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Introduction by Charles S. Maier, Harvard University

All histories are provisional. Evidence is marshalled; conclusions are drawn; the temporal arc of the narrative is constructed from the perspective of the story’s end-point. For a history of developments still in progress this must continually change. A renowned British historian of France told me confidently at the time of the Maastricht treaty that we Americans had an old and ageing country, but that Europe was creating a young and vigorous one. Another British senior scholar and staunch champion of the European Union (EU) confided happily that her formerly insular compatriots were even calling themselves Europeans. Their claims seem premature today but may not remain so. No historian can know whether the EU will rebound from what observers see as a serious funk or decompose further.

Wilfried Loth believed as he was concluding his history of the European Union in 2015 that despite the difficulties then visible “the European dimension of identity will become more prominent in the European consciousness and that European society will become more articulate.” He was thinking primarily about the Euro crisis that Greek indebtedness had exposed—not about the migration issue that has become so urgent in addition—and he could still write that “the European community has more and more come to be understood as a community of values committed to pluralism and democratic freedoms, the rule of law, human rights, and the protection of minorities” (436-437). That achievement seems shakier today; the vigor of anti-Brussels populism and the challenges of migration from the Middle East and the southern shore of the Mediterranean had hardly surfaced as this book was completed.

Loth has written a success story. Buoyed by a sense of progress that has since fallen into question, the author has provided a detailed narrative of European Union institution-building from its origins to what seemed like quasi-confederation. As the reviewers agree, the book remains invaluable as a linear history of sixty years of complex negotiations. It will be a historians’ and policy makers’ reference; it is hardly told as a gripping tale—but then the story of agricultural policy and structural funds and other intricate elite policy compromises is unlikely to offer the drama of the run-up to World War I or World War II. Loth does his best to illuminate the major challenges to the project: French President Charles de Gaulle’s nationalism, or British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s stubbornness, as well as the great leaps forward, whether in the 1950s or late 1980s. But crises overcome are less dramatic than those that are mortal. The relative dullness of EU history during long stretches of its existence reveals the success of the project. Granted, if the structure decomposes a new history would have to search out residual contributions to the failure—whether the monetary project, the reaction to open borders, excessive regulation, perhaps the same notes transposed from a major to a minor scale.

The three reviews that follow here agree on the value of Loth’s book and concur further that it is a history from the top down, focusing on the European civil servants and national policy-makers who have consistently negotiated the institutional and monetary projects. This has long been a common lament about the European project itself—it is supposedly a construction of elites unsupported by stubbornly national masses. For Shirley Williams the “democratic deficit,” remained the major flaw; to simplify Joseph Weiler’s formulation there was no European demos to justify democratic federation. ¹ But these were old laments. The Parliament has steadily

¹ See Shirley Williams, “Sovereignty and Accountability in the European Community,” Political Quarterly 61:3 (July 1990): 299-317; For Joseph H.H. Weiler’s critique of EU normative claims with respect to the lack of an underlying demos, see among his many interventions on legal underpinnings of the Union, “The Reformation of
increased its institutional role since the Maastricht and Lisbon treaties. And gradually a *demos* is emerging perhaps not ethnically but through common institutions and referenda. Unfortunately this emerging *demos* is very divided about the claims of the Union. On the other hand, when grouped according to interest and not just some elusive identity, there is overwhelming support: students have gained from a very impressive program of exchanges, farmers have been saved from the impoverishment of the interwar years, workers have received social protection, capitalists have gained most of all, perhaps so much as to unbalance the overall pattern of rewards. Those Europeans who have opted to remain in poorer or stagnating regions have received massive subsidies.

Agreeing on Loth’s elite focus, the reviewers here have nonetheless each emphasized a different European project inherent in the history of the EU. Antonio Varsori, an international historian at the University of Padua, adheres closest to issues of historiography. Varsori focuses on the progress of scholarship, which by now has itself spanned a half century and he places Loth in the linear tradition of this history, which he starts with Walter Lipgens (Loth’s mentor) who contributed early massive studies of the ideas behind European integration.  

Indeed it is worth recalling the major steps of the scholarly enterprise that Varsori all too briefly summarizes. The ideas for European union had a long pedigree which Lipgens lovingly traced including plans of European Resistance leaders for federation, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s early postwar pleas for a united Western Europe, then French leader Jean Monnet’s project for subjecting French and German coal and steel production to a supranational authority that led to the Schuman Plan of May 1950. This innovative idea powerfully contributed to the happy notion that the successive avatars of the project—the Coal and Steel Community negotiated between 1950 and 1953, the European Economic Community (EEC, then EC) forged between the Messina Conference and the Treaties of Rome (1955-1957), then the full European Union agreed on by the Treaty of Maastricht and the Lisbon Treaty (1992-2010)—prevented a new war in Western Europe by avoiding the clash of an embittered resurgent Germany and a vengeful France. In fact, the Cold War division of Germany and of Europe and the passage of decisive military power to the United States and the Soviet Union foreclosed a revived Franco-German conflict from the outset, even if the traumatic memories of 1938-1945 (and of 1914-1918) were always there to lend the European project a mythic aura from the outset.

More relevant than the ancient rivalries that Europe was celebrated as solving were the achievements that the EEC, then its successors, the EC and the EU, did rack up; and these were emphasized by political scientists earlier than historians. Ernst Haas and others discerned the role of functional “spill-overs,” of which Monnet was well aware: that is, the very solution of one problem—assuring France, say, of an adequate supply of German coal—was necessarily going to provoke others (whether disparity of wages and social costs or logistics)

European Constitutionalism,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 35:1 (March 1997): 97-131, esp. 112-118. Weiler has since gone on to criticize the EU’s unwillingness to acknowledge its historic Christian normative roots.

that required ever more legislative interventions in the market.³ Andrew Moravcsik’s major study, *The Choice for Europe*, as Varsori points out, focused on the key role of protecting French agriculture as De Gaulle’s motive for intensifying institutional collaboration.⁴ Alan Milward, who directed European Union studies at the European University Institute for many years and later wrote the official history of Britain’s early unsuccessful negotiations for accession, consistently revealed how the European agreements solved particular national problems for the treaty signatories—progress emerged because the agreements were positive zero-sum games.⁵

Most recently historians have returned to interpret the early postwar notions for European federation, such as those by Churchill, and the establishment of such early institutions as the Council of Europe, with its human rights court in Strasbourg, as the ideological achievement of conservatives who understood that the international arena could be used to hold off the forces of socialism and the left. (Similarly, historians have recently explored how the codification of international human-rights law in the late 1940s and 1950s sprang from analogous motivation).⁶ Such a political take on the EU had never been absent from political commentary: British Labour leaders were long suspicious of the EEC as led by Christian Democrats (Robert Schuman, Alcide de Gasperi, Konrad Adenauer) as an instrument designed to contain any socialist enthusiasms on the left. Until the rise of so-called ‘social Europe’—with the filling out of welfare and rights provisions under the aegis of the European treaties—this remained an analytical and political concern.

For Michael Geary, who has focused on Ireland’s and Britain’s relationship inside and outside the Union, the British-EU relationship remains a primary focus. His review admirably follows the expository development of Loth’s book, rightly stressing that it emphasizes issues of steps toward monetary and political union. Geary is generous and thorough. He strikingly states (albeit with a bit of rhetorical self-contradiction) that while Loth’s book was written during one of the “frequent lover’s quarrels” between London and Brussels, he was reviewing the volume at the moment Britain had voted to leave the EU “after a 43-year loveless marriage.” Geary would have preferred that Loth’s book give more weight to Britain’s half-century of resistance to the supranational elements that characterized the EU experiment from the Schuman Plan on. Not surprisingly he has made this theme his own and he is currently writing a history of the cross-Channel affair (to prolong his metaphor), which was charged with enough desire to consummate but stormy enough to finally break down. Or at least for now: most observers, and many Brits as well deeply regret the rupture. Aside from the

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economic advantages and the cosmopolitan gains for such domains as cuisine and higher education that Britain reaped, continental members benefited from the skilled civil-service tradition the islanders brought to the Commission and administration of the EU.

Foregrounding the problematic British role, as Geary does, leads to issues that he recognizes are not central for Loth. Britain’s singular standoffishness reflected two major wagers, whose riskiness London’s rhetoric often masked. The first, early on, was its waning imperial power; the second was its illusory belief that it enjoyed particular influence over Washington—the so-called special relationship. Britain long hesitated on surrendering its Commonwealth trade prerogatives to the EU: privileged access to New Zealand mutton and butter somehow assumed an importance equal to the positive opportunities of a continental market. Having to deal with the French and Germans on equal footing, when London might be Washington’s privileged tutor also seemed a bad bargain. Geary points out that Loth privileges the narrow construction of EU arrangements over the wider framework of decolonization within which they took place. Loth might also have showed what a dead-end the alternatives to the EU were. Although Washington remained a faithful ally against the Soviets (despite German fears at times especially under Federal Republic Chancellor Helmut Schmidt), it was hardly a faithful upholder of European empire: viz. Suez, Indochina, and Algeria. The later mutual admiration of Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan was hardly a substitute; the Brits got some intel to help with the reconquest of the Falklands. Even today, it is hard not to believe that carried away by a Euroskeptic revolt within the Conservative Party (which David Cameron lamentably failed to appreciate), the British are renouncing their important role within Europe (where they functioned to extract major gains) for a quite unrealistic calculation of supposed sovereignty, demographic immunity from migration, and global financial leadership. Brexit is a tragedy, and not merely from any material calculus—these can be measured to give any desired outcome—but the creation of what has been Europe’s singular non-material achievement, a cadre of young people with broad horizons. (Admittedly one needed to offset the singular failure to offer young migrants and uneducated the prospect of escape from social ghettoization.)

Irwin Wall’s quite brilliant review offers another suggestive counter-narrative to Loth’s. Wall contextualizes EU developments within the Euro-American relationship and the Cold War, a framework that allows an astute analysis of the long years from the 1960s until the mid-1980s marked by the first enlargement and the construction of a far-reaching agricultural policy, but also by the frustration of Gaullist plans for a French dominated political unit. As Wall argues, the Franco-German tandem on which the Gaullist vision for the EU rested was bound to be frustrated on two counts. Adenauer’s Germany was not going to sacrifice the security that the American alliance (NATO) provided, even if the French wanted a political directorate and offered the Fouchet Plan for greater unity. Neither were Prime Minister Guy Mollet nor de Gaulle, until late in the day, prepared to renounce a French imperial role. The constellation changed with the more left governments of the late 1960s and 1970s. For Wall the traditional opposition of Right and Left, manifested since the 1980s by neo-liberalism and social democracy, remains as important for understanding EU and international history as they do for domestic political events. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and German Chancellor Willy Brandt distrusted each other’s ambitions, but détente and Ostpolitik tended toward the same goals in practice. As Wall reminds us, the Helsinki process and the German-German and German-Soviet treaties of 1969-1972 reaffirmed the Soviet hold in Eastern Europe (how was it really to be challenged in any case until the system went into crisis a decade later?) but encouraged the percolation of dissident ideas. And as Wall emphasizes, the advance of the European project with Maastricht followed as a counter-weight to German unification, itself a consequence of the abandonment of Soviet domination of the era Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev had sought to secure through Helsinki.
The implications of these reviews outrun their explicit content. They rightly stress the virtues of Loth’s book, which does follow the projects for European construction. But they also hint at the importance of approaches that Loth has not emphasized, which tend to involve the global framework conditions for the success and limits of the EU. The most consequential choice that the author made was not that of focusing on elites at the cost of reporting on some vague wider public. That concentration was a logical consequence of following the processes by which Europeans achieved integration and who was around the table. It was reinforced by the relative disinterest (recognized by Loth) of voting publics. More decisive for the shape of the book was Loth’s underlying treat to Europe’s choices as largely Europe’s alone. I raise this point not to criticize a very solid historical achievement, but to suggest alternative perspectives that might have been developed. To discuss the CAP as a European compromise without considering the ramifications on what we used to call the Third World—the agrarian emerging economies—is to adopt a very internalist perspective. Lomé and Doha are both missing in this book. To consider the European economic achievements without reflecting on the military balance, including nuclear deterrence, is also a partial story. As Loth certainly understands, and as German Chancellor Helmut Kohl understood in 1989-1990, Germany had to be self-restrained for the EU to function. The achievement of keeping Germany a non-nuclear power for so many decades while Britain and France possessed their own deterrents has been a major if tacit achievement of European politics. Loth discusses European security policy at various points, in particular with reference to the Kosovo intervention and the provisions of the Nice agreements in 2000. He suggests that whatever progress on a common security policy was made tended to delegate powers such that the democratic deficit only intensified. (371) But acknowledgment that the European Union has hitherto not really developed a major security force, despite repeated policy promises, would be more fundamental a finding than citing numerous resolutions. It would also lead to sustained reflection on what sort of entity the EU remains and is likely to be.

Loth’s book is likely to remain an authoritative chronicle of the EU’s institutional history. Readers owe him a great debt for following so many diverse issues in so many countries for so many years. But assessing the historical significance of the European Union will still benefit from taking account of the wider force field of global politics and economics—the end of European empire, the ascendancy of the United States during an era when there seemed little alternative (indeed the U.S. was nurturing European unity as an instrument of its own leadership), and today the turmoil within the less materially favored countries that produces immigrant pressure. Can Europe—so wealthy, so disparate—become a force for world leadership or must it remain a structure that coheres only in the face of global pressures that it will try to respond to but fail to influence? For the moment, the tensions between the east and west of the Union, between the more liberal and the more populist, as well as the loss of Britain, are not encouraging. The danger is less breakup than irrelevance. But the founding Treaty of Rome will be sixty this spring. There is a heartening record to build on.

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**Irwin Wall** is Professor Emeritus, University of California, Riverside, and Visiting Scholar, New York University. His most recent book is *France Votes: the Election of Francois Hollande* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). His current project is a history of detente in the cold war during the 1970s.
The cover of the English version of Wilfried Loth’s impressive history of the European Union depicts Jacques Delors, then European Commission President, embracing the adoration of over-excited school children waving EU flags. It is an image of happier times for a project that Loth examines in his detailed account of the origins and development of the integration process. Without doubt, Delors, a former French finance minister in the early 1980s, was one of the key architects of the major developments in that process from the middle of that decade onwards; it is next to impossible to imagine a similar scene today in light of the many crises affecting the EU and the public’s skepticism towards many who are leading that project. The Delors period is only one of many that the author captures as he takes the reader on a sixty-year journey through the many ups and downs of the ‘unification’ process.

Building Europe is a welcome addition to the rather limited literature on the integration project, especially the canon that adopts more of a macro-level perspective on postwar Europe’s attempts at recovery after 1945. The result is remarkable as the book spans the entire period with a solid balance of depth in each section giving the reader as detailed an account as is possible for book like this. Loth adopts a predictable yet sensible chronological approach to his subject. Beginning with the earlier ideas on ‘European Union’ in the immediate post-1945 period, the book moves decade by decade, between crisis and compromise, until it reaches the sovereign debt crisis of the late 2000s. For the expert and the uninitiated alike, the author brings to life some of the defining moments that have shaped today’s EU including French President Charles de Gaulle’s vision for France and Europe, Britain’s erratic approach to Europe before and after accession to the then European Communities, the early efforts at monetary union, the tension between NATO and the Community’s lack of a foreign policy, treaty reform and inconvenient Irish ‘No’ votes and finally the Greeks and the sovereign debt crisis.

Although the book was written during a period when the British-EU relationship was going through one of its frequent lover’s quarrels, this review is being penned after Britain voted to leave the EU after a 43-year loveless marriage. It is impossible not to read the pages of the book without heavily reflecting on many aspects of that relationship. Indeed, the prologue to Building Europe could easily reflect the last couple of years of Brussels-London relations rather than capturing the period of the late 1940s, as they do, and the difficulty both domestically and within foreign policy to shifting sovereignty to a supranational entity. The story of how Britain tried successfully to water down the supranational elements to the Council of Europe is well known but now has added significance. Indeed, historicizing British-European relations makes the referendum decision to leave the EU less difficult to explain or understand, at least for historians.

Moreover, what the book’s prologue also makes clear, albeit without any sense of critical analysis, is the elite, top-down nature to the origins and development of European integration. What is absent is the will of the demos. The only survey mentioned is of European parliamentarians, the results of which, before the Hague Congress, are rather disappointing. Yet, the prologue nicely brings to the surface not only the challenges that political elites faced after World War Two but how many of these challenges are manifesting themselves in other ways today. These include Britain’s reluctance over Europe, the role of elites and the gulf between elites and the general public, the continued legitimacy of the nation-state, the nature and future direction of Europe post-crisis, and the role of Germany within the integration process.
The first substantive chapter in this political history of European integration traces the process from 1948 through to the late 1950s with the creation of the European Economic and Atomic Energy Communities. A number of key issues presented by Loth are worth examining. First is the assumption, not based on any solid evidence, that Germany would resurface from the depths of destruction and once again dominate Europe unless some plan was put in place to deal with the ‘German question.’ This fear was very real, at least for many in France, even if it was not wholly shared by its wartime allies, Britain and the United States. The sense of urgency that Loth outlines, along with the need to kick-start the French economy, were driving forces behind the emergence of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). But what the first chapter nicely captures is how the legacy of the war was interpreted quite differently by European states. Britain, France, Italy, and the Benelux each had their own narrative; the Scandinavians too are part of this story yet decidedly remained aloof. British politicians, like Ernest Bevin and Winston Churchill, played domestic politics with Europe. Indeed, it would have been refreshing had Loth critically assessed Churchill’s real motivations in advocating for further European integration while in opposition. Additionally, London was also developing economic and political interests elsewhere, especially across the Atlantic, an early indication of things to come.

Some of the Continental European states, and individuals like Jean Monnet writing from Washington, DC and clearly influenced by his surroundings, advanced a narrative, largely unchallenged, that only institutions could save Europe from the horrors of another war. That narrative gained traction. First came the Council of Europe, shorn of any supranational character by the British. Then came the real split. The creation of the ECSC in 1950 saw Britain retreat from involvement in European integration and the six Western European states, driven by national self interests and a desire to control West Germany advance forward. Yet, as Loth makes clear, it was not only the British who had issues about losing sovereignty; France too balked when it came to finally supporting the European Defence Community (EDC), a good example of not only putting the national interest first but also highlighting the importance of the Cold War arena in shaping outcomes within the integration process. Yet, an important irony not fully exploited by Loth was that the failure of the EDC plan ultimately meant NATO’s survival as Western Europe’s protector and the end to realistic efforts in the subsequent decades at forging a real and meaningful European foreign policy, a third force.

Chapters two and three deal with perhaps one of the most exciting decades of the project, the 1960s. Here, Loth examines not only the dynamics of building the EEC, the challenges from French President Charles de Gaulle and the reemergence of political and defence ideas in the Fouchet Plans (a de Gaulle-inspired initiative that aimed to put more power in the hands of the member states) but also the crises that began to rock the integration project. The British applications to join the Community are examined although there is no focus on the other three applicants other than mention of their relationship to London’s application. Nevertheless, the chapters touch upon, largely in quick chronological fashion, relations between France and Germany, the Commission and the Court of Justice, efforts at developing the Customs Union, special interest and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the politically sensitive British application and the ‘empty-chair’ crisis of 1965 when France left the Council of Ministers for six months. British applications are given sufficient attention notwithstanding the shadow they cast over the Community during that decade and de Gaulle’s refusal to lift his veto. Equally, Loth manages to include a good overview of the ‘empty-chair’ crisis given the even problems linked to voting mechanisms and decision-making that it caused the Community during the decades that followed.

The completion of the Common Market coincided with the first Community enlargement of Britain, Denmark and Ireland and the subsequent British referendum on whether to remain a member two years later in 1975, which Loth delves into in chapter four. Far more attention, though, is given to early efforts at
developing a Community monetary system. And although it failed to launch in the 1970s, it proved to be a useful blueprint for economic and monetary union (EMU) efforts in the 1990s. The issue of EMU is taken up again in chapters five and six as Loth examines integration during the late 1970s through to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Here, he masterfully packs in the many challenges that the Community faced including the launch of the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979, the same year that witnessed Margaret Thatcher’s arrival on the European stage as British Prime Minister (a topic Loth does not spend too much time on), further Community enlargement to include Greece, Spain and Portugal, the EC’s role in détente and the road to Maastricht with the signing of the Single European Act in 1986. Much of the integration narrative in these chapters is told from a troubling Franco-German perspective which leads the reader to conclude that no other actors played a role in navigating the integration process during this period and that Thatcher was simply wrong in her attacks on the creeping nature of the Brussels bureaucracy.

Unsurprisingly, treaty reform and EU enlargement feature prominently in chapters seven, eight and nine, as Loth explores the 1990s and 2000s through to the Lisbon Treaty and sovereign debt crisis. Here too, the Franco-German axis weighs heavily on the narrative and on the sources the author exploits. Nevertheless, Loth skillfully presents the broad overview of how the integration process developed in the face of further eastward expansion and the dynamics of trying to perfect the EU’s treaty framework to accommodate such a rapid expansion. The last three chapters will serve as a very important introduction to the last two crucial decades of integration development that witnessed not only the ‘big bang’ enlargement in 2004 but the introduction of the single currency, the ‘Euro’, the constitutional crisis of 2005 and the further rise of Euroscepticism in many of the founding EU member states. In his conclusions, Loth reflects that Prime Minister David Cameron’s 2013 announcement to hold a referendum might well see Britain completely withdraw from the EU; a prescient observation in light of the June 2016 referendum result. Yet, despite ending the book on a rather optimistic note, that the ‘Euro’ crisis might strengthen the Community consciousness, he fails to consider what impact ‘Brexit’ might have on the integration process and more significantly what medium to long-term impact German-imposed austerity will have on this, perhaps, imagined European consciousness.

The book’s rapid movement from the 1940s to the late 2000s is made possible by Loth’s exploitation of a rich array of primary and secondary sources; this is one of the book’s main strengths. It is a thoroughly well researched history of the origins and evolution of the integration process. For students of the European Union’s history, the wide breadth of references used will serve as an important tool in furthering their own research and understanding what has already been accomplished by other scholars.

More broadly, the book underscores that old saying: those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. The tensions between the supranational and national levels have been simmering since the 1940s with various tools used, more recently, to deal with them, like variable geometry or differentiated integration. Britain’s decision to leave the EU will certainly test the strength and character of the process amid continuing and persistent questioning about the future of the integration project.

For all the positives about this book, and there are many, it remains a diplomatic history of a process told from the level of heads of State and government. Loth does allude to other dynamics at play in the construction of the EU, including the role of the EU Court of Justice, business interests, the agriculture sector and other non-governmental actors; this is not the macro-history to tell their story. Nor does the book delve, in any critical sense, into the policies that the process is built upon, like the CAP and the negative aspects of that policy. Instead, the narrative that emerges in these pages is how relations between prime ministers and
presidents forged ever-closer union from the late 1940s onwards, the challenges and crises they faced along the way, and the efforts at overcoming these, sometimes with mixed results.

There is also has a very strong Franco-German thread running through the book even after the EU had expanded, first in 1973 and continuously in each decade thereafter. While other state actors are introduced post-1973, the narrative remains somewhat stuck in a geopolitical time warp of Bonn/Berlin-Paris relations. Seldom does the reader discover what role, if any, smaller states had on this process of unification other than the problems they brought to the negotiating table in Brussels. Indeed, the use of the word 'unification' in the title has strong connotations with that Franc-German tandem and it begs the question about the relevancy of that word in light of the events recounted by Loth in the last two chapters.

Additionally, very little mention is made of the process of decolonization or of the Cold War, two seminal events that have left important and sizeable footprints on European integration. This book is about high politics, the interactions between the main post-war European actors.

Despite this, Building Europe is an excellent, authoritative account of Europe’s rise from the ashes after World War Two and its efforts at navigating some kind of ever-closer union between nation states in the six decades that followed.
Historians’ interest in the European integration as an autonomous process dates back to the 1970s, when the U.S. and British archives made available their records for the second half of the 1940s. During the 1980s and the 1990s this branch of Europe’s history was characterized by a sharp increase in the number of studies, articles, and research projects, which also owed much to the determined effort by the European institutions, especially the European Commission, to favor the strengthening of the ‘European Studies’ through an effective university policy, which relied on funds and programs such as the Socrates/Erasmus, the Jean Monnet Action, the former favoring university students mobility all over Europe, the latter aiming at the creation, through co-financing by the EU, of university chairs in the various areas of the European Studies, etc. Although historians were the ‘Cinderella’ in achieving the EC/EU support, in particular when compared with jurists, economists, and political scientists, by the 1990s the ‘History of the European Integration’ began to be perceived as an autonomous branch in the general fields of international relations and Contemporary Europe; moreover, chairs of the History of the European Integration began to flourish in most western European universities. The early studies on this historical phenomenon owed very much to the initiatives and influence of some well-known French historians of the Pierre Renouvin/Jean-Baptiste Duroselle school of the ‘Histoire des relations internationals,’ in particular René Girault, as well as to the interpretations by the British economic historian Alan S. Milward. In spite of that, for some time this new history was negatively influenced by two serious shortcomings: on the one hand, most scholars appeared to limit their attention on the ‘European policy’ pursued by single European states, such as France, West Germany, Italy, etc.; on the other hand some historians were unable to disentangle their works from a strongly biased pro-integrationist stand. Especially the latter factor led to a sort of ‘teleological’, if not ‘Manichaean’ approach to the topic of their studies. With the beginning of the present century and the emerging of a new generation of younger scholars, the history of the European integration has experienced some relevant change: the attention is focused more and more on the ‘European’ side of the integration process, that is the EC/EU institutions, policies, actors, etc.; furthermore there has been a growing specialization and an increasing tendency towards a dialogue with the social sciences, especially political science, which appears to offer general interpretations of a phenomenon which is still in progress, although during the last few years it is experiencing one of its most serious crises.

In this context, and in contrast with other ‘histories’, such as Cold War History, in spite of the amount of research and of the number of available first-hand archival sources, the general histories of the integration process are comparatively few. Obviously, we do not lack useful textbooks for university courses, but few historians have appeared desirous of undertaking a study that would offer not only a general view of the events which form seventy years of European integration, but also would represent thoughtful interpretations that would deal with such a process in a long-term perspective. It is not surprising that one of the few attempts to that end has been the work *The Choice for Europe. Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, by Andrew Moravcsik, a political scientist in the United States.1

At last an historian has decided to face such a challenge. To a certain extent it may be said that this was an almost obvious decision. Wilfried Loth, the author of *Building Europe*, was as a young scholar a disciple of one of the early historians of the integration process, Walter Lippens; later on he was ‘present at the creation’, when in the 1980s scholars such as René Girault, Raymond Poidevin, Alan Milward, etc. started their interest

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Loth was one of the founding members of the liaison committee of historians of contemporary Europe at the EU Commission, a Jean Monnet chair, one of the promoters of almost all the major research projects dealing with the history of the European integration, etc. Nevertheless, he has not limited his interest to the history of the European integration and he is regarded as a distinguished historian of the Cold War, as well as of contemporary Germany.

At first glance Loth’s volume seems to be characterized by a traditional approach. The author aims at offering to the reader a narrative of the whole integration process since its origins in the second half of the 1940s until today. In this effort, he is helped by his deep knowledge of scholarly research, which, although prominently published in English and in French, offers important contributions in other languages, especially German and Italian. In the early pages of his book Loth singles out “four driving forces,” which in his opinion favored the launching of the European project in the second half of the 1940s: (1) the need to find a formula of international stability in a continent which had been plagued by two world wars, (2) the need to find a stable solution for the ‘German question,’ (3) the need to create a viable and sound European economic system which could satisfy all the economic and social forces, (4) the need for the European nations to find an autonomous role apart from the two emerging non-European super-powers, the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

In the following pages the author, also on the basis of his deep experience as a Cold-War historian, points out that the original aspiration at creating a European ‘third force’ was limited to the achievement of the construction of a unified Western Europe, a goal which was largely influenced by the East-West confrontation and by the development of the U.S. policy towards the European continent.

It would be useless to follow in detail Loth’s reconstruction of the development of the European project since the ‘turning point’ represented by the Schuman Plan and the creation of the so-called functionalist approach developed by Jean Monnet. France and West Germany were, according to Loth, the main ‘actors,’ and his analysis of the 1950s and the 1960s rests on solid ground, which owes on one hand to Loth’s experience as a researcher, on the other to the presence of a series of previously published thoughtful and detailed studies. Beginning with the 1970s the author dealt with topics that were partially or completely new. In his interpretation of the developments and changes which characterized the European construction, Loth appears to point out the important role played by some external factors, both in the economic field, such as the crisis of the 1970s or the triumph of the neo-liberal doctrine during the 1980s, and in the political context, from the ‘détente’ to the new Cold War to the end of the confrontation between East and West. European integration, especially its most relevant achievements of the Delors era, thus appears to have been the consequence of an adaptation by European leaders, especially the French and the West Germans, to the changes which took place in the international context. An aspect on which the author has focused his attention is the evolution of the European institutions, especially since the Single European Act onwards (271-322).

In his last chapters Wilfried Loth deals in detail with the period which followed the signature and implementation of the Maastricht Treaty. In such a context, he has been able to offer a convincing historical approach to topics that are usually dealt with by economists and political scientists. His pages on the causes of
the most recent crisis of the EU, from the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty to the financial/economic plight, are of much interest. In order to explain the difficulties of today’s European project he points out the growing gap between the European/Europeanist élite and the public opinions of several member states, as well as the imbalance caused by France’s growing weakness opposed to Germany’s economic strength. In spite of this, in his conclusion Loth appears mildly optimistic about the future of the EU and he believes that if the economic crisis is overcome there will a weakening of the euro-skeptical tendencies which have become stronger in several member states (372-440). The volume was completed before the emergence of the new crisis due to the wave of immigrants and refugees towards Europe, which is contributing to the fortunes of the euro-skeptical movements. Nevertheless, Loth is right in pointing out that for half a century the success of the European construction was closely tied to the belief of the European public that some form of integration favored a balanced economic growth and the safeguard of the ‘welfare state’ and democratic principles. So, the fate of the EU may still be bright if the European élites are able to find out the right mix among a liberal economy, the ‘welfare’ tradition, and the advancement of democratic ideals.

Wilfried Loth’s volume can be regarded as a relevant contribution to the knowledge of a phenomenon which has shaped the last seventy years of European history and for some time it will certainly be a point of reference to be quoted by the historians who deal not only with the European integration but with the history of contemporary Europe.
Wilfried Loth has written a lucid, comprehensive, and finely crafted narrative history of the European Union (EU) from its origins in the chaos of the immediate postwar years through 2015. The EU, of course, is, has been, and always will be a work in progress, and as it goes through what is perhaps today the worst of the crises that have continuously accompanied its construction, it is particularly useful to have a volume that so admirably tries to put that crisis in perspective. As we contemplate the centripetal forces that seem to threaten the EU with disintegration today, from Brexit to Grexit (the possible exits of Britain and Greece), the anti-European nationalist movements that are mushrooming in so many of the member states, and the serious threats to democracy in two of the EU’s most recent but important members, Poland and Hungary, we can find some solace in Loth’s summary of the operative forces that have in the past pushed Europe toward Union and continue to do so today. These are Europe’s need for internal peace, its corresponding need to find a solution to the ‘German question,’ the economic imperative of a unitary market that permits the development of economies of scale, and the elusive quest for a way for Europe to assert itself, its interests, and its values in a multi-polar world dominated by powers the size of the United States, Russia, and China. The EU has thus far admirably solved the first three of these dilemmas: it has lived through 70 years of relative peace, integrated Germany for the most part in eminently acceptable ways, and provided a framework for Europe’s capitalist elites to compete against one another and in the global economy. The European Union has also managed to project a kind of ‘soft’ power, pursuing peacekeeping and humanitarian operations around the globe. But it lacks as yet a common defense or foreign policy, leaving the former in the hands of NATO and the U.S., and the latter to the rival and often petty egos of its individual states and leaders.

Loth eschews theory for a pragmatic approach to his subject. He rejects none of the prevailing theories. He gives the founders their due (Monnet, Schuman, Adenauer, De Gasperi) but he respects Alan Milward’s insistence that unity emerged from the recognition of the member states that only by pooling some aspects of their sovereignty could they preserve themselves.¹ He follows Andrew Moravcsik in delineating the economic motivations that led to the historic clashes between the members, and John Gillingham in emphasizing their common debt to the economic theories of ordo-Liberalism (today neo-Liberalism).² But perhaps the most remarkable thread in his approach is his assumption that his four impulses toward unity continuously asserted themselves through the many disputes and crises that accompanied Europe’s construction. All of Europe’s political class, according to Loth, however reluctant they were to advance toward pooled sovereignty and supra-nationality, eventually ended up doing so. Europe emerged by consensus. In Loth’s telling even French President Charles de Gaulle and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, nationalists both, nevertheless deserve to be considered good Europeans.


Monnet’s fertile mind and endless quest for a unitary Europe earned him the appellation of ‘father of Europe,’ but the Coal and Steel community also emerged from the American-imposed reconstruction of the German economy and the European Defense Community (EDC) from the American insistence on German rearmament. The French in the end failed to ratify the EDC because it was inconsistent with their colonial policies and because the Americans abandoned them after the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. Loth recognizes the American role in European construction too, but I am not sure he emphasizes enough how Washington gave Europe the impulse toward unity as it assisted in its reconstruction, nor does he fully recognize the importance of the Americans in the negative sense; if Prime Minister Guy Mollet in 1956 went ahead with the Treaty of Rome it was because the Americans stopped the British and the French in their tracks during the Suez crisis in 1956. Adenauer was in Paris as this happened and shared Mollet’s fury at what the Americans had done, while a tidal wave of anti-Americanism swept France thereafter, leading Mollet to look to a United Europe as a way to escape smothering American policies. He embraced France’s quest to be a nuclear power and he intensified the Algerian war, looking to Germany to provide the funds both for atomic fuel enrichment in Euratom and in the development of Eurafrica, of which Algeria, after its rebellion was crushed, was meant to become the lynchpin.

Readers may be surprised to find even de Gaulle treated as a good European in Loth’s book. If the French leader regarded the European Commission in Brussels a ‘Tower of Babel,’ he was eager to establish European Political Cooperation, and in the long run, one may argue, it is his vision of a ‘Europe of States’ that has prevailed in the EU, whose policies are determined to this day by the European Council in which Heads of State and Foreign and Defense ministers of the member states consult one another regularly. De Gaulle tried to launch this system in the early 1960s, and while he was able to enlist the Germans in his view he was strongly resisted by the Benelux countries while the Italians remained ambivalent. Loth ignores, however, that the French were involved in a genocidal colonial war in Algeria during these years; not only did the French leader present a rather unattractive perspective to his partners, herding Algerians into virtual concentration camps and implicitly inviting his European partners to join with him in his repression, but it was also clear to the smaller countries that the Franco-German tandem was likely to run rough-shod over the rest. European Political Cooperation with de Gaulle also seemed to mean acquiescing in de Gaulle’s policies of disparaging the Commission, rejecting supra-nationalism or even federalism, and building a “‘Europe of States’ under his domination. Not to mention his explicit anti-Americanism. That de Gaulle looked unkindly at prospective British membership in the Common Market at this juncture was yet another reason for the pro-British Dutch and Belgians to reject his policies. And when the Adenauer finally signed on to de Gaulle’s vision in the Elysée treaty of January 1963, the Bundestag responded by severely limiting its prospects and clearly putting Germany’s relationship with the United States first.

Loth provides a balanced picture of the ‘Empty Chair’ crisis in which de Gaulle suspended participation in the further development of the EEC until his partners agreed to the retention of the individual states’ veto power in the European Council, and more importantly for France, the completion of the Common Agricultural Policy. Both of these concessions were unavoidable, and masked the fact that de Gaulle’s return to cooperation within the EEC was dictated by his failure to get a majority in France on the first ballot of the 1965 presidential elections and the resistance within his administration to the more extreme of his policies. These included the eventual cessation of French membership in NATO’s integrated command, opposition to the American war in Vietnam, and détente with the USSR. De Gaulle further managed to veto British membership in the EEC yet again in 1967, but his policies rather ignominiously collapsed when the French repudiated his rule first on the barricades in May 1968 and then in his failed referendum on worker
‘participation’ in the French economy in 1969. In the interval between these events the Russians destroyed de Gaulle’s détente by invading Czechoslovakia and squelching the Prague spring.

As de Gaulle was bowing out, however, German Chancellor Willy Brandt was picking up the succession as he ushered in the German Ostpolitik. Unlike de Gaulle, Brandt tacitly accepted the Brezhnev doctrine and the Russian assertion of control over the Eastern bloc. The Americans again played a negative role here; Brandt, like de Gaulle, saw no benefits in the Kennedy-Johnson flexible response policies. Tactical nuclear weapons as well as intercontinental strategic arms would destroy life in the small countries of Europe making détente in Europe a matter of simple survival. President Richard Nixon and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger clearly preferred the German Christian Democrats to Brandt’s SPD, and if there were to be détente with Moscow it was Kissinger who meant to orchestrate it, not Brandt. All this made it imperative for Brandt to make the Ostpolitik palatable to his European Economic Commission (EEC) partners. He was helped in this by British Prime Minister Edward Heath, the most European of British statesmen, and by French President Georges Pompidou, who, in part fearful of what Brandt might do, eagerly embraced British entry into the EEC so as to have an ally against Germany if needed. But all together, the EEC, now nine instead of six, with Danish and Irish entry alongside the UK, embraced Brandt’s policy of engaging Moscow in its quest for an all-European settlement in the talks leading to the Helsinki accords from 1973 to 1975.

The Helsinki agreement was under-estimated at the time; in fact it was a landmark in the end of the Cold War that occurred a scant 14 years later. I wish Loth had dwelled on those negotiations a bit more, because they provided as well an invaluable example of how a united Europe might in fact have permanently thereafter learned to function. Never before or since has the EEC or the EU jointly managed negotiations and a common foreign policy so adroitly and successfully; never since has there been so successful an example of European Political Cooperation. The nine met separately to coordinate their policies so as to negotiate as one among the 35 nations present, and while meeting Russia’s security needs in Europe and negotiating the terms for economic cooperation and trade between the blocs, they also insisted on a human rights ‘basket’ that was incorporated into the Helsinki agreement and provided the basis for dissidents to undermine the communist regimes in the 1980s, opening the way to communism’s collapse. To be sure, nobody anticipated this outcome in 1975. But it was crucial for Brandt to secure Russian recognition, too, of the possibility of the peaceful unification of Germany. Helsinki made political unity in Europe an all the more impressive achievement because if the EEC was formed for political reasons, its success in the 1960s had been primarily economic. And again, when transformation to a European Union in 1992 was negotiated to provide the framework in which German unification was able to take place, the motive was political but the outcome again economic: Europe today has a currency union comprising nineteen of its twenty-eight members but still no framework permitting genuine political cooperation.

Loth does well to stress the role of individuals in the making of Europe. In 1974 Willy Brandt gave way to Helmut Schmidt as Chancellor of Germany while Georges Pompidou was succeeded by Valerie Giscard d’Estang as President of France. Prime Minister Edward Heath was ousted in favor of Harold Wilson in Great Britain, and perhaps most importantly, in the United States, Richard Nixon resigned as President in favor of Gerald Ford. The Europeans correspondingly dropped their opposition to Kissinger’s “Year of Europe” and agreed to re-strengthen the Atlantic Alliance. The remaining years of the 1970s were stagnant in terms of Europe’s further development as European monetary policy failed and détente evaporated. However, Schmidt and Giscard managed to continue Franco-German cooperation and as a result direct elections to the European parliament began in 1979. Ironically, the substantive change in furthering European integration came in the 1980s from an unlikely source, the French President François Mitterrand. Mitterrand at first
pursued unilateral socialistic policies after his 1981 election, raising wages and benefits and carrying out extensive nationalizations in France. But these policies led to massive deficits; in the face of France’s European obligations and the opposition of her EEC partners it became impossible for France to pursue ‘Socialism in one country.’ Mitterrand carried out a 180 degree policy turn in favor of European cooperation, finding a willing partner in German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

With the dynamic European economist Jacques Delors taking control of the European Commission in 1985, Mitterrand and Kohl formulated the Single European Act, answering the felt need to create a single European market not simply for goods, as was the case heretofore, but including people, capital, and services. The Act, which also provided for qualified majority voting in the European Council on economic questions, was signed in 1986. Most remarkably, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, whose attitude previously had been singly to insist on a British rebate from the European budget, was a signatory. She was in favor of free trade and actually was in favor of a single market in goods, services, and capital, if not people, and she pragmatically accepted limited majority voting in order to get them; she also fell in with Mitterrand and Kohl when they threatened to go ahead without her. In Thatcher’s agreement to the Single European Act one finds impressive confirmation of Loth’s picture of how Europe was made; a nationalist like Thatcher at heart shared in the imperative that led Europe toward unity. She seemed to regret what she had done afterward, but ironically, fell from power because of the excessively negative tone she adopted in her European speeches. And Delors, whom she targeted, remained at the head of the Commission for an unprecedented third term until 1995.

The collapse of Communism and the unification of Germany provided the backdrop against which the Treaty of Maastricht was negotiated. Germany could only be unified on condition that it was fully integrated into Europe; Mitterrand firmly insisted that Germany recognize the Oder-Neisse frontier with Poland and permanently forego nuclear weapons as well. But the major outcome of the unification of Germany was the Maastricht treaty of 1992, at which the ‘pillars’ of European construction were adumbrated and the basic contours of the euro established. The EU, having decided to call itself officially a ‘union,’ ostensibly established a common defense and foreign policy along with a security and justice administration to add to the Commission and the common market. With the euro going into effect by 1 January 1999, a new era opened in the organization’s history. And it appeared momentous: the euro initially seemed to bring a new era of economic growth with the new century while the former Communist nations, ten nations altogether, joined the EU. One should not minimize the potential importance of this accomplishment. The EU need not, and probably will never, become a super-state. It suffers from a so-called democratic deficit—it is by no means a polity and its politics take place between states, corporations, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and the like, not between peoples. But if it can become a genuine federation, which Loth believes it is in fact, it has met its challenge and provided a brilliant foundation for a new and democratic future for European civilization. The EU rose to the challenge by calling no less than a constitutional convention to establish a constitution to replace the initial founding treaty of Rome in 1993.

But problems had long since begun to appear, and an initial shock occurred when a referendum in France in 1992 barely passed the Treaty of Maastricht and then another referendum there in 1995 solidly defeated the constitution, which was never thereafter ratified. A new treaty at Lisbon instead put the European pillars established at Maastricht on their foundations. But the major diplomatic events at the turn of century, the independence of Kosovo from Serbia, for example, and most egregiously, the Iraq war of 2003, occurred without the European Union exercising a common foreign policy, and the defense pillar showed few signs of being permanently established either. NATO reigned supreme, providing the foundation for a second Cold War. The EU was already on shaky ground, moreover, when the economic collapse of 2007-2008 occurred,
leading to a sovereign debt debacle in Greece and a full-fledged crisis of the euro as the Greek mess threatened
to engulf other over-extended nations: Ireland, Portugal, Spain, even Italy seemed next in line. The euro had
seemed to be an unalloyed success during the economic growth years from 2000 to 2008; but with the
collapse of that year the lack of common institutions for its proper governance became startlingly clear.

Without minimizing the importance of the euro crisis, Loth seems to believe it will be overcome like the
others. On one level Europe is in perennial crisis; on another level it remains a monumental achievement. But
it seems to me that Loth here ignores a structural impediment to the further development of the EU that the
euro crisis puts in stark relief. Europe is an integrated capitalist market of people, goods, capital, and services.
Europe’s social component, its welfare state model, however, does not exist on the European level but is part
of the fabric of the individual European states. Along with their national cultures, it in fact forms their very
basis for being. The euro was created in the 1980s and 1990s; it reflects the passing of the Keynesian concern
with full employment, a measure of social equality, and economic growth that characterized an earlier period.
The new era since the 1980s, in contrast, has been that of the installation of a neo-liberal era of globalization
and anti-inflation. Taxes have gone down, inequality has starkly increased, profits are up because capitalist
entities have relocated manufactures to the third world to take advantage of cheap labor, and Europe has
become de-industrialized. It has, with the exception of Germany, largely morphed into a collection of low-
wage service economies. The democratic deficit, moreover, has come home to afflict the individual European
states. Austerity reigns everywhere: the French thought they voted against it in the election of 2012, but
President François Hollande of France has imposed it more severely that did his predecessor, Nicolas Sarkozy,
and Greece voted for Syriza (the ‘Coalition of the Radical Left’) in a definitive rejection of austerity in January
2015 only to see austerity re-imposed, by Syriza, under Prime Minister Alec Tsipras, even more severely than
before, as Syriza in turn capitulated to the “troika”—the Commission, the Eurobank, and the International
Monetary Fund—that now manages Greece’s affairs. Everywhere the European states, their tax bases lost, and
their governments constrained by the vagaries of the bond market, are forced to curtail the basic services of
their welfare states. They are “no-choice democracies.”

3 “No Choice Democracies: How the Deep Crisis of Europe is Destroying the Community Model.” Blinken
Institute: Columbia University, April 23, 2012. See also Irwin Wall, France Votes: The Election of François Hollande,
Obvioulsy, all three reviewers agree that it was time to write such a book. I certainly will not contradict them. In order to understand the often erratic history of the European Union and its contribution to the contemporary history of Europe in general it is necessary to put the many and diverging elements of historical research together and to integrate them into a coherent narrative providing both sense and perspective. Such a narrative may be helpful not only to better understand the present situation but also to better identify the choices actors can take at these times. European integration history is an unfinished story; therefore, dealing with it is inevitably part of a broader process of orientation.

As Irwin Wall rightly states, the observer of the present crises can find some solace in my summary of the pushing forces in the European integration process. I am convinced that the desire to secure peace, the efforts towards a solution to the German question, the quest for larger markets, and the concern for self-assertion in the world were and remain *forces profondes* in the sense of the *Annales* School in French historiography. Of course, nobody can guarantee that the forces of self-destruction will never become so strong that the European building will collapse. On the other side, the motives, interests, impulses, and hopes working in favor of the European construction are strong, too. It is hard to imagine how all of them can be defeated in the long run.

Perhaps I should have insisted more on the thread resulting from austerity in many European countries and their exploitation by irresponsible populist leaders. Dealing with the fears of people considering themselves as victims of globalization is probably the biggest challenge political leaders and democratic forces are confronted with these days. I am grateful to the critics for reminding me of the danger that they may fail. However, this is not a special problem of the European Union (EU); it is just reinforced by its complicated decision making mechanism hiding the responsibilities of the national governments. At the same time, the outcome of the most recent Greek crisis in the first half of 2015 is an example how even a desperately populist movement can result in a decision to stay within the EU (and in this case, within the Euro zone). So far, “Brexit” has produced much gossip by nationalists, so-called ‘realists,’ and convinced federalists. In the long run, I can imagine that the consequences the English people will have to experience may not encourage others to follow the British example.

Does the book make clear the elite, top-down nature of the origins and development of European integration, as Michael Geary believes? I do not think so. True, the narrative is mainly about relations between prime ministers, chancellors, and presidents (but also foreign ministers and deputies), about the challenges and crises they faced, and about the efforts at overcoming these. In a book about building Europe the architects and masons necessarily have to play a prominent role. However, these architects and other craftsmen are acting in response to their respective electorate and clientele, and are confronted not only with external challenges but also with expectations and emotions. The driving forces behind the European project are not abstract elements of history; they are working through the people and the different forms of its societal organization. That is why I deliberately started my narrative not with some enlightened founding fathers or a government conference but with an effort to put different societal and political forces together which proved remarkably successful. It is astonishing that Geary argues that the will of the *demos* is missing in this chapter.

Generally speaking, my findings suggest a cautious use of the elite argument so popular in current debates about the ‘nature’ of the European construction. The argument may be correct to a certain extent for the British way of entering the Community (which also contributes to explain the success of the ‘Brexit’-
campaign), but even in this case one can see a division of the elites, and most of the important decisions in the history of the EU were accompanied or followed by broad public debates. As I explain in the conclusion of my book, the discrepancy between the Europe that was desired and the Europe that was feasible explains why a form of integration could come to be that placed little value on citizen participation and that withdrew the integrated political areas from public discussion. However, in the long run public discussion came back, and to a certain extent the ‘democratic deficit’ in the European construction was reduced.

If political leaders play such a prominent role in the book, this is also due to the need for leadership in constructing the building. Given the many ambivalences in public opinion, strong leader personalities could clear the way via direct contact with their partners, circumventing the routine of the bureaucracies and pledging majorities for their projects. Irwin Wall found so many “good Europeans” in my narrative since it appears in an overall view of EU history as a success. However, I did not use the term ‘good European,’ and I was also reluctant to qualify a political leader as ‘nationalist.’ The real process was more complicated than such black-and-white qualifications suggest. We have different conceptions of ‘Europe’ in the game, different emphasis given to them, different capabilities to understand a given situation, and different degrees of risk-taking. In all these categories, we also have learning processes (to mention, for instance, German Chancellors Ludwig Erhard and Angela Merkel) and regressions (to mention only the British Prime Ministers Harold Wilson and Tony Blair). If my book shows which qualifications a political leader who is acting in the general interest of the Europeans will need (and I think it can), it was worth the trouble to write it.