'What Europeans Saw of Europe': Medial Construction of European Identity in Information Films and Newsreels in the 1950s

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Abstract

This article examines Austrian, British, French and German newsreels and European information films produced in the period from 1948 to 1958 either by private and semi-private newsreel companies or transnational, supranational and national institutions like the Economic Cooperation Administration, Council of Europe, European Coal and Steel Community. These newsreel items and short films are not only records from the beginning and consolidation of the European integration project but also political instruments in this process. On the one hand, they informed the public about the new institutions, their purposes as well as their decision-making procedures; on the other hand, they were intended to create a European identity by rewriting a collective cultural and historical memory. By means of these films, some of them being part of the public relations campaigns of various European institutions and newsreel companies, a consistent picture of 'Europe' was shaped. This audiovisual representation of Europe as a geographical and historical entity, or, respectively, 'the idea of European integration', was not only a result of a political discourse but also a cultural continuation of a centuries-old iconographic tradition. This article aims at broadening the academic debate on a European identity by analysing the political communication process of the European Integration in the 1950s.

Keywords

Most contemporary historical analysis of European integration still concentrates on international relations and the role of political elites. The (visual) perception of Europe in a European 'public sphere'[1] by contrast is seldom discussed. As the historian Michael Wintle writes: 'When investigating the notion of Europe, one of the less frequented approaches consists of asking what people thought *Europe* looked like'.[2] Until recently, the question of what people thought Europe looked like was not only a less frequented question, it was hardly ever asked at all. Most studies on the European integration process concentrated solely on political decisions, less often and more recently on the political discourse and the history of political thought. European Integration History has therefore focused on political actors like Konrad Adenauer, Charles de Gaulle and Jean Monnet, or on the discourse of political thought, i.e. the struggle between (neo-) functionalism, intergovernmentalism, and federalism. But since its very beginning, the European integration process has also been constructed in images, accompanied by a variety of political public relations campaigns. Their essential purpose was not only to inform the public about the structure and aims of the new institutions and to explain the general decision-making process within the European Communities (European Coal and Steel Community, European Economic Community and European Atomic Energy

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[1] Note that the term 'public sphere', not unlike the term 'European identity', is highly problematic. Cf. Hans Jörg Trenz, 'Media Coverage on European Governance: Exploring the European Public Sphere in National Quality Newspapers', *European Journal of Communication*, 19 (3) (2004), 291-319; Marianne Van de Steeg, 'Rethinking the Conditions for a Public Sphere in the European Union', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5 (4) (2002), 499-519

[2] M. Wintle, *The Image of Europe. Visualizing Europe in Cartography and Iconography throughout the Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 12.

Community), but also to promote a sense of European identity. Due to its effect on public opinion, the audiovisual medium film played an important role within the European information policy. For this purpose a substantial quantity of films and documentaries (so called 'information films') were produced by transatlantic, supranational and national institutions as well as private film companies as early as 1948 to mobilise public support for the process of European integration and for the institutions of the European Communities.[3] Furthermore a majority of newsreel reports, while not commissioned by European political actors, still communicated similar if not identical European icons. This congruence demonstrates better than anything else the emergence of a catalogue of 'images of Europe', irrespective of the originator.

Against this background, this paper analyses communication processes which were partially used to propagate a European identity through the mass medium of film. Therefore, we will concentrate on the following research questions: firstly, what were the motives of the various press and information divisions of the European institutions or the Economic Cooperation Association (ECA)? Secondly, did these images originate from specific political actors or were they the result of a broader discourse at work? Finally, what kind of visual images, metaphors and narrative strategies did emerge in the discourse on a European identity?

To answer these questions we based our study on newsreels and information films as well as on written sources (e.g. documents, scripts, and official correspondence). We concentrated our research on Austrian, British, French and German newsreels and European information films that were produced in the period between 1948 and 1958 either by private and semi-private newsreel companies or by transnational, supranational and national institutions like the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), Council of Europe, European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). By analysing newsreels from the two initiating countries, France and Western Germany; one country with an ambivalent relation to the integration process, Great Britain; and one country outside of the communities, Austria, we present a comprehensive overview of a common European imagery. The analysis of the film sources itself is founded on a combination of semiotic and iconographic approaches as well as on classic film analysis.[4]

EUROPEAN IDENTITY

When studying European integration it is important to understand that attempts to communicate a sense of European identity can be found not only in written and spoken discourses but also in pictures. Many political rituals, such as the signing of treaties, party rallies, etc. only achieved their purpose through their visual distribution. This means that, for example, a newsreel report of the cast of the 'first European steel ingot' acquired political significance only after being shown in cinemas.[5] European integration implies not only a political and economic process but also the mental process of creating an imagined community.[6] According to Benedict Anderson, it was the appearance of mass media that made these 'imagined communities' possible. When 'reading a newspaper each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not

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[3] There were also initiatives to commission newsreel reports. They were, however, very limited in number.

[4] Helmut Korte, *Einführung in die Systematische Filmanalyse* (Berlin: ESV 2010), Lothar Mikos, *Film- und Fernsehanalyse* (Konstanz: UVK/UTB 2008) und Marion G. Müller, *Grundlagen der visuellen Kommunikation. Theorieansätze und Analysemethoden* (Konstanz: UVK/UTB 2003).

[5] 'Erster Gruß des Europäischen Stahls', *Austria Wochenschau*, no. 20, 1953, Filmarchiv Austria, Vienna; 'Luxemburg: Jean Monnet eröffnet den Stahlmarkt der Montanunion', *Neue Deutsche Wochenschau*, no. 171, 3 May 1953, Archiv der Deutschen Wochenschau GmbH, Hamburg.

[6] V. Öhner, A. Pribersky, W. Schmale, and H. Uhl, eds, *Europabilder* (Innsbruck, Vienna, Bozen: Studienverlag, 2005), 7.

the slightest notion'.[7] The act of watching the same pictures in a newsreel connected millions of Europeans. This does not mean that this alone created a shared feeling of European identity in the audiences, but it was a potent factor at the very least. In contrast to contemporary intellectual discourses, newsreels reached a vast audience and are therefore an indispensable source for the analysis of the construction of a European identity. The catalogue of European images emerging from this analysis is not only an important complement to the current state of research but provides a contrasting account – a 'contre-histoire' – of political communication.

Since 2005, the number of both academic publications and newspaper articles on European identity has increased considerably.[8] While the term emerged as early as 1973 in an official communiqué of the European Economic Community (EEC)[9], the first academic debate began after that in the 1980s in West Germany with Werner Weidenfeld's anthology on European Identity.[10] An international debate on European identity came to life with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Most work, whether journalistic or scholarly, shared the view that the European Union was missing an identity, necessary for the legitimation, stability and survival of the European project. More often than not the notion of 'identity' was used without defining its meaning, and therefore lost all significance. Accordingly, Lutz Niethammer employs the expression 'plastic word' to describe the proliferating and often ill-considered use of the concept of collective identity since the 1990s.[11] The respective understanding of the term 'identity' depends mostly on the background of the writer and his or her aims, and becomes therefore instrumentalised politically, especially when the extremely ambiguous term 'cultural identity' is employed. While the notion of a cultural identity is established on the idea of a shared collective memory, a political identity is based on the political participation of citizens.[12]

Discourses on identity become a central topic in times of stress and doubt. According to the German political scientist Thomas Meyer, a collective 'political identity' is a prerequisite for the stability of any political entity, especially during crises.[13] One possibility to communicate or propagate such a political identity is to emphasise the mode of operation of a political community, to show how political decisions are made and, in a democracy, how citizens can influence the politics.[14] Another way, more commonly associated with autocratic systems but in itself not undemocratic, is to emphasise the maintenance of order through symbolic rituals and/or evoking a common myth/history. Both these communication strategies can be found in our audiovisual sources.

The issue of a European identity is primarily connected to the issue of legitimacy, still central to the discourse of European integration nowadays. While simplifying an on-going and exhaustive debate, one could argue that there are more or less two opposing models of collective identity in the

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[7] B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, New York: Verso, 2006), 35.

[8] E.g. G. Datler, 'Das Konzept der 'Europäischen Identität' jenseits der Demos-Fiktion', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte,* 62, 4 (2012), 57-61; T. Meyer and J. Eisenberg, eds, *Europäische Identität als Projekt* (Wiesbaden: Nomos, 2009); J. Nida-Rümelin and W. Weidenfeld, *Europäische Identität: Voraussetzungen und Strategien* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2007); A. Pagden, ed., *The Idea of Europe: From Antiquity to the European Union* (Washington D.C: Cambridge University Press, 2002); E. du Réau, *L'idée d'Europe au XXe siècle. Des mythes aux réalités* (Brussels: Editions Complexes, 2008); T. Risse, *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010). In 2005 the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe was rejected by French and Dutch referendums.

[9] Declaration on European Identity by the Nine Foreign Ministers, Copenhagen, 14 December 1973, C. Hiil and K.E. Smith, *European Foreign Policy. Key Documents* (London: Routledge, 2000), 93-97.

[10] W. Weidenfeld, ed., *Die Identität Europas* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1985). We would like to thank our anonymous referees for this helpful suggestion.

[11] L. Niethammer, *Kollektive Identität. Heimliche Quellen einer unheimlichen Konjunktur* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2000), 9-12.

[12] E. Pfister and K. Prager, 'How We Learned to Stop Worrying and Utilize European Lieux de Mémoire as a Historical Instrument', *Donauraum,* 51, 1 (2011), 21-33, 24.

[13] T. Meyer, *Die Identität Europas* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2004), 20 and 38.

[14] Meyer, 41, ibid.

academic discourse: an essentialist approach that searches mainly for a historical cultural European identity, and a constructivist approach that tries to analyse a political identity under construction.[15] Recent research favours a constructivist approach,[16] but when dealing with our film sources we encounter both ideas. While earlier promotional films – in German also known as 'Kulturfilme' – concentrated on a perceived common European cultural ground, later information films and newsreel reports focused much more on aspects of a political community. The idea of a political identity thus replaced the idea of a cultural identity as the main argument in the media. This change was in accordance with the founding spirit of the ECSC. Accordingly, Jean Monnet's policy was to break with the communicative strategies of the European Council, which relied heavily on the evocation of Europe's glorious past in favour of a functionalist approach. This communicative paradigm shift was reproduced in the media.

Before addressing the different media we have to focus on the question of why the European institutions and other political actors of the integration process of the 1950s were interested in communicating and constructing a collective European identity for their legitimation. A retrospective search for attempts to propagate a collective European identity in the 1950s is by nature problematic. 'Collective identity' is a rather novel term and was therefore not used by the politicians and officials of the 1950s. In the files of the Service de Presse et d'Information of the ECSC one finds instead mentions of a 'European idea' and 'Consciousness'. These files bear evidence of a definite will to propagate a sense of European consciousness.[17] We have also to keep in mind that even an organisation like the ECSC, which itself was not democratic per se, needed the consensus of the citizens of the partner states to function. Thus, while not meeting the high standards of a collective political identity, as recently formulated by Thomas Meyer and Jürgen Habermas, newsreels and information films of the 1950s demonstrate a definite attempt to propagate a sense of collective to the cinema audiences. At this point it is important to distinguish newsreels from information films. While information films were financed and produced by conventional European actors and therefore correspond 1:1 to their political views, the same is not true for newsreel reports, which were produced by private enterprises. It is therefore difficult to pin down individual originators of European images in newsreels. The genuine originator of this communication strategy was neither the Service de Presse et d'Information nor the newsreel cameramen, but politicians involved in the integration process like Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi, Robert Schuman and Paul-Henri Spaak. They were at the origins of the European images shown in the cinemas.[18]

It is by now common knowledge that, as Ulrich Sarcinelli wrote, 'everyone who aims at influencing politics and society and intends to legitimate his influence needs a public'.[19] The consensus in the debate of political and social scientists is that, as Jürgen Habermas put it, the European Union is in need of a European public (sphere) where a European political identity can emerge.[20] At certain points in the history of European integration sporadic European public spheres did exist.[21] One such example can be found in the rejection of the European Defence Community by the French Assemblée Nationale 1953, which was reported in all of the European newsreels. We argue that,

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[15] W. Schmale, *Geschichte und Zukunft der europäischen Identität* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2008), 40.

[16] Datler, 'Konzept der 'Europäischen Identität'', 59.

[17] E. Pfister, 'Imagining European Integration. The Construction of a European Identity in Austrian, British, French and German Neswreels in the 1950s', *Zeitgeschichte,* 38, 4 (2011), 215-231, 220, as well as E. Pfister, *Europa im Bild. Imaginationen Europas in Wochenschauen in Deutschland, Frankreich, Großbritannien und Österreich 1948–1959* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress 2014), 136-152.

[18] Meyer, *Identität Europas,* 20; J. Habermas, *Ach Europa* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2008), 136.

[19] U. Sarcinelli, *Politische Kommunikation in Deutschland. Zur Politikvermittlung im demokratischen System* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaft, 2009), 39.

[20] J. Habermas, 136.op. cit. n 17.

[21] See Marianne Van de Steeg, 'Rethinking the Conditions for a Public Sphere in the European Union', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5 (4) (2002), 499-519, 507.

notwithstanding the fact that contemporary political actors were not using the term 'European identity', one motive of the political communication of the integration process was to propagate a sense of European solidarity and consciousness that corresponds in part to the modern concept of political identity.

There is still the question left of why the aforementioned political actors were interested in propagating a common European political identity. While international relations belonged to a political space where democratisation never took place,[22] all political partners involved in the integration process, i.e. the governments of the democratic partner states, had to justify their politics in front of their respective citizens. In order not to lose the next elections, the French and the German government were, for example, forced to explain their decisions to their population. For this purpose they had to communicate the policy, polity and politics of the new European institutions. Other European political actors, such as the European Movement and the new institutions themselves, were also interested in communicating a political identity. Most of them had no need to justify their politics in front of an electorate, but were pursuing the long-term goal of a political community. The same is true for the press and information service of the ECSC, which mainly focused on political elites and journalists but never forgot the broad public.[23]

Whereas the national governments were aiming for a very specific support of their citizens for the European project, the European movement and the institutions themselves were aiming for a more diffuse support. According to David Easton, specific support is the direct result of outputs that satisfy specific demands.[24] Diffuse support, by contrast, is not linked directly to specific material rewards and satisfactions. It cannot be understood as a quid pro quo in the fulfilment of demands. Diffuse support is a sense of attachment or loyalty to the authorities, regime, or political community that is more or less independent of specific benefits.[25]

Finally, we have to take into account the producers of the newsreels themselves. Only a handful of small reports were actually commissioned and paid for by the ECSC and the following institutions.[26] The vast majority were part of the newsreels because these topics were perceived as newsworthy. In this sense, newsreel producers responded to a public demand for information on the European integration.[27]

FILM AS A HISTORICAL SOURCE

In light of the different production background it is important to differentiate our two film sources. Even if newsreels and documentaries share many characteristics, there are some important significant differences that demand a separate introduction. Cinema newsreels are a singular mass

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[22] J. Habermas, *Zur Verfassung Europas* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2011), 45.

[23] EGKS/Hohe Behörde: Fünfter Gesamtbericht über die Tätigkeit der Gemeinschaft, 09.04.1956- 13.04.1957, Luxemburg 1957, 53ff.; CEAB (Commission des Communautés Européennes Archives, Bruxelles) 1/940 (Microfiche): Note sur l'organisation du Service d'Information de la Haute Autorité, 10.06.1954.

[24] D. Easton, 'A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support', *British Journal of Political Science,* 4, 5 (1975), 435-457, 444.

[25] D. Fuchs, O. W. Gabriel, and K. Völkl, 'Vertrauen in politische Institutionen und politische Unterstützung', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft,* 31, 4 (2002), 427-450.

[26] E. g. Rapports d'activités 01.08-15.02.1955, CEAB 3-708, Archives historiques de l'Union Européenne, Firenze.

[27] Public newsreel companies had an official 'Informationsauftrag' cf. Uta Schwarz, Wochenschau, Westdeutsche Identität und Geschlecht in den fünfziger Jahren (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus 2002) 81. But even private newsreel companies understood themselves as information media. Nicholas Pronay, 'British Newsreels in the 1930s: Their Policies and Impact', in: Luke McKernan (ed.), Yesterday's News. The British Cinema Newsreel Reader (London: British Universities Film and Video Council, 2002), 148-160, 139

medium and provide a unique, and up until now still unexamined, historical source of the beginning of European integration (1949-1958) in the post-war period. For Europeans of that period, newsreels were the only audiovisual medium that provided them on a regular basis with information on, and images of, the European integration process. In the 1950s, cinema attendance was at its historical height for most European countries (except for Great Britain where attendance was at its height in the late forties and has been declining ever since). According to a UNESCO report, in the early 1950s every week 215 million spectators watched films in the world's 100,000 cinemas – about one tenth of the population of the globe. Most of these spectators saw newsreels on a regular basis.[28] And every European cinemagoer that decided to watch the latest Western, romantic comedy or *Heimatfilm*[29] was likely to see a newsreel before the main picture.[30]

Newsreel reports on the integration process included reports on conferences, treaties and declarations, but also reports on symbolic political ceremonies.[31] In addition, there were compilation films that explained the Common Market to a general audience using images of coal trains and opening barriers.[32] All of these can be categorised as symbolic political acts, which the newsreel coverage transformed into communicated events. An important aspect of these historical sources is that they were for the most part not produced and commissioned by the political actors involved, but by private and semi-private newsreel companies.[33] Interestingly enough there are no qualitative differences noticeable when comparing public and private newsreels. In contrast to the infamous 'bizarre' items',[34] newsreel items covering the European integration process were not mainly aimed at entertaining the public but were motivated by the self-perception of the newsreel companies as an information medium. A note from Max Kohnstamm to the *groupe de travail* 'Presse et Information' of the ECSC helps to understand the logic of the media: 'The newsreels do affect the general public. As they are only interested in major world events, they put us on the agenda.'[35]

While of singular importance for our analysis, newsreels are at the same time a problematic source because there are almost no written sources documenting the production of a newsreel item; the cameramen worked mostly on their own and only with vague assignments from their editors. The same is true for editing and dubbing. Therefore we lack the material to analyse the influence of particular individuals or company policies on the definite newsreel item. We can on the other hand

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[28] P. Baechlin and M. Muller-Strauss, *Newsreels across the World* (Paris: Unesco, 1952), 4. Using the data from the UNESCO-report, Scott Althaus calculated the percentage of persons who saw at least one movie per week: 12.5–25 per cent of the population in Austria, 10,5–21 per cent in France, 9–17 per cent in West Germany and 28–56 per cent in the United Kingdom, see S. L. Althaus, 'The Forgotten Role of the Global Newsreel Industry in the Long Transition from Text to Television', *The international Journal of Press/Politics* 15 (2010): 193–218.

[29] 'Heimatfilm' is a film genre that was popular from the early 1950s to the early 1970s. Usually the film plot centred around love, friendship, family and rural life. They were typically shot in the Alps, the Black Forest or the Lüneburg Heath and focused on simplistic dichotomies like the 'good' and the 'bad' guy, or rural and urban life.

[30] P. Sorlin, *European Cinemas, European Societies: 1939-1990* (London: Routledge, 1991)*,* 90 and 140.

[31] For example: ,Erster Gruß des Europäischen Stahls', *Austria Wochenschau*, no.20, 1953, Filmarchiv Austria, Vienna; 'Luxemburg: Jean Monnet eröffnet den Stahlmarkt der Montanunion', *Neue Deutsche Wochenschau*, no.171, 3 May 1953, Archiv der Deutschen Wochenschau GmbH, Hamburg.

[32] For example: 'Europe. Marché commun européen', *Gaumont Actualités*, no.3, 1958, Gaumont-Pathé Archives, Saint-Ouens.

[33] Newsreels used for this paper: Austria Wochenschau, Fox Tönende Wochenschau (Filmarchiv Austria, Wien, Austria); Éclair Journal, Gaumont Actualités, Pathé Journal (Archives Pathé-Gaumont, Saint Ouen, France); British Pathé (British Pathé Ltd, London, UK), British Movietone News (British Movietone Digital Archive, http://www.movietone.com); Neue Deutsche Wochenschau, UFA-Wochenschau Welt im Bild, Welt im Film (Deutsche Wochenschau GmbH Filmarchiv, Hamburg, Deutschland).

[34] Like escaped monkeys, flying cars etc. See N. Hiley and L. McKernan, 'Reconstructing the News: British Newsreel Documentation and the British Universities Newsreel Project', *Film History* 13, 2 (2001), 185-199, 189.

[35] 'Les actualités touchent le grand public. Comme elles ne s'intéressent qu'aux très grands événements du monde, elles nous situent sur ce plan.' [Translation E.F./A.B.] Max Kohnstamm, Note au groupe de travail 'Presse et Information', 13. July 1955, CEAB 13/68, Archives historiques de l'Union Européenne, Florence.

compare newsreel items of different companies (private and public) with each other. There are, with only one small exception,[36] no differences between public and private newsreel companies in the imagery and commentaries. The outcome of this comparison was that the communicated propositions were, for a given national frame, almost always quasi-identical. The communicated images of Europe are therefore significant examples of the discourse on the idea of Europe in the 1950s.

As Pierre Sorlin stated, the cinema produced 'images [that] are not the reality but [...] our only access to reality'.[37] Even more than the print media, newsreels affected the perception and the visual memory of the public and over several decades were a central element of the cinema, which they arguably transformed into an information medium. But while the informational character of the newsreel was contested from the beginning,[38] its impact on the perception of the public can be seen for instance in its influence on feature films: *Canaris* (Germany 1955) intercuts newsreels with acted scenes and *Battle of Algiers* (Italy 1966), filmed in black and white, attempts to recreate the impression of newsreels, using the aesthetics and style of newsreel reports to suggest authenticity.[39] Needless to say, documentary films have used and still use newsreel footage in the form of compilation films.

Newsreel pictures were accessible to a vast audience and, unlike reports in the press and radio, their individual perception, guided by cinematographic codes, differed only slightly from one moviegoer to the other, mainly as a consequence of the use of iconographic traditions. Being of a visual as well as linguistic nature, they reached not only an even larger public than the press, but they created arguably more lasting impressions. Peter Baechlin and Maurice Muller-Strauss write in their report on newsreels:

> a picture in itself constitutes a selection, designed to give a comprehensive view of the incident. Thus both by its very nature and by its presentation, which is designed to focus the attention, the picture makes a direct impact on the spectator. [...] Moreover, the picture can immediately be understood by all spectators, irrespective of their language or cultural level.[40]

While the second part of this citation might not withstand modern analysis, since cultural background can influence the way pictures are seen and understood by a public in a given context, the first part alludes to the specific effect of newsreel images on the spectator.

What makes newsreel such interesting media is that they had a singular capacity to create images – images that are still in existence today, decades after the demise of the last newsreel company. Lasting examples are the proclamation of the Austrian State Treaty shown in the *Austria-Wochenschau* in May 1955, the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953, or the Berlin Airlift in 1949. Still in use as archive clips in documentary films, these images are more or less present in the minds of young Austrians, Britons and Germans who never saw a single newsreel. These three examples also illustrate the important part newsreels played in the construction of national identities. One has however to keep in mind that collective identities were never constructed by one single political

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[36] The French Éclair Journal initially had a sceptical opinion of German participation but changed this in the course of the early 1950s.

[37] Quoted in G. Heiss, 'Film als Quelle', in M. Fuchs, ed., *Geschichte in Bildern?* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag 2006), 99-108, 99.

[38] E.g. Newton E. Meltzer, 'Are Newsreel News?', *Hollywood Quarterly 2* (April 1947/3), 270-272.

[39] Sorlin, 61, op. cit. 28. Fake newsreel footage was used in 'Citizen Kane' (US 1941). After the prelude Orson Welles included a ten-minute long mock newsreel 'News on the March' (designed after the existing 'March of Time' Newsreel). A more recent use of the 'newsreel'-style can be found in the science-fiction movie 'Starship Troopers' 1997). In both cases the newsreel-style was however not used to suggest authenticity, but to emphasize the superficiality (Citizen Kane) or propagandistic use (Starship Troopers) of the media.

[40] Baechlin and Muller-Strauss, *Newsreels*, 11.

actor but were the result of a plethora of social interactions and corresponding dominant political discourse.

DOCUMENTARIES AND INFORMATION FILMS

From the very beginning of their existence, supranational and national institutions as well as European movement groups produced, in addition to newsreels, a substantial quantity of information films and documentaries promoting the idea of European cooperation. In general, these films were shown as part of a youth and adult education syllabus in public halls, political assemblies and cinemas, either on their own or as a section of a programme.

The very first information films on European integration after the war were part of a publicity campaign planned by the coordinators of the European Recovery Programme (ERP). All 16 participating countries of the Marshall Plan were obliged by agreement to propagate information on the ERP through the use of press releases, publications, posters, photos, radio programmes, newsreel stories, documentaries, and exhibits. To be precise, Article Two of the European Cooperation Master Plan obliged them to 'disseminate information' on the ERP, and to 'give Europeans the facts and figures on Marshall Aid […], to stimulate industrial and agricultural productivity, and to promote the idea of a European community'.[41] The British historian David Ellwood has characterised the information activities that evolved out of Article Two as 'the largest peacetime propaganda effort directed by one country to a group of others ever seen'.[42] Within these propaganda activities, the Information Division of the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) in Paris, as well as its successor the Mutual Security Agency (MSA) commissioned over 260 'Marshall Plan Films'.[43] Between 1948 and 1955 these films were produced and screened for a European audience, and were intended to supply background information on the European Recovery Programme. According to a recent evaluation of these documentaries, conducted by the German historian Gabriele Clemens, more than 30 of these films exclusively address the subject of European integration.[44] They were mainly produced between 1950 and 1952 when the ECA and MSA focused intensively on economic cooperation and tried to make the case against trade restrictions within Western Europe.

The series *Changing Face of Europe* included, for example, six films which were meant to assess the achievements of the ERP and the conditions of Western Europe.[45] Each film concentrated on a special aspect of European recovery, such as public well-being and health (*The Good Life*), agriculture (*200.000.000 Mouths*), or the state of transport in post-war Europe and the progress made in rebuilding and modernising roads, railways and airports (*Clearing the Lines*). The last film dwells in particular on the idea that borders were artificially created and that burdensome frontier controls slow down commercial exchange in Western Europe. The commentator of the films

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[41] A. Hemsing, 'The Marshall Plan's European Film Unit, 1948-1955: A Memoir and Filmography', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television,* 14, 3 (1994), 269-297, 269.

[42] D. Ellwood, 'The Message of the Marshall Plan', in D. Ellwood, ed., *The Marshall Plan Forty Years After. Lessons for the International System Today* (Bologna: Bologna Center, 1988), 33-39, 33. Here, Ellwood refers to Italy but the same assertion applies to West Germany, Austria and Great Britain. C. Becker-Döring, *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit für den Marshallplan am Beispiel von ECA-Dokumentarfilmen*, M.A.Thesis, University of Hamburg 1998 (unpublished manuscript).

[43] Linda Christenson compiled an extensive Marshall Plan filmography including 262 film titles, available at http://www.marshallfilms.org/ [11 August 2013].

[44] G. Clemens, 'Europa – nur ein gemeinsamer Markt? Die Öffentlichkeitsarbeit für den europäischen Integrationsprozess am Beispiel der Europawerbefilme zwischen Marshallplan und Römischen Verträgen 1947-1957', in M. Gehler, ed., *Vom Gemeinsamen Markt zur europäischen Unionsbildung. 50 Jahre Römische Verträge 1957-2007* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2009), 45-61, 48.

[45] The series was made in 13 languages and distributed to European cinemas in 18 countries, primarily by 20th Century Fox.

explained that, in order to assure free trade and free travel, 'surely now we must resolve our conflict and make up our minds, decide for the future and the bold, declare for the single Europe to which our mastery of land and sea and sky evidently points'.[46] Documentaries like *The Hour of Choice*, *The Council of Europe*, *E comme Europe* and the animation film *The Shoemaker and the Hatter* promote the idea that Europe's future could only be guaranteed by multinational and supranational institutions. The basic message that only economic and political cooperation would assure better living standards, economic prosperity as well as a high level of social security was repeated persistently in these films. The promise of the American Marshall Plan to the Europeans was quite simple: 'You too can be like us'.[47]

During preparatory consultations in which specific content aspects of the information films were to be discussed, two issues occurred. First, there was the question of the geographical boundaries of 'Europe'. Secondly, ECA officials and film directors had to tackle the issue of communication, that is, of how much 'propaganda' could be tolerated in such films. Quite often, the initial sequences, voice-overs and images had to be revised after completion, so that the message could be moderated and cushioned. Most officials, directors and writers involved were aware that the 'use of the 'holzhammer' method'[48] was not the way to convince sceptical Europeans. In general, they favoured a more subtle approach of indirect persuasion and pursued the strategy that a message had to be conveyed as carefully as possible in order to achieve a long-lasting impact on the audience.[49] *Let's Be Childish* is an excellent example for this low key approach. This film relates a parable of children who were able to overcome their national disputes in order to play together in harmony. In an Alpine resort, children of various nationalities, on vacation with their parents, engage in national contests in the snow. When a little English girl is accidentally hurt, they cooperate to buy her chocolate as a gesture of reconciliation from the local bakery. The film is quite charming in its simplicity, especially since no grown-up or parent is seen until the very end, and the narrator concludes with the appeal: 'May it be a lesson to the adult world'.[50]

In addition to these pro-European Marshall Plan films which focused on the cooperation between European states as a means to stabilise the continent economically and politically and to create a bulwark against communism from 1948 onwards, the implementation of the Treaty of Brussels Pact in 1948, the creation of the Council of Europe in 1949 as well as the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 all included in some part publicity campaigns. The public relations of each of the three aimed at informing the public about the structure and purpose of the new organisations. In addition, emphasis was placed on the relationship between the new institutions and the citizens in order to promote a genuine European identity.

The military alliance of the Western European Union, which resulted from the Treaty of Brussels, for instance, initiated a working group to coordinate a cultural campaign, which also included a cinema subcommittee. Initially, this subdivision was responsible for the exchange of films between the

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[46] See http://www.dhm.de/filmarchiv/die-filme/clearing-the-lines/. The comment can be found between minute 15 and minute 16. The other three films are *Power for All, Men and Machines,* and *Somewhere to Live*. The films can be consulted on the website of the *Deutsches Historisches Museum,* available at http://www.dhm.de/filmarchiv/die-filme/changing-face-of-europe/ [11 August 2013]. All films were produced by Ian Dalrymple, Wessex Film Productions, Ltd, London, for ECA/OSR.

[47] D. Ellwood, 'Italian Modernisation and the Propaganda of the Marshall Plan', in L. Cheles and L. Sponza, eds, *The Art of Persuasion. Political Communication in Italy from 1945 to the 1990s* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 23-48, 28.

[48] Minutes of the Film Officers Conference, 19-21 November 1952. NARA RG 59: Entry 5323, Department of State, International Information Administration, European Field Programs Subject Files, Box 14. The colloquial German term 'Holzhammermethode' refers to a (rhetorical) approach that imparts a message in a very rugged and crude manner.

[49] R. D. MacCann, 'Film and Foreign Policy. The USIA, 1962-67', *Cinema Journal*, 9, 1 (1969), 23-42, 26.

[50] *Let's Be Childish* (F 1950), produced and directed by George Freedland for ECA Paris, available at http://www.dhm.de/filmarchiv/die-filme/lets-be-childish/ [11 August 2013].

different nations, but its members soon agreed on broadening their field of activity. As the proceedings of a film officers' conference show:

> if the countries were to be brought yet closer together, it was important that their peoples should know how much they already owed to the historical process of interchange which had been taking place throughout the centuries by less deliberate and conscious methods. There was a need, in both the cultural and educational fields, for films about Europe.[51]

For this purpose, it was agreed to produce a film or a series of films that would examine Europe from a genuinely 'European perspective'. After extensive discussions on the financial budget and the theme, the international cinema subcommittee finally agreed on the subject of 'landscape painting'. They argued that landscape painting was an important European contribution to the world cultural heritage and that this should help communicate the shared cultural development of a Western Civilisation, as well as the internal European exchange of ideas, methods and various styles in the visual arts.[52] The members of the committee were convinced that such a film would stimulate reflection on cultural similarities of the past and enable close cooperation between European states and people in the future, and thus fulfil its political purpose. The result of this shared effort was the film *La Fenêtre ouverte* by the Belgian director Henri Storck.[53] It had its premiere at the Edinburgh International Film Festival in August 1952 and was awarded the *Coppa Rotary* at the Salerno Film Festival in 1962.

In response to the visualised presentation of a shared European heritage and culture in *La Fenêtre ouverte*, the Council of Europe commissioned an educational film to propagate European consciousness. The film *Europe, humaine aventure*, released in 1955/56, represents a unique experiment. Fifteen European states jointly attempted to construct a shared European memory by narrating the history of the continent from a European perspective. The intention of this project was, to quote a memorandum, to recall the common history of the European people only by means of iconographic material (pictures, prints), historical relics (regalia, manuscripts, records) and location shots of significant European buildings.[54] Led by the French film producer Philippe Brunet and in cooperation with the Information Director of the Council of Europe, Paul M. G. Levy, 2000 illustrated history books were evaluated and the selected 450 photos were submitted to various historians for review. After five years of production, a 65 minute long film was released. The length of this film is explained by the fact that each country wanted to see its own national history included. The production process shows how a common European history was constructed. The focus of the film was the development of a joint European culture in four phases: the Christian Middle Ages, the Age of Discoveries (Renaissance, Humanism), the Age of Reason ('la civilisation classique', 17-18th centuries) and the Age of Science. It concluded with the history of the new European institutions. The narrative is interrupted merely by short bits of information on conflicts and wars in Europe. The film was approved by all 15 states involved in the production. The common history of Europe was portrayed as an intersection of all the national histories. Disagreements, armed conflicts and different memories, insofar as they appeared to be problematic, were simply excluded or neutralised by the voice-over. The Franco-German War of 1870-71, for example, was mentioned only briefly and the Holocaust was not addressed at all. The memory of war was mainly a

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[51] C.H. Dand and J.A. Harrison, *Educational and Cultural Films: Experiments in European Co-Production* (Strasbourg: Council for Cultural Co-Operation of the Council of Europe, 1965), 12.
[52] Although Italian *vedutisti* of the 16th and 17th century were an important inspiration for landscape artists in Northern Europe, none was mentioned in the film due to the fact that Italy was not a member of the Western European Union in 1948/49.
[53] Fonds Henri Stock, Bruxelles, Films Réalises: La Fenêtre Ouverte, Dossier 31.
[54] Conseil de l'Europe, Historical Archives, Dossier no. 20620, Vol. I u. II: Films sur l'Europe et les problèmes européens. Vol. I, Committee of Cultural Experts, 4th session, 24 April 1952.

shared commemoration of suffering which was demonstrated by means of images of destroyed buildings, cultural monuments and military cemeteries.[55]

Another film produced by the Council of Europe was *Pionniers de l'Europe* (F 1951). This documentary takes up another leitmotif. It depicts the achievements and the performance of the Council of Europe and deals extensively with the intentions and aims of the European unification process. It is also the only film produced by a European institution that acknowledged the role and influence of the non-governmental European movement. The European movement was at this time still very active and it had organised many events on specific themes during the first decades of the European integration process. The eponymous 'Pioneers of European Integration' were thus not only European politicians or 'European Saints', as Alan Milward defined them, like Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi or Paul-Henri Spaak,[56] but also Europeans who had learned their lessons from the inglorious past. In these films, they were often described as courageous or industrious.

In the first scene of *Pionniers de l'Europe* the spectator was immediately thrown into the middle of the action, when a group of young people walked directly towards the camera in the opening scene of the film. Only the next image reveals where these adolescents are flocking to: the border between two states in Western Europe. The next shot shows how the barrier is torn down and all official border signs thrown into a bonfire. The image of the torn-down barrier is one of the most significant and consistent symbols in the European information films and newsreels alike. Its emblematic leitmotif takes up the underlying aim that Europe needs to overcome its divisive and conflict-ridden boundaries and merge into a new and harmonious community of European people.

Likewise, the Service de presse et d'information of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community financed and commissioned in cooperation with national newsreel companies short films for newsreels and documentaries.[57] Films like *Histoire d'un Traité* (1954), *La Comunità Europea* (1955) and *Es geht um 150 Millionen* (1956) were made to inform the audiences about the intentions and tasks of the ECSC. Furthermore, these films were dubbed into all of the national languages, and shown in all six member states of the ECSC. The primary purpose of this approach was to generate not only a kind of European public sphere but also to create a European identity and mutual understanding. The press officers as well as the directors and screenwriters working for the various European institutions were convinced that it was possible to translate the shared European heritage, values, symbols and ideas into audiovisual images.[58]

NEWSREELS

Whereas information films had more time to elaborate and arrange their narrative this was not the case for newsreels. They had to communicate the identity of a political entity as complex as the ECSC or the EEC and notions like the idea of Europe in only 20 seconds to two minutes of screen time, or less than 15 minutes in the case of information films. Such was the range of length of most newsreel reports and documentaries. To be able to communicate the policy of the ECSC, for example, cameramen had to make use of political symbols and political rituals. It is for us imperative to

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[55] A further film produced by the Council of Europe was *Des Lois pour toute l'Europe* (1955/56).

[56] A. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation State* (London: Routledge, 1992), 281; S. Brown Wells, *Pioneers of European Integration and Peace, 1945-1963. A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: St. Martin's Press, 2007).

[57] Communautés Européennes Archives Bruxelles, CEAB 3/653 (18th January 1956); and CEAB 1/10 (report June-August 1954), .Clemens, op. cit. n43, 50.

[58] Conseil de l'Europe, Historical Archives, EXP/CULT (54) 9: Comité des Experts Culturels, Session Extraordinaire, Strasbourg, 17th March 1954: Programme d'action du Conseil de l'Europe, Section culturelle et scientifique

separate these terms from the deeply negative connotation that accompanied their emergence. According to Murray Edelman, political symbols are means to condense difficult political concepts, and by doing so they make these concepts communicable.[59] But in Edelman's pessimistic view of the state of affairs, political symbols served mostly to distract the masses from hidden 'real' politics. We would argue for a less negative concept of symbolic politics following those such as Ulrich Sarcinelli and Ute Frevert, to name just two researchers, who championed the thought that all politics have to be in part also symbolic.[60]

European Integration in the 1950s was not only an institutional, bureaucratic or sectorial integration, it also had to be a symbolic one. Contrary to the traditional perception that the founding fathers were not interested in symbols, it is quite clear that Jean Monnet, Jean-Henri Spaak, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, and all the others were not only paying attention to legislative questions and structural developments but also to political symbolism which would 'translate' the challenging regulations of the ECSC, the common Market and Euratom into political rituals and sets of images.

The images we are going to discuss below are not only pictures in the strictest sense of the word; they are sets of images combined with commentary, musical score and cinematic montage. These stringent sets of images are metaphors or arguments for and of a European identity. They tried to explain symbolically the character of these new institutions.

These sets of images allow us, therefore, a first impression of what the Europeans saw of Europe. Like other images, these films and newsreel reports communicated imaginations and conceptions that helped the public to interpret their reality. Concerning European integration, these newsreels give us indications of the perception of the process of integration by the respective national publics. While there are some perceivable national differences in the motivation and argumentation for the integration process in the newsreels items, the images at work were similar, and more often than not even identical. The analysis of newsreels and information films shows that there were common imaginations at work in France, Germany, and Italy and to a lesser extent also in Austria and Great Britain. We should never forget that newsreel reports and documentaries were not so much communicating as constructing and creating these imaginations. And the fact that most of these imaginations are still communicated nowadays can be seen as evidence of their efficiency. These images of Europe were the first components of a European identity under construction; they were conditions for the success of the European project.

Different consolidated sets of European imaginations emerged from this analysis, and even though the following sets are based on the analysis of newsreel reports from 1948 to 1959, they share many characteristics with the images from the documentaries and information films mentioned above.

Of course, the most important images are those of the diplomatic meetings, conferences and signings of treaties, all of which can be summarised under the heading of *imaginations of a political community*. Images of the signature of European treaties are among the most durable and propagated. The best-known newsreel films and probably the most commonly replayed ones are those of the signing of the Rome Treaties in March 1957. Even today, we are quite familiar with these images, they were repeatedly shown in the news commemorating the 50th anniversary of the event, or as illustrations of reports on the European constitution. The signing of the treaties followed (and follows) a precisely given historical ritual and was/is thoroughly staged. The ritual itself was

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[59] M. Edelman, *Politik als Ritual* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2005), 146.
[60] U. Frevert, 'Neue Politikgeschichte', in J. Eibach and G. Lottes, eds, *Kompass der Geschichtswissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 152-164, 160.

modelled on the signing of the Schuman Plan in 1951[61] but it shares many traits with previous signings of treaties, the Treaty of Brussels in 1949 being a good example. The location was almost always dignified with a historical ambiance. The statesmen were seated behind nameplates of their respective countries, authenticating them as representatives of their nations. The exposition of the story with an establishing shot of the locality was followed by pictures of the reporters, cameramen and a flurry of camera flashes.

Those were not in any way revolutionary new pictures communicating a new Europe. The depiction of signings of state treaties had quite a long tradition. The iconography is comparable to that of images traditionally used in such contexts. Importance was attached to the idea of the equality of all political actors involved. Personal contact, i.e. the handshake, symbolised the friendship and cooperation not only of the individuals, but of the nations and people they represented. In this context the 'personal' meetings of Konrad Adenauer and Charles De Gaulle gained particular significance. These images stand in the tradition of the long established genre of history painting, such as, for instance, *The swearing of the oath of ratification of the Treaty of Münster in 1648* (Gerard ter Borch, 1648), John Trumbull's *Declaration of Independence of the United States* (1817) or even the signing of the Final Act at the Congress of Vienna by Jean Baptiste Isabey (1815), to give only three of the most widely known examples. The same is true for conferences which followed a long iconographic tradition. Images of a political community were meant to legitimise the European project in front of the audience by demonstrating that the diplomatic rules had been observed. They communicated furthermore that the integration process was being implemented jointly by equal member states. These images of a treaty and a group of equals are one of the central topics in the European iconography.

A slightly different set of images was the collection of reports on parliamentary debates concerning the European treaties in the respective national assemblies, which transmitted the idea *of a potential democratic community*. In view of the recent debate on the democratic deficits of the EU they are of special interest for historians. While they have never been a dominant set of images of European integration, they must not be forgotten. The rejection of the European Defence Community in the French Assemblée Nationale in particular proved to the public that the integration process always had to be justified in front of an electorate.

Images of *opening barriers* were not only central to the staged events of federalists, but also to the iconography of the European institutions.[62] Some of the most effective images in the history of the European construction are pictures of opening barriers at the inner European frontiers. These pictures visualise the end of toll barriers and imply that in the long term there will be no border controls at all; such images have potential to exercise a powerful and lasting effect on the imagination of the European audiences.[63] Frontiers are shown as something purely negative and detrimental to commerce and development. They are depicted as ancient remnants of a darker past. They also go back to a long iconographic tradition. Most of them are directly linked to political upheavals and revolutions, such as the French Revolution or the German unification in the 19th century.

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[61] 'Les représentants des 6 nations ont signés Schuman', *Pathé Journal*, no. 17, 25 Apr.1951, Gaumont-Pathé Archives, Saint-Ouen; 'Paris: Unterzeichnung des Schumanplans', *Welt im Film*, no. 308, 27 Apr. 1951, Archiv der Deutschen Wochenschau GmbH, Hamburg.

[62] The two best known events are the charging of the toll barriers by students at the German-French borders in St. Germanshof (06.08.1950) and Hirschthal (24.11.1950). The information film *Pionniers de l'Europe* (F 1951) addresses the episode in August 1950. As a student, the former German Bundeskanzler Helmut Kohl participated in a similar event.

[63] See for example P. Deger, 'Grenzen', in P. den Boer, H. Duchhardt, G. Kreis, W. Schmale, eds, *Europäische Erinnerungsorte 1. Mythen und Grundbegriffe des europäischen Selbstverständnisses* (München: Oldenburg, 2012), 247-256; and our forthcoming publication G. Clemens, A. Bruch, J. Goergen, T. Tode, *Werben für Europa. Die mediale Konstruktion europäischer Identität durch Filme im Rahmen europäischer Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*, 2014.

From images of borders it is only a small conceptual step to *European maps,* where the European integration has been constructed from its beginning. Maps depicting the European continent are in fact an old topic: from the allegoric maps of the Renaissance (for example, Sebastian Münster's *Europa Regina*) up to the first political maps of the 17th century. Even before the ECSC was established, geographical depictions of Europe had been at the core of the political communication of the European Recovery Programme, and before that, they were used in the project for Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi's Paneuropa Union. Politics were made with the aid of maps. Boundaries and frontiers, invisible to the naked eye, became solid and official in maps. Boundaries, that which separates us from others, are a central aspect of identity building, so it should not come as a surprise that maps were of central importance for most of the newsreel reports that tried to propagate the idea of a European community. In contrast to maps of Europe in newspapers and books, newsreels offered animated maps, where countries changed colours, grew together and boundaries vanished. While maps can also be understood as going back to an essential cultural identity of the continent, the fact that these maps were animated illustrates the European integration as a construction in process.

Last but definitely not least comes arguably the most successful set of images of Europe showing that the European integration would lead to an *economic community that would result in industrial and economic prosperity.* In the period of the ECSC's activity, the first half of the 1950s, images of coalmines and miners, of gigantic steel mills, visual impressive flying sparks and molten steel were especially popular, together with images of a developing infrastructure, mainly of railroad networks and infinitely long freight trains. These depictions stood in the tradition of early industrial paintings and photographs. Then, with the creation of the Common Market, pictures of newly constructed highways, apartment buildings and especially consumer products, varying from German cameras to Dutch cheese, gained more and more importance. Images of the manufacturing process illustrated the recovery of the European economy. The origin of this visual policy lay in the staged rituals of the European integration: the cast of the first European steel ingot, the first European coal train etc. The visual paradigm which tried to communicate economic prosperity was taken over by the national newsreel companies and supranational as well as national information films; it continued to be used up until the late 1960s with only some slight variations.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFORMATION FILMS AND NEWSREELS

Newsreels and information films shared many of these 'images of Europe', which made it possible to take them as a joint subject for this paper. While different in length, both newsreel and information films used for the most part the same images and the same arguments to communicate the integration process to a general public. Both brought pictures of industrial development, especially of steel and coal, of opening barriers and animated maps to give reasons for, and bestow meaning upon, this political endeavour. Mainly, however, the motivation for the production of newsreel and information films differed considerably. While the information films were commissioned by European political actors to promote European integration, newsreels obeyed the logic of the producing companies. The vast majority of reports were not commissioned by a political agent but tried to satisfy a perceived demand for information and entertainment.[64] Concerning this

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[64] Attempts of the Service de Presse et Information of the ECSC to provide first-hand newsreel footage failed because of a lack of financial and professional background: a project to finance at least 6 specific 'European' newsreel items per year and per newsreel company mentioned in Max Kohnstamm, Note au groupe de travail "Presse et Information", 13. Juli 1955, CEAB 13-68, Archives historiques de l'Union Européenne, Firenze was no longer mentioned in the 18th session, Tagesordnung, 10. Oktober 1957, CEAB 13-187, Archives historiques de l'Union Européenne, Firenze.

fundamental difference in the motivation of the production, this congruence of images might surprise at first glance, but is in fact evidence of a Pan-European political discourse.

There were, however, some considerable differences between newsreel reports and information films. On the one hand, information films did not focus on political legitimacy. The political rituals of the integration process, i.e. conferences, treaties etc. played far less a role in information films than in newsreel reports.[65] On the other hand, while the invocation of a shared European cultural history was of central importance for the argumentation of the information films, a positive lack of any allusions to a cultural European identity characterised the newsreel reports of the 1950s. It is possible that these differences were caused by the different format of these two audio-visual sources. While commissioned information films adopted the political rationale of European actors, like the European Movement, the Council of Europe, the ECSC etc., national newsreel reports assumed the point of view of national political actors, for whom a political and diplomatic legitimacy was of a central importance.

CONCLUSION

From the very beginning, the public relations campaigns of the various European institutions aimed at developing a consistent picture of 'Europe'. For one part, officials, media experts as well as film directors were involved in the discussion of how to define, legitimise and portray the idea of Europe. For the other part, these images as well as those from newsreels were a result of a political discourse and a centuries-old iconographic tradition. In the early production of information films, Europe was mainly based on cultural and historical elements. But with the development of concrete European institutions, and the increasing need to report on them on a regular basis, actual content and policies had to be communicated and transformed into audio-visual images.

By means of film as a medium with a powerful potential for awakening feelings of identification, empathy and parasocial interaction, the coordinators tried to propagate solidarity among the people of Europe. The constant repetition of identical images, combined with informative commentaries in the films was meant to communicate common values and norms to the Europeans. Images of Europe that tried to explain the new European institutions and make the process of integration more understandable to the European public were based on a specific arrangement of master narratives and visualised visions of a better future. This composition included not only images of reason confronting the inglorious and belligerent past with a present that consisted of a harmonious cooperation between the European states as well as of a prosperous European society, but, in the case of the information films, also metaphors and tropes of a common culture and history.

Therefore, analysis of the newsreel productions and public relations campaigns of the European institutions and their European information films breaks with the traditional analysis of European integration, which has so far concentrated mainly on the history of its institutions and international relations.[66]

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[65] Clemens, op.cit. n43, 59.

[66] P. Pichler, 'Identity through History? European Integration History as a Protagonist in the Construction of a European Identity', in M. Beers and J. Raflik, eds, *Cultures nationales et identité communautaire. Un défi pour l'Europe?/ National Cultures and Common Identity. A Challenge for Europe* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2010), available at http://www.docstoc.com/docs/98121207/Peter-Pichler-Karl-Franzens-Universit-Graz-Austria-Identity [11 August 2013]; S. Berger, 'History and National Identity. Why They Should Remain Divorced', 2007, available at http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-66.html [11 August 2013].

Those national governments participating in the integration process had to tackle the difficult question of how to inform the audience about the loss of national sovereignty, which would inevitably be the price that would need to be paid. The visualisation of this complex balance between European and national interests was hindered by the constant risk that European communication strategies could be perceived by the audiences as mere propaganda. It can in fact be misleading to use the term propaganda for these promotional films, as they were lacking the political machinery involved that characterised for example the fascist or communist propaganda. While the informational films discussed above had a definite political aim, most of them had neither the financial nor the political background to finance psychological surveys comparable to the denazification process.[67] The same is true for newsreel items. What is more, there were no specific exit-polls with information on the reception of the different items. Therefore, it is impossible to gauge the direct impact of newsreel items or documentary films on national audiences. A synchronal and diachronal analysis of the European images on the other hand gives evidence of its penetration of a European discourse. In this context, it is of utmost importance that images, metaphors and visualised master narratives be included in extensive analyses of the history of the European integration processes as well as the strategies that were used to define and communicate a European identity.

A comparison of promotional films and newsreel can also help to elucidate further the integration process and the different political agendas at work: whereas promotional films of the European institutions were often exceedingly idealistic, the news reported in newsreels tended to be more down to earth and concentrated far more on the economic and social consequences. Concerning the newsreel coverage of the integration process it is crucial to understand that, first, all newsreel companies of one country, regardless of their political background and financial structure, presented their audience with one consistent catalogue of European images. Second, the same is true for a comparison of the different national newsreels and European information films. While the European policies of the different nations were motivated by diverging national agendas, these never affected the common catalogue of European images in newsreels. National differences came down to a different frequency of news coverage. While French and German newsreels covered more or less all of the European conferences, treaties, etc., Austrian and British newsreel reports on the European communities were far less frequent. This does not mean that the newsreel reports shown in four different countries were exactly the same and there are sometimes perceptible differences in the commentary: the quest for sovereignty of Western Germany compared to the nostalgia of a 'Grande Nation' in France, and the Italian endeavours to become an equal partner within the Western world through the process of European integration, to give only a few examples. In light of the actual fragmentation of the European media landscape[68] it might be surprising that national deviations never affected the common imagery or goals in newsreels but only provided a different rationale for the national involvement. This is partly due to the medium itself. Most international newsreel companies had signed agreements to exchange newsreel footage to economise camera teams. Another reason for the similarity of images was the international 'film language' with its iconographic traditions used by camera operators across the globe. Last but not least, the 'European actors' themselves, i.e. the institutions and politicians, were responsible for a transnational catalogue of images by initiating the political rituals at the origin of the presented European

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[67] To a certain extent the ECA controlled the production process of the Marshall Plan films and carried out some surveys. In Rome, for example, the Italian ECA officials monitored all measures concerning Marshall Plan information activities. David W. Ellwood: E.R.P. Propaganda in Italy: Its History and Impact in an Official Survey, in E. Krippendorff, ed., *The Role of the United States in the Reconstruction of Italy and West Germany, 1943-1949* (Berlin: John F. Kennedy Institut für Nordamerikastudien – Freie Universität Berlin 1980), 274-302.

[68] H.-J. Trenz, '*In search of popular subjecthood: constitution-making and the democratic consolidation of the EU*', unpublished manuscript, (Oslo: ARENA 2008), 8.

imaginations. These rituals were not an invention of the post-war era but were in fact the result of centuries of diplomatic and symbolic traditions.

What stands out is the fact that even the few Austrian and British reports that exist (which are around twenty compared to over 200 in France or Germany) were composed after the same logic and used the same iconography as the French and German imaginations. A common catalogue of European Imaginations has emerged and solidified across Western Europe and became the nucleus of our contemporary European iconography. Concerning the question of a political identity of the European integration, it is impossible to assess the success of such political communication retrospectively. However, we would argue that there were some potent propositions of a political identity.

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