Europeanising spaces in Paris, ca. 1947-1962
McDonnell, H.M.

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

In 1948 Vladimir Jankélévitch, professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne, claimed that the squandering of the opportunity to purge Paris properly of collaborationist elements after the Second World War would not be so tragic but for the fact that one was talking about Paris. As he put it, ‘it would be of no importance if France was Afghanistan. But France is France, Europe’s guide and the conscience of all free men in the entire world; what happens on the banks of the Seine, between the Hotel-de-Ville and la Concorde has a particular importance for man in general.’¹ Jankélévitch’s remarks in the journal *Les Temps modernes* are a useful point of departure for this thesis in indicating the central place, but also the distinctiveness, of Paris in thinking about Europe in this post-war period. The unproblematic straight line that he drew between Paris, France, Europe, and the universal immediately invites critique, of course. But it also implied the question of the space of Europe in the sense of its scope. Europe was, then, to borrow and adapt Frederick Cooper’s argument about France, both less and more than itself.² Ideas about Europe impacted on and were formed in micro-spaces such as the French capital just as in the wider non-European world. It was often the case that Paris, or spaces within Paris, were in a sense conceived of as a stand-in for Europe as a whole, while Europe was also imagined as constitutively depending on its presence and power in the non-European world.

An examination of ‘Europeanising spaces’ is taken to mean an analysis of spaces in Paris in which ideas about Europe were formulated, expressed, exchanged, circulated, and contested

---

during this post-war period, roughly between the escalation of the Cold War and the end of the Algerian war of decolonisation. The concept of space here is broadly conceived to include the physical urban space that Jankélévitch so usefully points to, but also academic scholarship, intellectuals and their interventions, political movements, cultural groups, cultural performances and institutions, journals, literature, manifestos, photographs, and pertinent images. The analysis includes not only explicit interventions about the continent, but also discourse that implicitly called into question the terms of thinking about the meaning of Europe and of Europeanness. ‘Europeanising spaces’ is also taken to have three idiosyncratic definitions: 1. Europeanisation as a process; 2. Europeanisation as the refusal of the closure of the concepts of ‘Europe’ and ‘Europeanness’; and 3. Europeanisation as disclosure, acknowledgement or appropriation of the concepts of ‘Europe’ and ‘Europeanness’. These definitions will be elaborated on later in the introduction. First, though, the rationale for examining discourse about Europe not in Europe as a whole, but in a single European city, Paris, over a period of about fifteen years, is set out.

Rationale for the Examination of Europeanising Spaces in Paris

Looking at ideas about Europe in the post-war period up until at least the 1960s, one is struck by the confidence with which many took for granted that France was its highest embodiment. A recurring presupposition was that a Europe in which France did not take centre stage would be wholly implausible. And, crucially, by France was meant Paris. Frederick Cooper maintains that at least until the end of the period in question here, France was both narrower and

---

3 One should note that this conflict was only recognised by the French state as being in fact a war as recently as 1999.
wider than the nation. Both culture and politics were highly centralised in Paris from where an ethos of universalism was projected by France the empire-state far beyond its hexagonal frontiers. Frenchmen from outside the capital were definitively provincial until they had been sanctioned by the approval of Paris. Only then was one admitted to share in this project of French universalism. It was in this spirit that Paris was often trumpeted as the de facto capital of Europe after 1945.

Yet Paris did not typify or sum up once and for all Europe’s image of itself. Since the Greeks first used the name, there have always been many Europes. But France’s self-image, and that held by others, was particularly pronounced in its claim to be the apotheosis of the European tradition. In terms of culture, the perception of Paris as the leader of Europe was longstanding. Erich Auerbach looked back to the seventeenth century when, ‘under Louis XIV the French had the courage to consider their own culture a valid model on a par with that of the ancients, and they imposed this view upon the rest of Europe.’ In *The World Republic of Letters*, Pascale Casanova assesses that this perceived cultural supremacy was undiminished until at least the 1960s.

Cultural pride combined with a sense of political exceptionalism to form a strong sense of the city’s universal importance. This political image can be traced back to the Revolution of 1789 upon which was based an idea of France as the champion of the oppressed everywhere. France was widely perceived to side automatically with liberty and justice – the epitome of what was valuable in the European tradition. Yet the universalism of post-revolution France was

---

4 Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 171.
intertwined with European imperial interests. Awareness of this contradiction began to increase in the period in question here, however marginal it was prior to the Second World War. Here one can usefully draw from Immanuel Wallerstein’s distinction between an enduring limited ‘European universalism’ and a ‘universal universalism’.Raoul Girardet indicates how untroubled in French politics and society was this self-confidence when he points to a ‘conviction très profonde et à peu près unanime partagée de l’évidente primauté de la civilisation européenne – en vérité la seule Civilisation, – par rapport à toutes les autres sociétés humaines.’ Since imperialism commanded a remarkable degree of European consensus, one can infer that Paris as an imperial capital was important to Europe as a whole. As Amit Prakash argues, ‘Paris was an effervescent center of art, politics, and intellectualism for much of the twentieth century, but it was also an imperial capital, its social and political architecture divided by colonial forms of racism.’ It follows, then, that the second half of Prakash’s proposition was as significant as the first for thinking about Europe and Europeanness. Christoph Kalter’s study of French intellectuals and the Third World makes the case that the ‘discovery’ of the Third World was comparable to the discovery of America five hundred years earlier in the degree to which it prompted a reassessment of Europe’s place in the world. How was this kind of reassessment carried out in spaces in the imperial capital of Paris in this period?

---

8 According to the philosopher Paul Ricoeur, for example, the Algerian war required ‘perhaps for the first time since the Enlightenment, the coming to terms with the fact that French culture was not universal. Cited in James D. Le Sueur, Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics during the Decolonization of Algeria (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 5.
10 Raoul Girardet, L’idée coloniale en France de 1871 à 1962 (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1972), 89.
This historical patrimony contextualises the ease with which one could assert the pre-eminence of Paris in Europe in this period roughly between 1947 and 1962. These assumptions about the European tradition informed the common conviction of very different figures that Europe must be led by France. Robert Schuman hesitated not at all to make a direct connection between the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, and France’s moves in 1950 towards the Treaty of Paris of 1951 establishing the European Coal and Steel Community. Nor was this kind of proposition the preserve of career politicians. Régis Debray could still insist in 1977 that, ‘I have always really believed that France will bear the torch of revolution to the rest of Europe. I find the Jacobinism of 1792 and 1848 not only sympathetic but in a sense natural to me. I can conceive of no hope for Europe save under the hegemony of a revolutionary France, firmly grasping the banner of independence.’ To keep to the period in question here, in 1946 Julien Benda could propose the advancement of a common European language and take it as a given that this would be French. In the same year François Mauriac opined that it was France that would save what remained of Europe from the infernal circle of technology and destruction. Should France fall short, ‘humanity would have entered the age of the termite.’ When in 1950 he singled out the intellectual as a European institution under threat from Soviet Russia, it was Parisian intellectuals that he had in mind. Likewise, in 1949 André Malraux proposed to his audience that if it doubted that Europe was still defending the world’s highest intellectual values,

one should consider how quickly Paris would come to be a holy place in man’s memory if it were destroyed.  

This sense of the paramount importance of Paris was not limited to French people. The prestige of Paris attracted intellectuals from all over Europe and beyond, as we have already seen in the case of Jankélévitch, who was of Russian Jewish background. When one talks about Eastern Europeans who figure in this period like Czesław Miłos, Mircea Eliade, and E.M. Cioran, it is important to bear in mind that they were formed in a world in which European culture was a certain French culture. Eric Hobsbawm traces the historical pattern of Eastern European national groups distinguishing themselves from their disdained neighbours by affiliating themselves to this Europe centred on the Île de France whilst refusing it to those at their borders: ‘No doubt proud Rumanians see themselves as essential Europeans and spiritual Parisians exiled among backward Slavs.’ As such, it mattered profoundly to these Eastern Europeans that Paris should listen to what they had to say. It was this perception that fuelled the anguish of Eliade, the Romanian writer and philosopher at the École pratique des hautes études. He lamented in 1952 that, ‘L’Europe ne sent-elle pas l’amputation d’une partie de sa chair même? Car, au fonds, tous ces pays se trouvent en Europe, tous ces peuples appartiennent à la communauté européenne… Encore une fois, il ne s’agit pas de “nationalisme”: il s’agit de la stérilisation spirituelle de plusieurs peuples, en dernière instance d’un attentat contre l’intégrité spirituelle de l’Europe.’

---

Tony Judt situates the importance of the French capital after 1945 in light of the recent history of the continent. He argues that France’s leadership of Europe was reinforced in this era by default because of

the utter absence of any countervailing intellectual or artistic authority elsewhere. Germany was in eclipse, Spain was isolated by Franco, Britain was as marginal as ever to European debates and Italy was absorbed by its own struggle to recover from fascism… Despite France’s own decline it was paradoxically more important, in proportion to the surrounding nations of old Europe, than at any time since 1815. Its intelligentsia was thus correspondingly dominant in the life of the European mind and would remain so for twenty years.²¹

As for individual thinkers, Hannah Arendt wrote that for intellectual Jews the fatherland was Europe.²² In the early twentieth century, a strong equivalence was certainly assumed between this experience of Europe and of a certain illustrious and cosmopolitan German intellectual life, as Tony Judt argues in his discussion of ‘The Jewish Europe of Manès Sperber’ (himself a Parisian émigré).²³ But the hegemonic terms for thinking about Europe in the post-war period would be set further west in Paris. This was commonly the understanding of Spanish Republican exiles, for whom Paris was the radical heartland of their rather francocentric conception of Europe. Among their number was the writer Jorge Semprún, who identified another underlying aspect of this shift of weight in European intellectual life when he pointed to the post-war perception of the tainting of the German language itself with Nazism.²⁴

As a point of clarification, the examination of connections that were drawn between Paris and Europe is not to diminish the importance that was staked in specifically French narratives in this post-war period. Nor is it to claim that the history of the city in these years is more properly

European than French. Apparently Jean Cocteau became irritated with Paris – ‘the city which talks about itself the whole time’. This kind of self-regard of the French capital indeed should give one pause before overstating the degree to which ideas about Europe permeated life in the city. Nevertheless, the quantity and degree of conviction of discourse connecting Paris and Europe merit investigating further into the nature of that connection, and its significance within the broader context of how this post-war period was rationalised in various spaces in the city.

**Europeanising Spaces**

The concept of ‘Europeanising Spaces’ is explicated further in this section so as to bring into clearer focus the research questions and methodological approach of the thesis. As stated above, the most important sense of ‘Europeanising spaces’ refers to spaces in Paris in which ideas about Europe and Europeanness were formulated, implied, or implicated. Europeanising is a useful term because it encompasses not only explicit discourse about Europe but also spaces in which Europe was merely invoked tacitly. One of the underlying contentions of this thesis is that discussions of Europe that limit their sources to explicit invocations of Europe overlook a wealth of relevant and challenging material.

Certainly in the case of Paris in this period, urban, political, and cultural spaces all disclosed assumptions about what Europe and Europeanness were, or what they should be. In this regard, it is sometimes useful to draw on one possible nuance suggested by the distinction

---

between the verb ‘Europeanise’ and the noun ‘Europeanisation’: Europeanise can suggest an active endeavour, whereas the noun form can connote more of a passive and sedentary process. There is of course an important difference between agents whose express intention was to say something about Europe or Europeanness, and spaces that did so inadvertently. The most obvious examples of the latter are the urban spaces that are examined in the first section: the Parisian café, the Parisian home, and the Parisian street. For example, on a daily basis café proprietors and customers might have had precious little awareness of, much less interest in, the discourse of Europe that suffused this Parisian institution, without it being any less significant for that.

Though historically there have been many different kinds of ideas of Europe, it is curious that the term ‘Europeanisation’ is by far most commonly associated with the institutional development of European political and economic integration since the Second World War. Often this has implied a crucial secondary sense of Europeanisation which suggests that the institutions involved in this process represent, as it were, more than themselves – they were not merely a contingent and pragmatic political development, but rather an expression of a deeper European identity. Europeanisation in this sense, then, signifies the fulfilment or redemption of not only political antecedents of European unity but also something like a historical and cultural European common linear tradition, if not essentiality. One can deduce from this that one common and persistent form of Europeanisation is the active conflation of Europe of the nascent EEC and Europe as a generic term. One might add that this understanding of Europeanisation has

---

27 Indeed, journals such as the *Journal of Common Market Studies* list innumerable contributions whose titles include the term ‘Europeanization’.

been so thoroughly appropriated by narratives of post-war European political integration that one is obliged to argue forcefully what should be a truism; namely, that there are many other Europes, and so other possible meanings of Europeanisation. Though any consideration of ideas about Europe in this period cannot ignore the rise of the European Economic Community, the latter is only considered tangentially in this work. This thesis aims to challenge its appropriation of the term ‘Europeanisation’ to examine how discourses about Europe were produced in other spaces. As such, Europeanisation is taken to apply to any space in which discourse about Europe was produced, explicitly or tacitly; so, not only political forums other than inter-governmental processes of European integration, but also cultural, and tangible urban spaces.

What are some of the assumptions of the conventional discourse of Europeanisation and discourse about Europe in general that this thesis aims to interrogate? One sense of Europeanisation is comparable with notions like globalisation or modernisation, in that it is a process named by its supposed endpoint. It is a short jump from here to some of the most common characteristics of discourse about Europe, whether with reference to political Europe, or to Europe in a more abstract general sense of its historical and cultural characteristics; namely, teleology and doing history backwards.

To keep to examples relevant to this period in Paris, one thinks of the laudatory commemoration of the historian of the idea of Europe, Denis de Rougemont, in October 2006. De Rougemont, a Swiss historian based in the French capital, claimed to trace contemporary conceptions of Europe back to the time of Hesiod. It is therefore fitting that he be appropriated for celebrations of an inexorably ever closer union. Likewise, the establishment esteem with

---

28 Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 96.
29 Both of these problems are discussed in Frederick Cooper’s discussion of ‘globalization’. See ibid., 91-112.
which Altiero Spinelli is held today as a former member of the European Commission and father of the European parliament can lead one to misunderstand his political positions in his early career. His radical ideas about Europe as a Second World War resister, and his contribution to the Paris-based Mouvement socialiste des états-unis d’Europe (MSEUE), should not be retrospectively flattened into points on his trajectory towards respectability.\footnote{31} Indeed, in his critique of ‘doing history backwards’, Cooper notes that even more important than trying to illuminate the present is ‘what one does not see: the paths not taken, the dead ends of historical processes, the alternatives that appeared to people in their time.’\footnote{32} Most of the case studies and examples considered in this thesis articulated understandings of Europe that differed from or even opposed those of what Alan Milward ironically termed the ‘European saints’ like Schuman and Jean Monnet.\footnote{33} Nor can they be understood by any attempt to read back into them assumptions about Europe today.

Another common trait of discourse about Europe is its self-congratulatory tone. Of course, one needs to distinguish between political rhetoric and media commentary on the one hand, and academic scholarship on the other. But it still true that there is a certain general tendency, as Hayden White argues, to try to identify a ‘Europe that is good and noble.’ He writes that ‘the current quest for Europe’s true “identity” is the manifestation in public discourse of an effort to invent a new identity for “Europe” but in such a way as to mask the sleight of hand involved in pretending that Europe has been, if only secretly and in part, good and noble all along the course of its history.’\footnote{34}

\footnote{31} See ibid., 484.  
\footnote{32} Cooper, Colonialism in Question, 18.  
\footnote{34} Hayden White, ‘The Discourse of Europe and the Search for a European Identity’, in Stråth, Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other, 67.
Conversely, others are disturbed by what is seen as a trend of masochism in discourse about Europe. In France notable examples include Pascal Bruckner who excoriates European Third Worldism in general, and Jean-Paul Sartre in particular who, so Bruckner charges, was himself naively and incorrigibly Eurocentric. In other words, the critique of Europe by many European progressives was, in Bruckner’s eyes, itself parochially European. There is a kernel of truth in Bruckner’s argument with which one can engage, while eschewing the rather flimsy polemical texture of his work as a whole, and without making concessions to his politics that are characteristic of a sharp rightward turn in French intellectual life from the 1970s. Indeed, by the early 1980s Paris was, according to Perry Anderson, ‘the capital of European intellectual reaction.’ The thesis, then, seeks to navigate both the pitfalls of unthinking congratulation and of contrarian denigration of Europe, while seeking to historicise them where they are found in the period in question.

Types of Europeanisation

So far we have considered conventional uses of the term ‘Europeanisation’, and its primary usage in this thesis to refer to spaces in which ideas about Europe and Europeanness were produced in Paris at this time. Besides these, three supplemental definitions of

---

Europeanisation are proposed here which inform the analysis of some of the different case studies.

1. Europeanisation as Process

In one sense it is hardly controversial to insist that Europeanisation is a process. Even conservative advocates of Europe would find it a useful term, in the sense of an understanding of Europe roughly analogous to certain kinds of nationalism. In this way, Europe is conceived, just like the nation, as always coming into being but not yet fully itself, hence the need to be educated about itself. On the other hand, it has always existed and its people are connected with one another in a linear fashion through history, hence the need for Europe’s past to be vindicated.37

Yet Europeanisation can be conceptualised as a process in a more probing and heterodox sense. This would include Julia Kristeva’s analysis of European culture as the birthplace of the quest for identity, but which has also never ceased to expose its own futility as well as ‘its possible (if interminable) overcoming.’ ‘This is the paradox’, she continues,

there is an identity—mine, ours— but it is infinitely constructible and deconstructible, open, and evolving, which confers its puzzling fragility and its vigorous subtlety to the European project as a whole and to European cultural destiny in particular. Therefore, do not expect me to propose a definition of European culture other than this: as a counterpoint to the modern cult of identity, European culture is a quest for identity that is indefinitely reconstructible [sic] and open. And it is

37 This point is adapted from Richard Seymour, ‘The British have invaded 90% of the world’s countries. Ha ha?’, The Guardian (6 November, 2012), http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/nov/06/british-invaded-90-percent-world
precisely its status as counterpoint that renders European culture—and consequently the European project in and of itself—interesting, valuable, and also difficult.\textsuperscript{38}

One can go one level further back than this to maintain that discourse about Europe not only refers to a process, but is itself formulated in the course of a process. It is indeed one virtue of the term Europeanisation that it constantly reminds one that the production of discourse about Europe needs to be understood as a process rather than a stance – a point that Cooper argues is understated in historiography generally. Understanding any historical actor, he argues, requires asking ‘how people put their thoughts together; in other words scholars must make an effort to get out of their own categories.’\textsuperscript{39} Following Cooper, part of the burden of this thesis is to trace and explain shifts in discourse about Europe and Europeanness in post-war Paris. To this end, by restricting the study here to eight case studies, the thesis is better placed to undertake a detailed analysis of the nature of ideas about Europe, rather than attempting to survey comprehensively ideas about Europe in the French capital in this period. The premise here is that by focusing attention on a handful of examples one can more easily analyse in requisite detail the complex dynamics of formulating ideas about Europe in terms of specific circumstances, pressures, and motivations. Of course, the common threads that link the various expressions of Europe in these different spaces are also considered.

Cooper’s recommendations, furthermore, highlight at once the difficulty and opportunity of a study of Europeanising spaces in Paris. Difficulty in the sense that, besides problems of using appropriate methodology and taking a convincing historiographical approach, conceptualisations of Europe in Paris at this time were inextricably interwoven with issues which often instantly prompt an emotive reaction – Communism, the Cold War, a recent history of

\textsuperscript{39} Cooper, \textit{Colonialism in Question}, 11.
fascism and catastrophe both inflicted and suffered, imperialism, colonial war, political violence. They also demand of the scholar special attention to the problems of differentiating history from memory.\textsuperscript{40} Opportunity in the sense that it is in precisely such a historically complex field of enquiry that one can most convincingly shift the historical goalposts to the kind of scholarship that Cooper aims for. As such, the thesis aims to go beyond what was said about Europe to explaining why and how it was said whilst remaining always attentive to the complexities and shifts in the historical process.

This explanatory framework must also take account of the form in which Europe was invoked in these spaces. Cooper remarks on the overuse of the term ‘identity’, and suggests nuances that allow us to distinguish between different kinds of identity claims: identification and categorisation; self-understanding and social location; and commonality, connectedness, and groupness.\textsuperscript{41} Likewise, the thesis aims to account for different kinds of invocation of Europe both in the sense of the intended or implied meaning of the actors in these spaces in Paris, and in the analysis of that discourse. We will see Europe or Europeanness represented variously as an idea, an identity, in terms of consciousness, as a commitment, in terms of faith, as a style, as a ‘seriality’, in various degrees of openness, availability, or restriction, as a geographical space, a civilisation, as an inward looking ethnic group, as an entity necessarily in excess of itself, and so on.

At this point we will examine two sub-categories of this definition of Europeanisation as a process. These are particularly useful in analysing the processes in which discourse about


\textsuperscript{41} Cooper, \textit{Colonialism in Question}, 73-77.
Europe was formed. The first of these is a model of competition which draws from Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of the field. Then, it is argued that while indispensable, an understanding of the formation of ideas about Europe solely in terms of competition can be quite misleading. As such, Michael Rothberg’s concepts of memory are borrowed and adapted to propose the concepts of ‘knotted Europes’ and ‘multidirectional Europes’.

i. Paris and Competing Conceptions of Europe

Often ideas of Europe or discourse about European identity are examined in isolation without sufficient attention to, in the first place, underlying constraints and pressures on how actors are inclined to formulate certain ideas about such issues, and on the degree of plausibility accorded to their ideas by their intended audience; and secondly, without sufficient appreciation of the relational context in which actors make claims. What they have to say about Europe is not made in a political and cultural vacuum but instead has to factor in comparable claims made by other actors.

It is one of Pierre Bourdieu’s key arguments in his Language and Symbolic Power that any claim for identity or an idea of groupness is not made in isolation. It is not neutral or disinterested because it is necessarily made within the confines of a competitive field. This field of competing claims involves ‘different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognize, to impose the legitimate definition of the division of the social world and, thereby, to make and
In these terms, any claim about the meaning of Europe made in Paris in this period must be understood as having been articulated within a field of competing claims about Europe. These include not only claims made within Parisian circles but also comparable claims wherever they were made. Nor would this include only different conceptions of the meaning of Europe but also explicit and implicit assertions that Europe was, in fact, unimportant compared with other categories of belonging or human organisation like class, nation, or the universal.

Ideas about Europe varied hugely in Paris. The thesis will work from the position that one can at once conceptualise a general field of claims for Europe, within which Paris held a privileged position, and also a sub-field of claim-making about Europe within Paris itself. Both involved the competition between actors in the field to make their claims for Europe believed and accepted. These two levels while distinct were of course also interconnected. Moreover, integral to the field are certain pressures that tend towards or shape conclusions in a certain way. However little they are openly acknowledged or recognised they must be accommodated in some way. The argument here is that when thinking about Europe in Paris certain considerations imposed themselves on actors in the field either to a greater extent than would have been the case elsewhere in Europe or as considerations that would not have arisen elsewhere at all. The multifariousness of the elements that constituted ideas about Europe leads us on to discuss how such ideas were formed in ways other than through competition.

ii. Knotted Europe and Multidirectional Europe

---

Looking at competitive processes is indispensable to an examination of ideas about Europe. However, this tells us little about what constituted ideas about Europe, and how the constituent elements of these ideas related to each other. As such, the analysis of the idea of European unity by the theorist of nationalism, Anthony Smith, is a useful point of departure. Smith poses the question of what is common to Europeans. He suggests that such is the extent of differences among Europeans that one can never reach a satisfactory answer. And yet this does not preclude the fact that there are indeed shared European traditions though not all Europeans share in them, or share in them to the same degree. ‘But,’ he continues, ‘at one time or another all Europe’s communities have participated in at least some of these traditions and heritages, in some degree.’ Smith compares this family of European cultures with Wittgenstein’s concepts of ‘family resemblance’ and of the ‘language game’. Here a ‘family’ of elements or defining characteristics overlap and figure in a number of examples, but not all examples.43

To take up the analogy, the family of elements that constituted ideas of Europe in Paris in this post-war period often included the rather canonical elements Smith points to, such as traditions and heritages like Roman law, political democracy, parliamentary institutions, Judeo-Christian ethics, Renaissance humanism, rationalism and empiricism, romanticism and classicism.44 However, more striking were demarcations of Europe that were contingent to that particular historical moment. Among the most common of these delimiting features were those that referred to what Europe was not. Of course, the Other as a constitutive concept of notions of Europe is hardly unique to Paris. But in representations of Europe at this time in the French capital, its Others can be said to have been particularly numerous, and especially strongly

---

44 Ibid.
contrasted to itself. These included America, China, Asia, Africa, the Third World, the USSR, and residents of immigrant background. Moreover, it also included more abstract Others such as Nazism and fascism or their legacy, barbarism, capitalism, Communism, violence, irrationality, tradition or, in some ways or forms, modernity.

However, it is argued here that Smith’s useful model for thinking about ideas of Europe can be further refined. By way of illustration, in his engagement with Michael Rothberg’s concepts of ‘knotted memory’ and ‘multidirectional memory’, Jim House points to the work of Monique Hervo who lived and worked in a shantytown, or bidonville, populated by North African immigrants in the northwestern Paris suburb of Nanterre. House situates her solidarity with, and activism on behalf of, these residents in the context of her formative experience as a sixteen-year old girl helping to stretcher the survivors of Buchenwald as they arrived in Paris.45 The connections Hervo made between this experience, the policy of resettlement camps in Algeria, and her work in the bidonville are for House an important example of multidirectional memory or ‘noeuds de mémoire’, concepts that have been developed as a conscious development and critique of the French historian Pierre Nora’s collective project, Les lieux de mémoire.46

Since all those experiences which were formative for Hervo are also key to the constitution of ideas of Europe and of European identity, one can talk about multidirectional or knotted Europes. In this way we can perceive the schematic nature of notions of Europe fashioned solely in relation to America, or to empire, or to its history of violence, or to its own internal history, or whatever else, and grasp that these are actually interconnected in myriad

45 Jim House, ‘Memory and the Creation of Solidarity during the Decolonization of Algeria’, Yale French Studies 118-119 (2010), 33-34.
46 See the special edition on ‘Noeuds de mémoire: multidirectional memory in postwar French and francophone culture’ in Yale French Studies 118-119 (2010); also Michael Rothberg, Multidirectional Memory. Remembering the Holocaust in an Age of Decolonization (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009). The Algerian camps referred to here were part of a French policy of resettlement of the rural Algerian population during the Algerian war.
dynamic ways, disabusing us of any notion of a single, settled and uncomplicated idea of Europe. This resonates with Smith’s development of his concept outlined above by his employment of Wittgenstein’s concepts to represent Europe in which a ‘family’ of elements or defining characteristics overlap and feature in various but not all constellations.\(^{47}\) The advantage of the notion of a multidirectional Europe over Smith’s model, besides its sharper emphasis on dynamism, is its location of Europe in popular memory and lived experience, and its emphasis on intrinsic complications that perhaps call more for management than analysis alone.

An additional advantage of the concept of multidirectionality ties into the limitations of the competitive model of ideas examined above. While that analytical tool is indispensable, its use can nonetheless obscure the fact that making sense of concepts of human belonging like Europe cannot look only to competition. A core claim of Rothberg’s *Multidirectional Memory* is that memory is too often considered as a zero-sum struggle between different experiences so that recognition of the one necessarily detracts from that of the other. Rothberg instead suggests that memory can be ‘productive and not privative.’\(^{48}\) This is to say that the juxtaposition of different memories need not be at the expense of either, and can in fact be mutually reinforcing and open each other up to being understood in novel and productive ways. This is a key point to bear in mind in this thesis as one considers the elements of experience which lay at the base of various understandings of Europe. What is more, this provides the theoretical apparatus to validate the methodological aim outlined above not to attempt to hijack various Parisian and French histories in order to claim they were European after all. Indeed, it is far more the case that the mutual imbrication of narratives of the French capital and the French nation state on the one hand, and narratives of Europe on the other, is stressed and unpacked rather than overridden.


\(^{48}\) Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 3.
2. Europeanisation as the Refusal of the Closure of Europe

In the April 1953 edition of *Esprit*, the editor Jean-Marie Domenach inveighed against ‘La fausse Europe’. He denounced the false Europe of six states brought together in the process of economic integration, and called instead for a true Europe against the twin hegemony of the superpower blocs, and particularly against American hegemony expressed through its German client.49 Domenach’s intervention exemplifies another useful idiosyncratic sense of Europeanisation highlighted in this thesis – the refusal and rejection of certain ideas about Europe, and opposing them with alternative ideas. This included disputing Europe’s putative universalism, or suggesting alternative understandings of the universal, and how Europe would fit into this. Or, it could also include what is termed here ‘self-ironic Eurocentrism’: Eurocentric discourses that also expressed a sense of their own partiality and inadequacy.

The concept of ‘knotted Europes’ is also useful in suggesting this second supplemental use of ‘Europeanisation’ in this work. It offers the advantage of foregrounding the unpredictability of processes of discourse about Europe. After all, the metaphor of a knot connotes elements of ideas about the continent that are almost inextricably intertwined, and connect to each other in barely fathomable ways. This has something in common with Mireille Rosello’s use of the concept of ‘creolisation’ to examine discourse about Europe and Europeanness. In her account, creolisation denotes the unpredictable results that arise from contacts between cultures, and is particularly interesting in regard to those that are taken to be

49 Jean-Marie Domenach, ‘La fausse Europe’, *Esprit* 21/201 (1953), 513-529.
non-European. Creolisation is defined not by disorder but unpredictability, and it is this sense that it differs from the term ‘métissage’. Rosello suggests that the concept of creolisation is thus a useful analytical tool to contest consensual definitions of Europe and to think more rigorously instead about perceptions of European hybridity, the non-Europeanness of Europe, the possibility of a non-Eurocentric Europe, and Europeanisation itself as an unpredictable process.

This approach also alerts us to the dangers of passing over uncritically closed and exclusivist notions of Europe. Indeed, in his discussion of ‘nœuds de mémoire’, Rothberg suggests that a core purpose of that concept is to take to task the still very current practice of disavowing cosmopolitan impurity.

The calling into question of a fixed and closed understanding of Europe also has parallels with Dipesh Chakrabarty’s project of ‘provincializing Europe’. By Europe Chakarabarty does not mean the region of the world. Rather, he is talking about habits of thought that permeate the social sciences, particularly as they apply to his scholarly specialism of South Asia. Specifically, his work investigates the repertoire of academic concepts that include historicism, capitalism, modernity, and Enlightenment. In this sense, attention is paid to discourse about Europe in Paris in the post-war period which disputed or raised questions more generally about the universal claims made for Europe, and the corollary ‘denial of coevalness’ of non-Europeans. By the same token, Europeanisation in this sense includes ideas that dispute, to borrow Wallerstein’s terms, European universalism in the name of universal universalism. At the same time, the analysis seeks to circumvent the weaknesses of Chakrabarty’s important work. Cooper argues

---

51 Ibid., 2-3, 6-7.
54 Here Chakrabarty is borrowing the phrase of Johannes Fabian.
that Chakrabarty’s case is overstated and as such reveals ‘how far the Europe that he wants to “provincialize” is from any Europe that existed. Instead of looking at the conflicting ways in which inhabitants of this province actually thought, he has been content to let the most simplistic version of the Enlightenment stand in for the European province’s much more convoluted history.’ As such, following Cooper, the very convolutedness of discourse about Europe in Paris must be with grappled with and not minimised.

3. Europeanisation as Disclosure, Acknowledgement or Appropriation

A third related supplemental definition of Europeanisation is the disclosure of, or insistence on, the relevance of the category of Europe to places where it had previously not been obvious or acknowledged. Likewise, Europeanisation can be understood as the insistence on the Europeanness of various actors or spaces whose Europeanness was denied or devalued. One thinks immediately of Mircea Eliade’s lament quoted above. In some cases this kind of Europeanisation is roughly equivalent to the philosopher Jacques Rancière’s concept of ‘political subjectivization’. Politics in this sense is, Rancière maintains, not a sphere but a process. Where Europe or Europeanness was invoked as a means of exclusion, this politics involved the demand of the excluded, or the ‘part of no part’, for inclusion in the polity on the basis of equality.

Furthermore, we will see that one notion of Europeanisation signified norms and criteria that were applied to immigrants in Paris in this period, either to make them more European or to

---

55 Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 122.
56 Jacques Rancière, ‘Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man?’, *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103/2-3 (Spring-Summer, 2004), 305.
extend European control over the non-European. Conversely, immigrants sometimes responded with a kind of counter-Europeanisation in their reluctance to be determined by such schemes of containment and in their contestation of their devaluation as non-Europeans, indeed of their de-Europeanisation and the baggage that entailed. This Europeanisation foregrounded what and who was considered to be European, and what and who was considered not to be. But it did so in the spirit of critical interrogation and irreverence, rather than deference to a Europe that had already been made, and whose terms of belonging had already been set.

Chapter Plan

The first set of three chapters examines the city of Paris itself as a Europeanising space. To this end it examines concrete spaces in the French capital, and how these were implicated in thinking about Europe. These chapters are an adaptation and in large part a critique of the French historian Pierre Nora’s multivolume edited collection, *Les lieux de mémoire*. This work examines diverse spaces in French history ranging from rituals, festivals, songs, flags, monuments, buildings, and various kinds of symbols. In his review of this endeavour, Tony Judt comments on the lack of any entry on either Bonaparte in all the volumes, finding this to be a rather implausible gallocentric curtailing of France’s intertwinement with the history of Europe as whole. Another consistent criticism of this collective work has been its inattention to the history

---

of French imperialism and of immigration. In engaging with these two critiques, these chapters examine how precisely these histories, though not only these, were intertwined with discourse about Europe in some of the city’s spaces.

Chapter 1 takes as its point of departure the critic George Steiner’s citation of the café as an essential marker of the idea of Europe. It then reviews the café’s place in Paris as part of an image of European cosmopolitanism and as a forum in which discourse about Europe was produced. It then considers the implications of the centrality of the café for non-European Parisian residents given the institution’s putative quintessential Europeanness. Here particular attention is paid to Algerians and black Americans. Further, the serenity of the café is juxtaposed to the experience of violence that often underscored discourse about Europe, particularly in regard to the Algerian war of decolonisation and the Cold War. Finally, the chapter considers the function of the café in the image of Jean-Paul Sartre, and its connection to his output on the question of Europe.

Chapter 2 examines the connections between discourse about Europe and, in its broadest sense, the Parisian home. The reconfiguration of the urban space of the city in the wake of the experience of the Second World War, and its impact on the habitability of the city, is examined as an exercise that was undertaken with Europe as a guiding standard. The dual affective and concrete senses of home were particularly relevant in regard to the influx into metropolitan France of both European Algerians and Algerian Muslims. Europe and Europeanness are identified as key terms in the attempt to rationalise their absorption into Paris and to manage their accommodation. Europeanness is further explored as a term of ethnicisation of more and

less desirable inhabitants in the city, and which impacted especially on Algerian immigrants. Furthermore, discourses of Europeanness and non-Europeanness are analysed in terms of their application to devalue areas of the city populated particularly densely by these North Africans.

The Parisian street is examined as a Europeanising space in Chapter 3. Here the politics of street names is examined in relation to contemporary reflections on Europe, as are demonstrations and confrontations in the streets of the capital. Specifically, the reaction in Paris to the Soviet invasion of Budapest in 1956 and the notorious killings of some up to 200 unarmed Algerian demonstrators on 17 October 1961 are considered in terms of underlying convictions about the meaning of Europe and Europeanness. The Paris street wall is then examined as a forum on which graffiti denouncing this violence connected to wider concerns about justice as a defining element of Europe’s self-image.

The second section of the thesis comprises two chapters that look at political Europeanising spaces in Paris. Chapter 4 analyses the Mouvement socialiste des états-unis d’Europe (MSEUE). Founded in 1947 and based in Paris, this was an independent movement of socialists from throughout the continent. The point of departure of the chapter is the under-examined, ambiguous relationship between socialism broadly conceived, and ideas about Europe. The analysis picks up on the Movement’s attempts to advocate a coherent and viable political project of European integration within the guiding framework of socialist traditions, values, and aims in the context of the post-war world of Cold War and European imperial conflict.

Chapter 5 examines the Fédération des étudiants nationalistes (FEN). For this important and very visible far-right wing student group founded in 1960, Europe and its defence were
central terms of reference, even obsession. The group was active in French student politics, producing and distributing journals, contesting student representative positions, organising political meetings and demonstrations, and revelling in street fights. The FEN concerned itself with a whole range of subjects from trivial issues of student life to grand theories of hierarchy in world politics. Its brand of nationalism was located within a vision of an integral Europe. Indeed, a nation was reckoned to be a European privilege and the notion of non-European nationalisms was as outrageous as it was dangerous. As such, Europe was only of value to the group to the extent that it extended to the non-European world. Should decolonisation be carried to its conclusion and Europe reduced to its European geographical limits, Europe would be worth very little at all.

The third set of chapters looks at cultural Europeanising spaces in Paris. One should note that the distinction made in this thesis as a whole between chapters looking at political Europeanising spaces and those which examine cultural Europeanising spaces is principally an analytical differentiation. It is not intended to suggest that these categories are radically separable, or to imply a priori that actors within these categories were likely to formulate widely differing expressions of Europe. In fact, the politicisation of these cultural spaces in terms of Europe is precisely one of their notable characteristics.

Chapter 6 examines the cultural activities of Spanish exiles from Franco’s regime in the French capital in this period. It analyses a range of cultural groups and figures within this community, notably the writer Juan Goytisolo, Pablo Picasso, Jorge Semprún, and the cultural supplement of Solidaridad obrera – the important organ of the anarcho-syndicalist labour organisation, the Confederación nacional del trabajo. The chapter pays particular attention to the politicisation of the cultural activities of the exiles, and also how they drew from themes which
permeated Spanish history in particular, but were also timely to any consideration of contemporary Europe as a whole: quixotism; the relationship between civilisation, culture and violence; and the implications of discerning insiders and outsiders.

Chapter 7 looks at the ideas of Europe of the Orientalist Jacques Berque in this period of French decolonisation. It emphasises two events in particular: Berque’s inaugural Collège de France lecture in 1956, and his dialogue in the course of an evening at the Sorbonne in 1960 with one of the most distinguished Orientalists of the previous generation, Louis Massignon. The Collège de France lecture set out his vision of Europe and the Arab world and was a point of reference for all Berque’s future stances. The chapter examines Berque’s understanding of Europe in relation to the Arab world in relation to his vision of a Mediterranean community and his engagement with concepts such as rationalism, modernity, alienation, faith, justice, violence and reconciliation.

Chapter 8 considers the photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson and how Europe was represented or interpreted in his work. It looks at the contradictions, problems and capacities of the photographic medium for the representation of Europe, and how these corresponded with Cartier-Bresson’s political, social, and aesthetic commitments. To this end it examines three spaces and their reception by their Paris audiences: first, his exhibition at the Musée des arts décoratifs in the Louvre (1955), which displayed his work from both Europe and the non-European world. Second, it looks at Cartier-Bresson’s record of the culmination of the Chinese Civil War and its subsequent presentation in a collection of 1954 – D’une Chine à l’autre. This is contextualised in terms of the representation of Europe in terms of its Others. Third, it analyses his 1955 work Les Européens in which Cartier-Bresson’s impressions of his European travels were presented.