single major power must become stronger than the others put together, otherwise the strongest could impose its will on the others, causing them to lose their sovereignty. Balancing implies the possibility of using force to stop a state from becoming too powerful, and it is often indifferent to the plight of weak states, whose territory could be carved up between major powers in order to preserve an equilibrium between stronger states. The First World War (1914–1918) showed that relying on power balancing was little better than anarchy and that an alternative was necessary. The **League of Nations** was supposed to replace balancing with a legal framework for resolving disputes between states; but it failed to prevent states' pursuit of power through force, and this led to a new global conflict. What the two world wars also demonstrated was the fact that the balance of power system makes for mutual suspicion, which fosters tension. When each state has to maintain a large army, spend greatly on defense, and craft diplomatic alliances, a **security dilemma** emerges, as one country's enhanced security comes at the cost of making another feel more vulnerable (Jervis 1978). This situation is especially pernicious for democracies, since politicians will ask citizens to sacrifice individual freedoms for national security, as happened in the 1930s in Germany. Abandoning this reliance on armies and alliances for balancing against rival states was thus the shared objective of the leaders and citizens of post-1945 Western Europe.

1.2 Early Ideas and Pioneers of Unity

Once war was a common occurrence among the sovereign states of Europe, thinkers trained in philosophy and law examined the conditions upon which a lasting peace could be founded. This objective had to be reconciled with the need to preserve individual freedoms, especially freedom of religious worship. Hence the aim of figures such as William Penn, the Abbot Saint Pierre, and Immanuel Kant was to improve Europe's political system by finding a mechanism to avoid war. They did not wish to see unity imposed by force or through a return to a common religious identity. Rather these authors sought to overcome the deficiencies of the balance of power system by limiting states' right to make alliances or use force to settle their disputes. This objective was not realized, and the First World War, which left 30 million dead in Europe alone, revealed the atrocious cost of relying on war to settle inter-state disputes. Statesmen led by French President Aristide Briand began to question the very value of state sovereignty in this context. However, Briand's plan for European unity was not put into practice; the first

institutions capable of overcoming balancing and attenuating sovereignty were only established in the second half of the twentieth century.

1.2.1 William Penn

William Penn, an English landowner after whom the US state of Pennsylvania is named, was by religion a Quaker, a breakaway group of the Church of England strongly associated with pacifism. In 1693, as war was raging in continental Europe, Penn proposed a system for a congress of nations designed to procure peace. His *An Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe by the Establishment of an European Dyet, Parliament or Estates* spoke of Europe's "harassed inhabitants" and criticized the doctrine that "peace is the end of war." In the absence of a common government between states, leaders across Europe traditionally defended war as a legitimate means of enforcing their rights to foreign territories or of installing a friendly ruler on a foreign throne. Penn dismissed this notion that war was a proper instrument for bringing peace in disputes over territory or dynastic succession. Instead, his proposal called for Europe's states to send delegates (on the basis of a country's wealth) to a general assembly or parliament, which would meet yearly to arbitrate disputes, settling them by a three-quarters majority.

Penn was not a utopian; he did not expect sovereign states to yield to this arbitration without some means of enforcement. This is why his plan called for a **collective security** approach. That is, if any country refused to abide by the decision of the European parliament, all the countries, "united as one strength," would enforce compliance. Joint military action was thus threatened against violators of this system. Although this sounds potentially violent, Penn did not expect disputes to end in military conflict, because the great characteristic of Europe was that no single state was more powerful than the rest combined. In this situation he envisaged peaceful dispute resolution, as no state would dare challenge all the others. Anticipating objections, he argued that this same logic would mean that even the most powerful European country would feel obliged to join this parliamentary system rather than stay on the margins of a united continent. Moreover, limiting the use of war did nothing to diminish domestic sovereignty (e.g. over religious matters), so concerns about loss of autonomy would be no excuse for non-participation either.

1.2.2 Abbot Saint Pierre

Penn's visionary project failed to make an impact on European politics. Yet this did not stop others from trying to design similar systems for the unification of the continent. Abbot Saint Pierre, a French cleric who served his country as a diplomat, was another thinker determined to help the pacification of Europe. His participation in the negotiations of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), which put an end to more than a decade of warfare involving all the region's major powers, helped inspire his most famous work, *Project for Perpetual Peace in Europe* (1713). Responding to the jealousies between states over

territory and trade – the causes of the wars that ended at Utrecht – Abbot Saint Pierre proposed a European Union designed not only to remove war but also to stimulate trade via free commerce (Hont 2005, 27–28).

Abbot Saint Pierre's project of union was intended to remedy the deficiencies of the balance of power. He also assumed that peace treaties like that signed in Utrecht were only ever temporary expedients, bound to be broken as a result of the jealousies and fickleness of rulers. European Union in his eyes needed to be set on a permanent basis, through a treaty establishing a congress of all the leading rulers. Again, the purpose of this union was to provide the weakest state with the backing of all, so that even the most powerful state would have to accept the binding decisions of this congress. The most important matters Abbot Saint Pierre expected the congress of this union to settle were territorial and dynastic claims as well as commercial disputes. The latter were increasingly important in Europe, as warring states were not only cutting off trade with one another – beggaring themselves – but also trying to restrict neutral trade, bringing more states into conflict (Hont 2005, 31).

Like Penn's plan, therefore, the Project for Perpetual Peace in Europe was a collective security scheme for waging war on any state that broke its treaty promise to accept collective dispute settlement. Living under the shadow of this collective use of force would be far preferable to relying on *ad hoc* balancing alliances, continuously made and unmade, for security. From a rational perspective, kings and princes capable of understanding their true interest in stable trade relations and secure rule over their territories would have to sign such a treaty. Moreover, Abbot Saint Pierre thought this model of political military union was universal, meaning other regions should adopt it.

1.2.3 Immanuel Kant

The treaty envisaged by Abbot Saint Pierre was stillborn. Republican critics of monarchy thought they knew exactly why such schemes faltered: kings did not share subjects' interest in peace and prosperity. Instead, kings and other unelected rulers were motivated in their foreign relations by lust for conquest and glory regardless of the toll exacted from ordinary citizens. Hence, when the German philosopher Immanuel Kant envisioned a plan for European peace, he advocated the need for each state to become a republic as a precondition for a federal-style union.

Kant's *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay* was written in 1795, at a time when the French Revolution threatened the existence of monarchical rule throughout Europe. This plan for peace proposed abolishing not just war, but also the custom of rulers inheriting, exchanging, or purchasing other territories. These practices, which entailed treating the state as the personal property of a ruling family, went against the new, revolutionary language of individual rights and popular sovereignty. The latter meant that citizens had the right to government by consent and were not subject to the whims of monarchs.

By extension, Kant argued that perpetual peace rested on each state having a republican constitution where the people was sovereign – not the king. Popular sovereignty, he claimed, prevents states from going to war for a trifle, as when kings did so for glory

or to avenge their honor. Monarchs could make these decisions and pass the costs on to their subjects, who would do the actual fighting and suffer the civilian privations of being at war. Republican governments responsive to the needs and preferences of citizens would instead be more self-restrained with citizens preferring self-defense over aggression – a proposition now known as "democratic peace theory," which remains highly influential in international relations (Doyle 1983). Once organized as republics, European states would be able to form a federation and take further steps toward a peaceful future. This included the gradual abolition of standing armies and the prohibition of external public debt, both of which Kant saw as facilitating conflict. Hence his scheme meant circumscribing state sovereignty per se by limiting precisely what made states such efficient instruments for waging war.

Again, these radical proposals for eradicating the causes of war among European states fell on deaf ears. After the Napoleonic wars (1803–1815), which were an indirect result of the French Revolution, the most powerful states did try to manage their affairs without resorting to war. Known as the **Concert of Europe**, this arrangement involved the leaders of Austria, Britain, France, Prussia, and Russia meeting in *ad hoc* conferences to settle their differences (Elrod 1976). Although the arrangement was successful in minimizing great power conflict within Europe, by the early twentieth century the major countries in Europe had abandoned this system and resorted to classic balancing behavior. Two rival sets of alliances, the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance, came into conflict in 1914, sparking the beginning of the First World War.

Ironically, this horrendous conflict occurred when European governments had become far more republican than ever before. Each major belligerent relied on mobilizing its people, civilians as well as soldiers, on an unprecedented scale, which was achieved through **nationalism**. This ideology promoted national unity and the sense that armies were of the people fighting for their people. The devastating consequences of inter-state war fuelled by nationalistic antagonism made Winston Churchill's remark in 1901 that 'the wars of people will be more terrible than the wars of kings' truly prophetic (quoted in Gilbert 2012, 54). In response, peace between the warring parties was accompanied by a bold collective security project: the League of Nations.

The League of Nations shared the design of some of these earlier projects for unity. Based as it was on a global membership that included states beyond Europe, the League depended on all member states agreeing to arbitration in case of disputes. Decisions that were not respected would be enforced through economic sanctions imposed by other members, and ultimately it was possible to use force collectively in order to uphold the League's rules, for instance in the event that one member invaded another. This arrangement signified an unparalleled restriction on state sovereignty. Members of the League committed themselves to accepting binding arbitration for their disputes and to participating in collective action to enforce the decisions of the League when broken.

1.2.4 Aristide Briand

It was the catastrophe of the First World War that persuaded European and other states to accept this project. This global conflict had shown that war was an intolerable price

to pay for state sovereignty; it was preferable to limit sovereignty in order to create a system for managing inter-state disputes more peaceful than balancing. Sadly, the failure of the League of Nations to prevent the Second World War has made this institution a byword for fanciful utopianism. However, the inter-war period in Europe was actually the first time when statesmen (rather than philosophers) actively considered taking measures for political union.

French President Aristide Briand, already a Nobel Peace Prize winner for his willingness to pursue reconciliation with Germany, proposed a plan for a European Union as a form of federation. Known as the Briand Memorandum, this document was sent in 1929 to all the region's governments, to canvas their opinion. Culturally the inter-war era was a period of grave European self-doubt, reinforced by the obvious strength and dynamism of the United States, and also by the looming presence of the alternative Soviet socio-economic model (Heater 1992, 116–130). Briand's proposal thus came at a time when the idea of European unity seemed to offer a preferable alternative to crass materialism or the abolition of private property. Numerous writers put forward this ideal. Chief among them was Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, whose book *Pan-Europa* (1923) and the Pan-European Movement it spawned advocated unity as a form of moral and economic regeneration.

Despite the popularity of this idea, Briand's memorandum – admittedly short on details – fell on deaf ears. Although it proposed a customs union to promote free trade, this project put political objectives above economic ones at a time when Europe's suffering economies were the main preoccupation for citizens and governments. Following the 1929 stock market crash, countries reverted to **economic protectionism**, thereby reducing intra-European trade. In 1930 the League of Nations did establish a Study Commission for European Union, even though governments had shown little enthusiasm for Briand's project. With diminished expectations from the League itself, in the 1930s Europe's states returned to a balancing behavior based on diplomatic alliances and stoked up nationalism to justify territorial and other claims against neighboring countries. Unsurprisingly, this system resulted again in violent conflict, beginning in 1939. Consequently, when politicians debated European integration after 1945, the emphasis was placed on economic reconstruction alongside pacifying the continent by restraining both state sovereignty and nationalism.

1.3 The Peace or Civilizing Justification for Unity

Historically the primary motivation for European unity has been peace, as seen in the schemes for unification described in Section 1.2. After 1945 this justification assumed an even greater moral dimension, in response to the egregious human rights crimes, including genocide, committed during the Second World War. In this context the "never again" spirit meant the priority was to find an institutional mechanism for abolishing the absurd national rivalries that led to bloodshed. Integration was thus considered an end in itself, a way to civilize Europe's nations and citizens that balance of power could not achieve.

The integration pursued after 1945 was thus intended to have a civilizing effect, because cooperation via shared institutions would allow countries to become more tolerant and respectful of their neighbors. Moreover, the idea of integration through economic coordination was also designed to encourage citizens as well as governments to consider their mutual interests. This would prompt them to set aside selfishness and national boundaries in favor of an expanded conception of identity, a phenomenon known as cosmopolitanism (Beck 2006). Cosmopolitanism, the ability to put oneself in the shoes of someone in another country, was essential to reduce the appeal of nationalism.

Another benefit of eliminating national rivalries that appealed after 1945 was the positive impact this would have on democracy. By providing an institutional framework for peace and reconciliation, integration could make Europe safe for democracy. Prior to the Second World War, democratic states entangled in balancing strategies were obliged to spend heavily on defense rather than welfare and other socially useful ends. In addition, the security imperative facing states after 1918 had undermined new democracies in Europe. Democratic regimes in Italy and Germany were toppled by extremist leaders who promoted nationalism and did away with constitutional limits on the exercise of power. These ideas were popular among citizens frightened that democracy was ill equipped to provide security and prosperity in a hostile international climate. Hence reducing inter-state rivalry was a means to encourage democratic consolidation, allowing governments to help citizens' wellbeing rather than prepare for possible war (Mazower 1998).

This peace justification for unity has proved very potent, especially among the six West European states that took the first concrete steps toward integration after 1945 (see Section 2.2). Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Italy had suffered repeatedly from Franco-German rivalry; all six thus understood the need to limit state sovereignty and nationalism. Yet this justification continued to prove important in the development of integration in the second half of the twentieth century. This can be seen in the period after the end of the Cold War, when membership of what became the EU expanded greatly.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, which marked the ideological division of Europe between the capitalist West and the communist East (to be discussed in detail in Section 2.1), left a question mark over the future of Germany – which had been divided into two since 1945 – and of the former Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe. In this novel context, European leaders again made the case for European integration as a means to prevent the re-emergence of nationalism. As the then French President François Mitterrand explained, "nationalism is war." Tightening the bonds of integration was thus promoted in this period as a means to keep Europe at peace. Indeed, in 1992 French citizens – who had a direct vote on whether to accept the treaty creating the EU – were told by politicians that spurning integration would mean Germany going it alone. Without more integration to accompany German reunification, the latter process could revert to continental dominance – or worse (Criddle 1993). Similarly, the 2004 enlargement of the EU so as to include in it Central and Eastern European countries was commonly justified in terms of its pacifying or civilizing effects. Spreading integration eastwards was seen as

a way to stabilize countries that had little democratic experience and in some cases harbored unresolved territorial claims and grudges over the treatment of national minorities living abroad (Schimmelfennig 2003).

Up until the 1990s, European leaders came from generations that had either lived through the Second World War – if not also through the First – or experienced firsthand the ruined lives and shattered societies left behind after 1945. Today's generation of leaders is remote from the horrors of warfare, something also true of their electorates. Indeed, such has been the success of reconciliation and of leaving behind the balance of power system that it is easy to forget that Europe was once the most militarized part of the globe (Sheehan 2008). Nevertheless, the peace justification still plays a role in the political discourse accompanying integration. During crisis talks in 2010 over emergency loans to Ireland, Herman Van Rompuy, president of the European Council, argued that "the biggest enemy of Europe today is fear. Fear leads to egoism, egoism leads to nationalism, and nationalism leads to war" (EU Observer 2010). Indeed, in recognition of what the EU has accomplished and also in order to give it support in a time of crisis, the Nobel Prize Committee awarded it the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize.

One flaw in this justification, though, particularly from a citizen's perspective, is that it neglects certain positive features of national identity in Europe. For instance, whereas nationalism in Germany in the first half of the twentieth century was military and antagonistic, national pride in Nordic countries is associated with protecting democracy and promoting social equality. Pride in what their own countries have achieved in the past – whether **social democracy** in Scandinavia, secular education in France, or fighting Nazi Germany in Great Britain – means that few EU citizens are as anti-national as the Irish author Colm Tóibín. Writing in 2008, he explained: "I support the European project as a way of protecting me from Irish politicians. I voted for [the] Lisbon [Treaty], not because I wanted to follow the Irish political establishment but because I despise it and need protection from it" (Tóibín 2008). Since national identity and patriotism still matter in Europe, there is a limit to how far integration just for the sake of peace can be justified. Another persuasive justification regarding the instrumental benefit of unity exists: the way in which it helps improve prosperity.

1.4 The Prosperity Justification for Unity

One of the most powerful and successful justifications for European unity is the claim that it is a unique mechanism for enhancing prosperity across Europe. This argument was used at the end of the Second World War, when Western Europe urgently needed economic reconstruction. Since then it has remained extremely pertinent: in the 1970s, when Europe suffered from the oil crisis; in the 1980s, when national economies stagnated in comparison to those of the US and Japan; in the 1990s, when enlargement to include the struggling but low-wage cost economies of Eastern Europe became possible; in the 2000s and beyond, when globalization and the financial crisis squeezed both ordinary citizens' standard of living and government spending. Improving growth in Europe has thus been a central political preoccupation for several decades, a feeling reinforced by anxious comparisons with major rival economies (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Average GDP growth of large economies, 1970–2009

	1970–1980	*1980–1990*	*1990–2000*	*2000–2009*
EU (15 until 2000)	3.02	2.42	2.02	1.5
USA	3.28	3.20	3.21	1.82
Japan	4.47	4.01	1.27	0.7
India	-	5.7	5.5	7
China	-	9.2	9.7	10.2

Source: data from EUROSTAT, World Bank

National politicians have thus looked to integration when they wanted to provide opportunities for improving economic growth through participation in a bigger free market area. The idea of creating a continental-sized economy by abolishing national customs barriers was already present in Briand's plan for European Union (see Section 1.3). The 1930s were a decade when European countries turned their backs on free trade – a move seen as detrimental to growth and prosperity, which further undermined inter-state relations (Mazower 1998, 104–137). On the basis of this historical experience, economic justifications for unity became particularly persuasive and have been used repeatedly (see Box 1.3).

Box 1.3 Case Study: The Prosperity Justification in Action

EU officials are very active in making the economic case for European integration. This was perhaps most evident in the 1988 Cecchini report for the European Commission, which specified the costs of "non-Europe" – in other words the productivity and growth benefits lost by not having a fully integrated market. The report predicted that Europe's gross domestic product (GDP) could grow by an extra 4–7 percent, if the EEC dismantled national practices discriminating against foreign trade and introduced Europe-wide regulatory standards for making and selling goods. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher – not ideologically inclined to transfer powers away from her government – accepted this kind of argument. She signed up to the Single European Act (1986), which was designed to help complete a single market. This meant giving up national control over the economy in certain areas in return for benefiting from enhanced economic growth and better prospects for British businesses (George 1998). In this context, integration was preferred to national sovereignty on the basis of economic benefits otherwise unavailable, a logic that also applied to the creation of the euro. Of course, citizens and governments do not always find this logic convincing. Denmark, Sweden, and the United Kingdom have chosen to retain their national currencies, in order to keep greater control over fundamental aspects of economic policy such as interest rates and devaluation. This example shows there are limits to how persuasive the prosperity justification can be.

After 1945 the removal of customs barriers was promoted as a way of making European economies more competitive, as well as more interlinked. That is, economic competition within an expanded market area was associated with positive developments such as allowing firms to innovate, improved access to capital, and creating a better business environment generally. Indeed in certain countries politicians, as well as citizens and firms, have tended to see integration as a means of stimulating domestic socio-economic reforms. The economic justification here, then, is about the benefits of adapting national practices to a more competitive and rule-based order. For instance, generations of Italian leaders have promoted integration as a means of modernizing socio-economic relations and thereby overcoming clientelism, or even corruption (Ferrara and Gualmini 2000).

The single European currency, the euro (used by 17 EU countries in 2013), is perhaps the best practical example of this idea that integration can stimulate European economies into becoming more competitive globally. The prosperity justification behind the euro was that a shared currency would spur growth by removing the transaction charges associated with converting currencies when trading goods or services and by stimulating price competition across an integrated market. In turn, this would help control inflation, allowing for lower interest rates and further boosting investment. Additionally, the new currency came with a Stability and Growth Pact designed to prevent countries from running large budget deficits and thereby forcing them to control public spending (see Section 5.2). Hence the euro was expected to provide long-term beneficial changes that politicians otherwise could not implement (Marsh 2009). Of course, the results in practice have not necessarily lived up to these expectations (see Chapter 12 for a discussion of the Eurozone crisis).

The prosperity justification is further complicated by the fact that participation in European integration can actually be expensive for governments. All EU member states contribute to a common budget, which is used to finance common policies. This spending, notably the subsidies to farmers and the money spent on infrastructure in poorer regions, is not spread evenly across Europe. Consequently some countries end up as net beneficiaries of EU spending, while others are net contributors (see Section 5.1). In the latter there is heated political debate as to whether integration represents good value for money. Scandals involving EU money – such as the €720,000 of EU regional development funds intended to pay for an Elton John concert in Naples and subsequently paid back – get a lot of attention. This perception that EU money is not necessarily well spent makes citizens in net contributor countries wary about financing integration through their taxes.

Hence, while there is a shared desire for economic growth through integration, this attitude has yet to translate into a great deal of financial solidarity across European countries. Citizens and governments want the economic benefits of integration but, especially in the wealthier countries, they remain skeptical about redistributing prosperity from richer to poorer regions.

1.5 The Strengthening State Capacity Justification for Unity

As opposed to moral (peace) or economic (prosperity) justifications, another way of explaining the merit of European unity is to point to what it allows countries to achieve

that they otherwise cannot manage alone. Hence this justification concerns the way in which creating shared institutions to manage common policy issues permits national governments to do more for their citizens. This argument has been put forward most forcefully by the British historian Alan Milward, who claims that integration effectively rescued the nation-state in Europe. Prior to integration, small and large countries alike had struggled to remain politically independent and prosper economically – that is, to actually succeed as sovereign states. So transferring a limited set of policy competences to institutions like the European Commission has definitely been worth it, as all EU countries are now in a position to achieve both (Milward 1992).

This justification is not just about economic growth, but about the overall policy effectiveness made possible by unity in all manner of important administrative tasks. In many policy areas, as a result of integration, EU member states now have instruments to meet the needs of their citizens. This is illustrated by examples such as the European Arrest Warrant, which expedites the return of suspected criminals from other EU countries; the Blue Card visa, which permits the recruitment of highly skilled immigrants; or the Community Trade Mark system, which protects intellectual property across national borders and globally. A small European country acting alone on the global stage would find it harder to perform all these tasks. These examples thus highlight how unity provides states with new capacities for delivering policies that concern citizens in areas such as justice, immigration, and global trade.

Yet there are important political disagreements within and across EU countries about what integration can best achieve with regard to strengthening state capacity. That is, politicians and parties are split over what state capacities integration should strengthen. On one side there are those who think that integration should help EU countries resist globalization and protect existing social policies; on the other side, there are those who believe that integration is the best way for Europe to adjust to the new realities of a globally interconnected world.

In France, for instance, European integration has traditionally been justified as a way to limit the effects of globalization on the social policies of the French state (Schmidt 2007). French politicians thus see integration as a means of reducing the pressure to lower taxes and social spending. This pressure exists because countries compete for investment and jobs in a globalized world where capital and highly qualified labor are very mobile. By uniting their forces, countries can promote common rules – for instance European-wide standards of social protection, or taxes on financial transactions to raise funds – rather than accept shedding government programs. Nicolas Sarkozy (France's president, 2007–2012) illustrated this attitude of using integration to protect jobs and standards of living by calling for a "buy European" law to compel governments to purchase only European-made goods in public procurement.

This idea of strengthening state capacities through measures associated with economic protectionism is usually articulated by social–democratic or left-of-center political parties. These parties support integration via the creation of a shared economic space, which involves a loss of national autonomy over economic and social policy. However, in return, they wish to see that European-level social regulation helps preserve national welfare traditions such as generous pension rights, job protection, subsidized health care, as well as high standards of sickness and housing benefits. Their ambition is thus to use integration as a means of preserving social democracy – something that

individual countries cannot sustain if European countries compete on lowering taxes and on attracting investment through lower social protection. Strengthening state capacity via integration, on this understanding, depends on limiting how far EU countries can compete among themselves, so as to avoid achieving unity at the expense of social–democratic principles. Keenly aware that integration means giving up certain powers over economic and social policy, left-of-center parties face a dilemma over whether to accept integration if it is not accompanied by concrete attempts to extend social democracy in Europe (Dimitrakopoulos 2010).

Liberal and center-right parties hold a different perspective on which state capacities integration should benefit. They want EU rules and increased inter-state cooperation actually to reduce protectionism and to stimulate reform of the European **welfare state**, which they argue makes firms uncompetitive in a globalized world. Whereas social democrats want to strengthen the state's capacity to prevent the phenomenon of globalization from increasing socio-economic inequalities, those on the other side of the political divide want to strengthen the state's ability to adapt to globalization by embracing open markets. Free market liberals and the center-right see the ability to use the EU to reform national policies on employment rights, pensions, labor mobility, as the best way to adapt to globalization, that is, allowing EU countries to remain prosperous and fund more suitable welfare policies. Liberal and right-of-center parties face their own dilemma over integration, because there is a risk that pooling competences means sharing control over key economic policies with countries and governments that want protection from rather than adaptation to globalization. This is the quandary spelled out by former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, when, already in 1988, she observed that "we have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain, only to see them re-imposed at a European level."

Consequently there is no shared consensus about what exactly European unity should do to strengthen the state. What matters, though, is that politicians and citizens across party divides see integration as a mechanism for achieving something that individual countries cannot do on their own. As in the peace and prosperity justifications, here too the idea of European unity constitutes a political objective for transcending state sovereignty.

1.6 Concluding Summary

Europe as a geographical term exists alongside a political definition, indicating what is different about this western tip of Eurasia. The oldest political definition of Europe was in terms of a common religious identity based on Christianity. Hence Christendom denoted separateness from the peoples to the east, notably the powerful Muslim Turks. With the development of the territorial sovereign state in the seventeenth century, a secular definition of Europe arose. This distinguished Europe in terms of a continent divided into sovereign states, none being more powerful than the rest combined. Europe was said to function as a republic because states balanced against one another to prevent the complete dominance of any single country.

The balance of power between these states was not a peaceful order. Thinkers such as William Penn, Abbot Saint Pierre, or Immanuel Kant thus developed plans for a more peaceful system based on European unity. They looked to collective security to overcome the deficiencies of balancing. This meant that states would lose the right to resort to force; in its place would come mutual dispute settlement, enforced through collective action if a state refused to play by the rules. Such projects relied on the fact that even the most powerful European state could be kept in check by the combined strength of the others. However, these proposals came to naught – states prized their sovereignty too highly, while monarchs, unlike ordinary citizens, were in any case insulated from the sufferings wrought by war.

It was only after the horrors of the First World War that governments accepted to implement collective security, which they did in the form of the League of Nations. In 1920s' Europe there was a cultural and political movement in favor of unity. This was seen as a means of moral regeneration, but also as one of economic reconstruction, designed to help fend off communism and avoid losing influence to the New World. Aristide Briand's call for a European Union in 1929 suited the zeitgeist; but other states, already concerned about the weakness of the League of Nations, did not muster much enthusiasm. This project, like the League itself, foundered and Europe returned to war.

Hence the need for peace is the original justification for uniting the continent. From this perspective, European unity is a way to overcome the balance of power system – which requires constant preparation for war, engendering a security dilemma. In addition, a peaceful order based on states working together enables civilized relations between citizens and governments, thereby overcoming the artificial enmities inspired by nationalism. Circumscribing sovereignty and nationalism are not the only justifications put forward for unity. Stimulating economic growth by eliminating obstacles to trade between European countries is another powerful justification. This prosperity justification sees economic benefits as a central component of unity. Finally, there is a justification for unity in terms of strengthening state capacities. That is, working together not only allows for peace and prosperity but also enables governments to tackle complex problems in a world where individual European states are no longer so powerful. Acting together permits states to implement better policies in areas such as justice, immigration, and global trade, although there is stark disagreement about whether unity should help sustain national welfare provisions or encourage reform.

Guide to Further Reading

Heater, D. 1992. *The Idea of European Unity*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

Comprehensive historical account of the actors and motives behind European unity; concise and highly accessible.

Mazower, M. 1998. *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*. New York: Knopf.

A provocative work chronicling how and why democracy in Europe was constantly under threat in the first half of the twentieth century before finding a successful institutional form after 1945.

Milward, A. 1992. *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*. London: Routledge.

A bold, historically based thesis about how integration provided a means to reinvigorate the state, allowing national governments to satisfy the socio-economic needs of citizens.

Discussion Questions

1 How and why has Europe been defined as a separate continent? What do these definitions imply about the question of which countries are considered European?
2 What were the characteristic features of the balance of power in Europe prior to integration and why did they make for a violent inter-state order?
3 What remedy did European thinkers propose for overcoming power balancing? How similar were the proposals of William Penn, Abbot Saint Pierre, and Immanuel Kant?
4 Why is nationalism also considered deleterious for inter-state relations in Europe? How is integration supposed to minimize the negative facets of nationalism?
5 In what way can European unity be said to strengthen the state and how does European integration affect social democracy?

Web Resources

This book is supported by a companion website, which can be found at www.wiley.com/go/glencross. There you will find a list of the web links referred to in this chapter wherever you see a "Web" icon in the page margins. In addition, you will find a list of further relevant online resources such as websites for EU institutions, political groups, archives, and think tanks, information on studying abroad, and biographies of key figures. You will also find self-assessment tools in the form of flashcards and independent study questions developed specifically for this chapter.

Glossary

Christendom
An historical definition of Europe as a continent united by a shared Christian identity. In the Middle Ages, the notion of a *respublica Christiana* ("Christian republic") served a political end: to distinguish Europeans from Muslim Turks and to encourage crusaders to fight the latter.

Collective security
Inter-state arrangement whereby members agree to resolve their differences through negotiation. This system rests on a joint pledge to combine forces in order to deter, or even defeat, a member that fails to abide by collective decisions.

Concert of Europe
Informal arrangement (1815–circa 1890) between major European powers to manage inter-state disputes peacefully, so as to avoid domestic political unrest like that occur-

ring during the Napoleonic wars. The system functioned for a while through *ad hoc* conferences, but consensus among major powers eventually broke down.

Economic protectionism
Government policy of shielding domestic firms from foreign competition via high import tariffs and other trade barriers. It is done for the sake of protecting jobs or politically favored industries, but it invariably produces a counter-response leaving nations worse off.

League of Nations
Collective security organization established in 1919 to manage inter-state conflict peacefully. After some initial successes, it failed to restrain states from resorting to war, notably in 1939.

Nationalism
Political ideology that sees the state as the territorial expression of a particular nation, whose people share a common national identity. More extreme versions see inter-state rivalry as a competition between nations over which ethnic group or national values will prevail.

Security dilemma
Phrase used in international relations to refer to the insecurity produced when countries seek to make themselves safer through alliances or arms build-ups. Such moves encourage other states to do the same, thereby potentially creating a spiral effect that renders all countries less secure.

Social democracy
Center-left political ideology, highly successful in post-war Western Europe. Advocates social rights (good healthcare, pension, and sickness provisions) and full employment as an essential element of a healthy democracy. It is based on the principle that government must intervene in the economy to attain these goals and prevent capitalism from creating extreme inequalities.

Welfare state
An economic order based on government providing essential services such as healthcare, pensions, or sickness benefits. Welfare is typically redistributive, i.e. dependent on transfers from the wealthy to the less well off, funded through taxation.

References

Beck, Ulrich. 2006. *The Cosmopolitan Vision*. Cambridge: Polity.

Criddle, Byron. 1993. "The French Referendum on the Maastricht Treaty September 1992." *Parliamentary Affairs*, 46: 228–238.

Den Boer, Pim. 1993. "Europe to 1914: The Making of an Idea." In Kevin Wilson and Jan van der Dussen eds., *The History of the Idea of Europe*, 1–59. London: Routledge.

Deudney, Daniel. 2008. *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Dimitrakopoulos, Dionyssis, ed. 2010. *Social Democracy and European Integration: The Politics of Preference Formation*. London: Routledge.

Doyle, Michael W. 1983. "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs." *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 12: 205–235. Available at http://www.jstor.org/stable/2265298 (accessed July 15, 2012).

Elrod, Richard B. 1976. "The Concert of Europe: A Fresh Look at an International System." *World Politics*, 28: 159–174. DOI: 10.2307/2009888.

EU Observer. 2010. "EU President Issues Stark Warning against Nationalism." *EU Observer*, November 10. Available at http://euobserver.com/institutional/31240

Ferrara, Maurizio, and Elisabetta Gualmini. 2000. "Italy: Rescue from Without?" In Fritz W. Scharpf and Vivien A. Schmidt, eds., *Welfare and Work in the Open Economy, Volume 2: Diverse Responses to Common Challenges*, 351–398. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

George, Stephen. 1998. *An Awkward Partner: Britain in the European Community*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gilbert, Martin. 2012. *Churchill: The Power of Words*. London: Transworld Publishers.

Heater, Derek. 1992. *The Idea of European Unity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hont, Istvan. 2005. *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.

Jervis, Robert. 1978. "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma." *World Politics*, 30: 167–214. DOI: 10.2307/2009958

Le Goff, Jacques. 2005. *The Birth of Europe*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Marsh, David. 2009. *The Euro: The Politics of the New Global Currency*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Mazower, Mark. 1998. *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*. London: Allen Lane.

Milward, Alan S. 1992. *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*. London: Routledge.

Nexon, Daniel H. 2009. *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Schimmelfennig, Frank. 2003. *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, H. D. 1966. "The Establishment of 'Europe' as a Political Expression." *The Historical Journal*, 9: 172–178. DOI: 10.1017/S0018246X00026509

Schmidt, Vivien. 2007. "Trapped by Their Ideas: French Elites' Discourses of European Integration and Globalization." *Journal of European Public Policy*, 14: 992–1009. DOI: 10.1080/13501760701576494

Sheehan, James J. 2008. *Where Have All the Soldiers Gone? The Transformation of Modern Europe*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Tóibín, Colm. 2008. "A Godsend to Every Crank in Ireland: On the Left or on the Right." *The Guardian*, June 14. Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jun/14/ireland.eu (accessed July 16, 2012).