I. INTRODUCTION

THE CHURCHILL MOMENT

"My Dear Mr Churchill" is a typical salutation used by English-speaking writers – women and men from various countries – of letters addressed to Winston S. Churchill between 1946 and around 1951. Such letters were sent not only by people living in English-speaking countries, but also from France, Germany, Switzerland and other countries such as Uruguay or Cuba. People wrote in their native language, in English, or in other foreign languages they had adopted as theirs in the host countries to which they had emigrated. It was a time during which Churchill travelled to several European countries and the USA and gave dozens of speeches – frequently because honorary degrees, usually doctorates in Law, were being conferred on him, but also often at the invitation of national parliaments.

One of Churchill's speeches, namely the one given at Zurich University on 19 September 1946, became famous for its exhortation of the Europeans to build a United States of Europe.[1] It was not the first time Churchill had advocated this project. I will pass over his many comments on Europe in the interwar years and during the Second World War, but in most of his speeches between 1945 and 1948, Churchill at least mentioned or in some cases even expressly detailed the concept of a United States of Europe (USE): Brussels, 16 November 1945 (speech to the joint meeting of the Senate and the Chamber)[2]; The Hague, 9 May 1946 (speech to the States General of the Netherlands)[3]; Zurich, 19 September 1946 (the aforementioned "Zurich speech", Zurich University)[4]; London, 14 May 1947 (Albert Hall, United Europe meeting)[5]; The Hague, 7 May 1948 (Congress of

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1   The history and chronology of the Zurich speech were established by Sauter, Max (1976): Churchills Schweizer Besuch 1946 und die Zürcher Rede. Herisau (Philosophical dissertation, University of Zurich). Sauter prints the *spoken* version (recording by Radio Zurich), which differs in some details from the version printed later in "The Sinews of Peace" (see next footnote). A third version, likewise differing from the delivered speech in some details, was circulated to the press after the speech (see Sauter, p. 77, footnote 241). See also Klos, Felix (2016): Churchill on Europe. The Untold Story of Churchill's European Project. London – New York (Klos does not quote Sauter, so the story is less 'untold' than he claims …). Klos wanted to clarify Churchill's position with regard to the Brexit debate in the UK: Brexiteers and Remainers alike claimed Churchill as support for their opinion.

2   See Churchill, Winston S. (1948): The Sinews of Peace. Post-War Speeches, ed. by Randolph S. Churchill. London, p. 41–44.

3   See Churchill, The Sinews of Peace, op. cit., p. 128–134.

4   See Churchill, The Sinews of Peace, op. cit., p. 198–202.

5   See Churchill, Winston S. (1950): Europe Unite. Speeches 1947 and 1948, ed. by Randolph S. Churchill. London, p. 77–85.

Europe)[6]. In several other speeches, he did not mention the USE explicitly, instead speaking of a "united Europe": Metz, 14 July 1946[7]; Amsterdam, 9 May 1948 (open-air meeting)[8]; London, 17 November 1948 ("United Europe" exhibition, Dorland Hall)[9].

Nearly all of Churchill's speeches, or at least their key messages, were disseminated by the international media. His public was international and as large as one could imagine, and the reason is clear: After the war, there was no statesman more renowned than Churchill, whose excellent speeches had always had the quality of practical acts with a deep impact on public opinion. It is no coincidence that he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature some years later in 1953, for his rhetoric was exceptional and could be understood by everyone.

It is noteworthy that Churchill was a Freemason. This is not to say that his ideas pertaining to Europe originated exclusively in Freemasonry, but they were certainly encouraged by it as we will see below in chapter II. And although he was an avowed conservative and Christian, his speeches also reached people who held other political opinions or referred to Christianism less than he did.

In the postwar years, Churchill ceaselessly attempted to foster a new European spirit of unity and collaboration, at least in the West. He (and one is tempted to say: he alone) was able to outline in a single speech the global political situation and the roles played by the different powers, the development of Europe during the early "Cold War" (the expression is not contemporaneous) and the diminishing influence of the British Empire or Commonwealth. He was historian enough to convincingly evoke the *longue-durée* phenomena in the postwar present, and he was a staunch and convincing democrat who stood on a foundation of solid values. One may object that he argued in favour of colonialism, and we will see in the coming chapters how the representatives of civil society dealt with the issue of democracy and colonialism. Nevertheless, Churchill's analyses of the global political, military, economic and social situation were clear and mostly factual, and they were characterized by a pronounced fairness.

In short, Churchill was unique in that he was simultaneously an intellectual, an outstanding politician, and a man whose speeches touched people of all social strata, whether they were from allied nations or from former enemies such as Germany. He became the link between ordinary citizens' ideas of a united Europe on the one hand and the political project of a European union – or a United States of Europe, the term preferred by Churchill – on the other. There was something like a "Churchill moment", a specific impetus, in the early years of European unification following the Second World War, and this is why it seems reasonable to me to bring together Winston Spencer Churchill and the "ordinary citizens".

The pinnacle of this Churchill moment was undeniably the Congress of Europe in The Hague in 1948 (7–10 May), a decisive and emotional event in the

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6   See Churchill, Europe Unite, op. cit., p. 310–317.
7   See Churchill, The Sinews of Peace, op. cit., p. 171–175.
8   See Churchill, Europe Unite, op. cit., p. 318–321.
9   See Churchill, Europe Unite, op. cit., p. 465–466.

history of the European unification movement. The congress united representatives of European civil society as well as intellectuals and representatives of the political class, some of whom had been active in resistance movements during the Second World War or participated in one of the committees or commissions of the League of Nations, in a human rights league, or in an association or society supporting European cooperation, European unification or the idea of a United States of Europe. It provided a massive impulse for the European federalist movements and had an impact on the founding process of the Council of Europe as well. In his opening speech, Churchill aptly declared: "This is not a Movement of parties but a movement of peoples."[10]

The Congress of Europe and the establishment of the *European Movement International* in Brussels in October 1948 evoked a broad media echo, encouraging many ordinary people to write letters to Churchill (and presumably to other politicians as well) and become activists – Europeanists – themselves. These letters, which will be examined in chapter IV, are characteristic of the late 1940s and early 1950s as a period in between the dynamics of a civil society inherited from the interwar period and the resistance movements on the one hand and the new dynamics of institutionalized European integration on the other.

This is not to say that the letters to Churchill do not raise certain questions. Not all of the writers were without doubts, and some were – at least formerly – fascists. The background of the latter's European ideas can be traced back to fascist conceptions of a European "unity". Nevertheless, they were part of the numerous chorus that sung, after the war, the song of European unification in a European Union or a United States of Europe.

In their totality, these letters illustrate very well who were the individuals wishing to be part of the European movements as active members or as supporters backing their idealism. One could say they represent the "European movement generation" of the early postwar years, with their authorship comprising teenagers going to school, university students, young people who had experienced their late youth in the war, "mature" adults, and elderly men and women.

European integration has always been advanced by the many and not only by the few, though this fact has largely been forgotten in the meantime. The institutionalization of the integration process by creating "first"[11] the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), then the European Economic Community and so on all the way to the European Union has slowly but noticeably alienated citizens from the idea of Europe. It was with good reason that pro-European associations such as the European Federalists were initially sceptical regarding the path paved by the ECSC, though they did not resist the developments in a fundamentalist fashion.

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10 Speech at The Hague, Congress of Europe, 7 May 1948. In: Churchill, Europe Unite, op. cit., p. 311.
11 "First" refers to those institutions that were, at least in hindsight, the forerunners of the European Union of today.

Institutionalization relegated the pro-European civil movements to the background. They continued to exist and disseminate the idea of European unity, but the information machine created by the European Communities became stronger and appropriated public attention.[12] With the economic and financial crises becoming a political crisis of the European Union in recent years, existing pro-European associations have found their way back into the public eye and new organizations such as "Pulse of Europe" have been established.[13] In hindsight, Europe as the "project of an elite" was no more than an episode. The new generation of ordinary citizens marching in favour of European-Union Europe do so because they know there is much to be lost. The interwar and early postwar generations of ordinary citizens – not without exception, of course – were willing to unite Europe, and while the fundamental motives have necessarily been modified, what has not changed to this day is the fact that ordinary citizens stand up to do what is necessary when Europe is in crisis. They did so after the First World War (and of course even earlier as well, but that is not the topic of this book), they did so *during* both World Wars under life-threatening circumstances, they continued to do so after the Second World War, and they are doing so now.

In his opening speech to the Congress of Europe in The Hague in 1948, Winston Churchill said:

> The Movement for European Unity must be a positive force, deriving its strength from our sense of common spiritual values. It is a dynamic expression of democratic faith based upon moral conceptions and inspired by a sense of mission. In the centre of our movement stands the idea of a Charter of Human Rights, guarded by freedom and sustained by law.[14]

This statement provides an excellent summary of what organizations like the human rights leagues that were active during the interwar period believed in. At its height between the wars, the French *Ligue des Droits de l'Homme* had more than 180,000 members. It was a major civil society agent, and most of its members must be considered "ordinary citizens". Like many of his other speeches, Churchill's words in The Hague established a connection between the prewar goal of a democratic and pacifistic civil society largely composed of ordinary citizens and supporting the notion of a new Europe – one that would consist of a union or

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12 See as an exemplary study Reinfeldt, Alexander (2014): Unter Ausschluss der Öffentlichkeit? Akteure und Strategien supranationaler Informationspolitik in der Gründungsphase der europäischen Integration, 1952–1972. Stuttgart.

13 See Leggewie, Claus (2017): Europa zuerst! Eine Unabhängigkeitserklärung. Berlin. Leggewie's approach focuses on grassroots movements. In this he differs radically from other studies that prefer a view from above: Marcowitz, Reiner; Wilkens, Andreas, eds. (2014): Une "Europe des citoyens". Société civile et identité européenne de 1945 à nos jours. Bern.

14 Churchill, Europe Unite, op. cit., p. 312. A French version of the speech was also distributed to the press on 7 May 1948 (after 3.30 p.m.): This material was collected by Robert Aron, one of the French participants, who later donated his congress papers to the *Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine* (hereafter BDIC), Paris-Nanterre in December 1955. For the imprint of Churchill's speech in French, see Fonds Congrès de l'Europe (1948), BDIC, F delta res 0114.

"United States" of democratic European countries respecting basic human rights – and the postwar civil society and governments.

That being said, this book focuses on a small number of case studies that help to round out our knowledge on who these ordinary citizens were that formed the basis of civil society in regard to European unification and what role they played in Europeanism. For the interwar years, I have chosen the cases of the *Freemasons* on the one hand and the *human rights leagues* on the other. Both were intertwined with each other and combined national and international structures and elements extending far beyond geographic Europe. The reason for this choice is that prewar and interwar societies were conducive to a rich landscape of leagues, associations, societies, committees etc. that were connected in national, transnational and international frameworks. The establishment of the League of Nations proved to be propitious for this kind of organized civil society – though the term "civil society" should not be interpreted as signifying a societal sector separated from or flatly opposed to politics. Active members of leagues, committees, societies and the like often appear to have been active politicians as well. This fact does not change the civil society character of these organizations, however, and Freemasons and human rights league activists thus constitute an excellent way of opening doors to understanding the civil society during the interwar period.

The third, postwar case study deals with the many people who wrote letters to Churchill. For the most part, they were ordinary citizens acting outside of any organizational framework at the time they penned their letters. There was also no organizational link or network between them individually like there was in the case of Freemasonry and human rights activists. What they did have in common was a conviction – namely that Europe should unite – and a leading personality they believed in: Winston S. Churchill. Some of them were of course involved in certain civil society organizations or had applied to join one or the other, but I have chosen to study them as individuals since that is what they appear as in their letters. As mentioned above, these writers of letters to Churchill represent quite aptly the generation in which the emerging European movements[15] found active members and supporters of their ideas. They were the door openers to this field of recruitment.

Compared to the more or less illustrious assembly at the Congress of Europe in The Hague, our letter writers were also more frequently members of the lower social classes. Churchill himself sketched a picture of the assembly:

> This Congress has brought together leaders of thought and action from all the free countries of Europe. Statesmen of all political parties, leading figures from all the Churches, eminent writers, leaders of the professions, lawyers, chiefs of industry and prominent trade-unionists

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15 European overview of European Movements: Pistone, Sergio, ed. (1996): I Movimenti per l'Unità Europea 1954–1969. Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Genova, 5–7 novembre 1992. Pavia.

are gathered here. In fact a representative grouping of the most essential elements in the polit-
ical, industrial, cultural and spiritual life of Europe is now assembled in this ancient hall.[16]

Most of the letter writers definitely did not belong to these classes, and the same
can be said about prewar Europeanists. Organizations or associations such as hu-
man rights leagues, Freemasons, pacifists and others were backed by a massive
base in various countries. Their members numbered in the tens of thousands or
even more than a hundred thousand besides the few well-known representatives.
One could nevertheless argue that this still did not place them outside of the realm
of the social elites; I will revisit this aspect in more detail in the respective chap-
ters.

SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE IDEA OF EUROPEAN UNITY

"Civil society", and even more so "ordinary citizens", paved the way for a "social
history of the idea of European unity". Since the medieval period, important
figureheads like Dante Alighieri ("De Monarchia", early 14th century), Erasmus of
Rotterdam ("Querela Pacis", early 16th century), Sully ("Grand Design", early 17th
century), Abbé de Saint-Pierre ("Paix perpétuelle", early 18th century), Rousseau
(new edition of de Saint-Pierre's treaty, mid-18th century) and Kant ("Perpetual
Peace", late 18th century), Henri de Saint-Simon (European monarchical state,
early 19th century), Victor Hugo (concept of fraternal nations, mid-19th century),
Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi ("Pan-Europe", interwar years), Jean
Monnet (institutional integration, interwar and postwar period) and many others
have been studied copiously in regard to their contributions to the political-
philosophical notion of European unity.[17]

The idea of seeking a broader social base for such a unified Europe was first
explored by scholars and especially historians during the Second World War. In
a first phase, which can be distinguished from the second phase starting around
fifteen years ago, scholars enlarged the group of studied authors writing about
Europe and its unification. Heinz Gollwitzer conducted research on the notion and
imagination of Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century during

16   Churchill, Europe Unite, op. cit., p. 311. The social stratification of national delegations to the
     Congress is examined in Guieu, Jean-Michel; Le Dréau, Christophe, eds. (2009): Le "Con-
     grès de l'Europe" à la Haye (1948–2008). Brussels: French delegation, studied by Bernard
     Lachaise, p. 151–167, especially p. 155; British delegation, studied by Christophe Le Dréau,
     p. 169–185; Belgian delegation, studied by Geneviève Duchenne, p. 187–197; Dutch delega-
     tion, studied by Annemarie Van Heerikhuizen, p. 199–209; Italian delegation, studied by
     Simone Paoli, p. 211–222; Greek delegation, studied by Alexandra Patrikiou, p. 223–232;
     Hungarian delegation, studied by Gergely Fejérdy, p. 233–242. The question of "elites" is
     posed by Alexander Reinfeldt, p. 287–298.
17   The main authors of plans for Europe are presented in Böttcher, Winfried, ed. (2014): Klassi-
     ker des europäischen Denkens. Friedens- und Europavorstellungen aus 700 Jahren europäi-
     scher Kulturgeschichte. Baden-Baden. See also Hewitson, Mark; D'Auria, Matthew, eds.
     (2012): Europe in Crisis. Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917–1957. New York.

the Second World War, and the resulting book on "Europabild und Europagedanke" was first published in Munich in 1951.[18] Gollwitzer took into consideration not only the figureheads of the epoch, but also included a number of second-line authors. In the 1960s, Walter Lipgens set out to investigate the history of resistance groups in Europe. He published hundreds of documents showing the richness and inveteracy of the idea of European unity in various political, religious and ideological milieus. The four volumes "Documents on the History of European Integration" (published 1985–1991, all documents translated into English or printed in their original English versions) impressively present the sizeable and diverse social base that Europe was intellectually built upon after the war. Lipgens died while editing this enormous collection of records (ca. 750 documents dating from 1939 to 1950), and it was Wilfried Loth who eventually completed the editorial work in 1991.[19] A few years later in 1995, a valuable synthesis was provided by Michel Dumoulin in "Plans des temps de guerre pour l'Europe d'après-guerre 1940–1947"[20]. This collection of research articles includes the ideas of Nazis and their collaborators on Europe. In general, the participation and impact of extreme right-wing and fascist groups should not be underestimated – as shown in the studies by Bernard Bruneteau ("Les 'collabos' de l'Europe nouvelle")[21] and Robert Grunert[22], for example. While this aspect has been a subject of intensive research for only around thirty years, Lipgens had already collected and published such documents as well.

In the meantime, several synthetic studies have also been published that focus on individual participants, groups (interest groups, professional groups, associations) and networks. Among these, one might highlight (in chronological order) Gérard Bossuat's "Inventer l'Europe. Histoire nouvelle des groupes d'influence et des acteurs de l'unité européenne" (2003)[23], Olivier Dard and Étienne Deschamps's "Les relèves en Europe d'un après-guerre à l'autre" (2005)[24], Jean-Michel Guieu and Christophe Le Dréau's "Le 'Congrès de l'Europe' à La Haye (1948–2008)" (2009)[25] and Veronika Heyde's "De l'esprit de la Résistance

18 Gollwitzer, Heinz (1951): Europabild und Europagedanke. Munich.

19 Lipgens, Walter; Loth, Wilfried, eds. (1985–1991): Documents on the History of European Integration, 4 vols. Berlin. Vols. 1 (1985) and 2 (1986) cover 1939–1945, vols. 3 (1988) and 4 (1991) cover 1945–1950.

20 Dumoulin, Michel, ed. (1995): Plans des temps de guerre pour l'Europe d'après-guerre, 1940–1947 / Wartime Plans for Postwar Europe, 1940–1947. Actes du colloque de Bruxelles 12–14 mai 1993. Baden-Baden – Brussels.

21 Bruneteau, Bernard (2016): Les "collabos" de l'Europe nouvelle. Paris.

22 Grunert, Robert (2012): Der Europagedanke westeuropäischer faschistischer Bewegungen 1940–1945. Paderborn.

23 Bossuat, Gérard, ed. (2003): Inventer l'Europe. Histoire nouvelle des groupes d'influence et des acteurs de l'unité européenne. Avec la collaboration de Georges Saunier. Brussels.

24 Dard, Olivier; Deschamps, Étienne, eds. (2008): Les relèves en Europe d'un après-guerre à l'autre. Racines, réseaux, projets et postérités, 2nd ed. Brussels (1st ed. 2005). This collection of articles covers a wide range of conceptions of Europe from right-wing to left-wing political orientations, from religious to non-religious approaches, etc.

25 Guieu/Le Dréau, eds., Le "Congrès de l'Europe" à la Haye, op. cit.

jusqu'à l'idée de l'Europe. Projets européens et américains pour l'Europe de l'après-guerre (1940–1950)" (2010).[26] The idea of a United States of Europe as discussed among labour movements was studied by Willy Buschak (2014).[27]

Some authors like Wolfram Kaiser, Brigitte Leucht and Morten Rasmussen (2009)[28] or Kaiser, Leucht and Michael Gehler in "Transnational Networks in Regional Integration" (2010)[29] have focused specifically on networks of Europeanists. Christina Norwig studied the European Youth Campaign in the 1950s, which allowed her to enlarge the social base of the European idea.[30]

Other scholars have studied pro-European movements and groups of interest in individual countries in depth. I will list but a few of these, again in chronological order: Heinz Duchhardt and Małgorzata Morawiec's "Vision Europa" (2003) dealing with German and Polish Europeanists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries[31]; Anita Ziegerhofer's "Botschafter Europas. Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi und die Paneuropa-Bewegung in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren" (2004)[32]; Vanessa Conze's "Das Europa der Deutschen" (2005)[33]; and Geneviève Duchenne's "L'européisme dans la Belgique de l'entre-deux-guerres (1919–1939)" (2008)[34].

Finally, a ground-breaking effort was undertaken by Gabriele Clemens with her study examining pro-European advertising films.[35]

Pacifists and their movements, League of Nations associations, European federalist movements, and the Europeanism of political parties of all colours and ideological orientations have also been examined. The emergence of various

26 Heyde, Veronika (2010): De l'esprit de la Résistance jusqu'à l'idée de l'Europe. Projets européens et américains pour l'Europe de l'après-guerre (1940–1950). Brussels. In addition, the reader may consult the following book: Henrich-Franke, Christian, ed. (2014): Die "Schaffung" Europas in der Zwischenkriegszeit. Politische, wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Konstruktionen eines vereinten Europas. Berlin.

27 Buschak, Willy (2014): Die Vereinigten Staaten von Europa sind unser Ziel. Arbeiterbewegung und Europa im frühen 20. Jahrhundert. Essen.

28 Leucht, Brigitte; Rasmussen, Morten; Kaiser, Wolfram, eds. (2009): The History of the European Union. Origins of a Trans- and Supranational Polity 1950–72. New York – London.

29 Leucht, Brigitte; Gehler, Michael; Kaiser, Wolfram, eds. (2010): Transnational Networks in Regional Integration. Governing Europe 1945–83. New York.

30 Norwig, Christina (2016): Die erste europäische Generation. Europakonstruktionen in der Europäischen Jugendkampagne, 1951–1958. Göttingen.

31 Duchhardt, Heinz; Morawiec, Małgorzata, eds. (2003): Vision Europa. Deutsche und polnische Föderationspläne des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts. Mainz.

32 Ziegerhofer-Prettenthaler, Anita (2004): Botschafter Europas. Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi und die Paneuropa-Bewegung in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren. Vienna.

33 Conze, Vanessa (2005): Das Europa der Deutschen. Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung (1920–1970). Munich. See also Conze, Vanessa (2004): Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi. Umstrittener Visionär Europas. Gleichen (brief biography for 'popular' use).

34 Duchenne, Geneviève (2008): Esquisses d'une Europe nouvelle. L'européisme dans la Belgique de l'entre-deux-guerres (1919–1939). Brussels.

35 Clemens, Gabriele, ed. (2016): Werben für Europa. Die mediale Konstruktion europäischer Identität durch Europafilme. Paderborn.

European movements in the period since the end of the Second World War has inspired a number of scholars to study this Europe "from below". Paolo Caraffini tellingly entitled his 2008 book on the subject of the "Consiglio italiano del movimento Europeo" from 1948 to 1985 "Costruire l'Europa del basso" (Building Europe From Below).[36]

All of these works together form a rich spectrum to which I hope to add the perspective of "civil society" and "ordinary citizens". Naturally, this approach overlaps with previous studies – but not in relation to the specific case studies on the Masons, human rights leagues and writers of letters to Churchill, nor in the aspect of its unique viewpoint.

EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY
AND THE IDEA OF EUROPEAN UNITY

Definition of "Civil Society"

The rise of civil society is commonly placed in the eighteenth century in terms of both theory and practice.[37] The idea of dissociating state and society grew slowly from its beginnings in the seventeenth century, but was apparently quite well

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36 Caraffini, Paolo (2008): Costruire l'Europa dal basso. Il ruolo del Consiglio italiano del movimento europeo (1948–1985). Bologna.

37 The following 12 paragraphs are partially identical to Schmale, Wolfgang; Treiblmayr, Christopher: Human Rights Leagues and Civil Society (1898 – ca. 1970s). In: Historische Mitteilungen 27 (2015), p. 186–208, here p. 199–201 (the author of this part of the article being Wolfgang Schmale). The historical draft is based specifically on: Adloff, Frank (2005): Zivilgesellschaft. Theorie und politische Praxis. Frankfurt am Main – New York. Bauerkämper, Arnd, ed. (2003): Die Praxis der Zivilgesellschaft. Akteure, Handeln und Strukturen im internationalen Vergleich. Frankfurt am Main – New York. Becker, Marvin B. (1994): The Emergence of Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century. A Privileged Moment in the History of England, Scotland, and France. Bloomington. Bermeo, Nancy; Nord, Philip, eds. (2000): Civil Society before Democracy. Lessons from Nineteenth-Century Europe. Boston. Colás, Alejandro (2013): International Civil Society. Social Movements in World Politics. Hoboken. Davies, Thomas (2013): NGOs. A New History of Transnational Civil Society. London. Edwards, Michael, ed. (2011): The Oxford Handbook of Civil Society. Oxford. Eyffinger, Arthur (1999): The 1899 Hague Peace Conference. 'The Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World'. The Hague – London – Boston. Geremek, Bronisław; National Humanities Center, eds. (1992): The Idea of a Civil Society. National Humanities Center Conference. Research Triangle Park, NC. Hall, John A., ed. (1995): Civil Society. Theory, History, Comparison. Cambridge. Hoffmann, Stefan-Ludwig (2006): Civil society, 1750–1914. Basingstoke, Hampshire. Jessen, Ralph; Reichardt, Sven; Klein, Ansgar, eds. (2004): Zivilgesellschaft als Geschichte. Studien zum 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Wiesbaden. Keane, John, ed. (1988): Civil Society and the State. New European Perspectives. London. Linklater, Andrew (1982): Men and Citizens in the Theory of International Relations. London. Schwelling, Birgit, ed. (2012): Reconciliation, Civil Society, and the Politics of Memory. Transnational Initiatives in the 20th and 21st Century. Bielefeld. Seligman, Adam B. (1995): The Idea of Civil Society. Princeton, NJ. For further bibliographical details, see the quoted article by Schmale/Treiblmayr.

developed by the middle of the eighteenth century and eventually enabled Adam Ferguson to publish his famous "Essay on the History of Civil Society" in 1767.[38] One may rightfully doubt, however, that Ferguson's notion of "civil society" was identical to what we think of when using the term today.

On the one hand – and indeed to this day – civil society is a synonym for "bourgeois society", the new societal type that achieved hegemonic status in the nineteenth century. This notion of civil society is based on the historical fact that the bourgeois was first and foremost a *homo oeconomicus*. This specific quality of the bourgeoisie played a major role in the social revolutions of the late eighteenth century, with Karl Marx being the first to emphasize this relationship. Historians still maintain the importance of the interrelation between civil society and the economy of the bourgeois society.

Others trace the origin of the concept of civil society back to Aristotle's notion of "politiki koinonia", which regained popularity in the Late Middle Ages when Aristotle was translated into Latin and other vernacular languages. Most scholars writing on civil society refer to a long list of thinkers including John Locke, Montesquieu, Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, Alexis de Tocqueville, Antonio Gramsci and others – not to mention the controversial debates of the past decades. Today, "civil society" is an all-encompassing notion appearing to cover all organized and structured societal activities that are non-governmental and can be subsumed under the notion of participative democracy. This type of civil society is charac-terized by its globalized nature.

In historical hindsight, one may of course ask whether this is a new aspect or not. The bourgeois society and economy are linked to the period of globalization taking place during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. According to Manuel Castells, the network society is the agent of globalization during this period.[39]

Anti-slavery and abolition societies of the late eighteenth century were the first associations that can be regarded as organizational expressions of civil socie-ty. The fact that such associations came into being in the period of the Atlantic Revolutions can be explained by the new historic constellation owed precisely to these revolutions of society and state occurring in North America and France. This new constellation was characterized by a systemic relationship between the rule of law, humanitarianism and political participation by the people. Neither the American nor the French Revolution created constitutional institutions that could assume responsibility for the tasks resulting from this systemic constellation.

The best example to illustrate this issue is the anti-slavery movement. It origi-nated in England, initially driven by individual activists and later structured through the establishment of associations on both sides of the Atlantic. Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville transferred the idea to France and co-founded the

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38   Becker, Emergence, op. cit., p. XI, on Ferguson.
39   Castells, Manuel (1996): The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. 2nd ed., Oxford.

Société des Amis des Noirs in 1788. Together with Nicolas de Condorcet, the society's president in 1789, he attempted to have slavery abolished with the help of the "cahiers de doléances" through which the French population prepared the forthcoming *États-généraux* in Versailles. Members of the *Société* who became deputies to these Estates General, which were eventually transformed into the National Assembly, were involved in the enactment of a law prohibiting slavery.

The English, American and French anti-slavery and abolition societies formed a loose network, and they can be considered a structured and organized expression of the arising civil society. These organizations promoted the abolition of slavery throughout the nineteenth century and contributed to the formulation of international anti-slavery laws.

The second origin of structured and organized civil society are the women's associations created in France between 1789 and 1794. Many of these associations, though not all of them, promoted women's political and fundamental rights. Despite being prohibited in 1794, they formed the historic model for the women's movements and associations during the revolution of 1848 and in the Paris Commune of 1871. The most enduring of these associations were the *National Society for Women's Suffrage* founded in 1867 and the *Société du Suffrage des Femmes* established in 1883 – not to mention various others in many European countries. Women's clubs or societies were even to be found in the Balkans: Their main purpose was to teach women how to be a good wife and mother, but their work also comprised a strong nationalist element. These clubs were thus by no means apolitical – but were they part of a civil society, as some scholars suggest?[40]

Women likewise played an important role in Freemasonry, human rights leagues, pacifist movements, League of Nations associations and so forth – although Freemasonry nevertheless maintained its fraternity character in many regards. Women also wrote letters to Churchill. This is to say that the notion of civil society encompasses female activists as a condition for its definition.

The dismantling of imperialism and the nationalist state impeded the juridification and humanization of international relations, which also meant a setback for the national societies. Most of the peace and internationalist movements emerging as early as 1815 – one example being the *New York Peace Society* founded by the New York tradesman David L. Dodge in 1815 – can thus be viewed as part of the international civil society. The first international peace conferences were held in London in 1843, in Brussels in 1848, and in Paris in 1849, the latter with a famous allocution by Victor Hugo that was sometimes still quoted in letters to Churchill a hundred years later. The *International League for Peace and Freedom* organized a congress in Geneva in 1867 with more than 6,000 attendants, which shows how large the active base of civil society had become by that time. Freemasons had contributed to the establishment of this new peace association, which was strongly committed to the idea of a United States of Europe based on peace, liberty, justice

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40   Some of the articles in Hildermeier, Manfred; Kocka, Jürgen; Conrad, Christoph, eds. (2000): Europäische Zivilgesellschaft in Ost und West. Begriff, Geschichte, Chancen. Frankfurt am Main – New York, seem to suggest such a broad interpretation of "civil society".

and democracy.[41] The interdependency between peace and democracy was generally seen as essential.[42]

I will not enumerate all the developments relating to civil society during the nineteenth century. As mentioned previously in this introduction, I have decided to investigate Freemasonry more closely. To specialists in Masonic history, the constructive role Freemasons played in the establishment of republics and the democratization of society in Europe and elsewhere is evident. This is especially true in regard to the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, as well as concerning the "Latin" countries. The European and international relations of the Freemasons will be studied in the second chapter, so I will not discuss them any further here.

One of the most important events in the development of modern civil society was the foundation of the *Ligue pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen* in France in 1898. With the establishment of this organization, senator Ludovic Trarieux and others reacted to the Dreyfus affair and the extreme right-wing *League of Patriots* and *League of Anti-Semites*. The French League for Human Rights encouraged the foundation of more than 20 similar leagues throughout Europe starting in the early twentieth century and continuing through the interwar period. These human rights leagues will be analysed in the third chapter.

Freemasons and human rights activists shared networks that also included pacifists and, after the establishment of the League of Nations, the League of Nations associations. The ties between all these leagues, associations and other civil society organizations opposing anti-Semitism, racism and other phenomena were very close.

The normal manner of organization generally encompassed three levels: local chapters, a central national organization (e.g. National Executive Committee, Board, Federal Council or similar) and a European or international umbrella organization.

When looking closer at the members at the individual levels, an unwritten rule becomes apparent: The respective central national organization assembled distin-

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41 See (among others) the following syntheses: Bariéty, Jacques, ed. (1987): Mouvements et initiatives de paix dans la politique internationale / Peace Movements and Initiatives in International Policy / Friedens-Bewegungen und -Anregungen in der internationalen Politik. 1867–1928. Actes du colloque tenu à Stuttgart 29–30 août 1985. Bern. Petricioli, Marta; Cherubini, Donatella; Anteghini, Alessandra, eds. (2004): Les Etats-Unis d'Europe. Un projet pacifiste / The United States of Europe. A Pacifist Project. Bern. Petricioli, Marta; Cherubini, Donatella, eds. (2007): Pour la paix en Europe. Institutions et société civile dans l'entre-deux-guerres. Brussels. With a stronger focus on Southern European countries: Tavares Ribeiro, Maria Manuela; Freitas Valente, Isabel; Rollo, Maria Fernanda, eds. (2014): Pela paz! For peace! Pour la paix! (1849–1939). Brussels.

42 With regard to the entire 20th century, see Dülffer, Jost; Niedhart, Gottfried, eds. (2011): Frieden durch Demokratie? Genese, Wirkung und Kritik eines Deutungsmusters. Essen. See also Wieviorka, Olivier; Romijn, Peter; Kott, Sandrine; Hoffmann, Stefan-Ludwig, eds. (2016): Seeking Peace in the Wake of War. Europe, 1943–1947. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (NIOD Studies on War, Holocaust and Genocide, 2).

guished figureheads. This seems logical since these people were charged, for instance, with lobbying the government over the general concerns of the association and its members as well as with maintaining international relations. They had to travel abroad, deliver speeches and write a great many letters or even treatises on specific subjects. It was their job to organize annual conventions and regular business meetings of the respective board and to handle the administration of their organizations. This often also meant they had to manage staff, and thus had to deal with employment or labour laws and potential conflicts arising from them.

We will see how Freemasons and human rights leagues organized the flux of information and knowledge within their specific obedience or league. This required a certain number of educated people who were able to meaningfully organize the masses of incoming information and provide the local chapters with substantial content.

The majority of the members were ordinary people. Freemasons numbered in the tens of thousands, human rights leagues and pacifists in the thousands, tens of thousands or even, in France, hundreds of thousands. As stated above, civil society comprises – for historical reasons – those citizens who advocate human and civil rights as well as a constitutional state where the rule of law reigns supreme. The legal form of this state can vary, and the understanding of "democracy" obviously evolved continually from the French Revolution until 1945, when women's suffrage was introduced across Europe, and continues to do so to this day. But the basic definition applies throughout the entire period: Ordinary citizens are those people who subscribe to the fundamental values of the rule of law along with human and civil rights, who live out their conviction in their daily lives and eventually participate in some form of collective supporting the peaceful pursuit of their ideals. It is not necessary for them to be famous or rich or belong to the upper classes. Men and women with firm convictions exist in every social standing, and ordinary people can accomplish outstanding things – both good and bad.[43]

A hallmark of civil society organizations is that they involve both men and women alike. This applies to Masons (albeit with some restrictions, see chapter II), human rights leagues, pacifists, League of Nations associations, "think tanks" such as the *Mayrisch circle* during the interwar period, and others. In this they differ from political parties, parliaments and other types of collectives that were – and continue to be – predominantly male. This is not to say that nothing has changed in this regard, of course.

Research on the idea of a European Union or United States of Europe during the interwar period has generally focused on specific associations like the *Pan-European Union* of Count Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi.[44] But the concept occupied the thoughts of tens or even hundreds of thousands of individuals: The

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43 For the "bad", see the seminal study by Browning, Christopher R. (1992): Ordinary Men. Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland. New York.

44 See, in addition to the aforementioned publication: Hewitson, Mark (2012): The United States of Europe. The European Question in the 1920s. In: Hewitson/D'Auria, eds.: Europe in Crisis, op. cit., p. 15–34.

first half of the twentieth century featured a rich landscape of all kinds of associations including pacifists, youth organizations, Freemasons, human rights leagues, women's associations and many more, all of which seem to have asked themselves – and posed to the public – the question how to pacify and unite Europe. Not all of these collectives can be classified as being part of civil society, however.

The link between fundamental and human rights, democracy, rule of law, humanitarianism and other values on the one hand and "civil society" on the other appears essential in my eyes. It allows us to make a clear distinction between the activists described above and the many other (ordinary) citizens in nearly every European country who believed in a "new European order" under the leadership of Nazi Germany. Not all of them were staunch Nazis or fascists, or even hardliners in favour of collaborating with Hitler. They simply believed that European unification or a political order for Europe required, after the failure of the League of Nations, a dominant power that could manage it.[45] These people are not included in this book's concept of civil society. Some appear among the writers of letters to Churchill, however, and I intentionally did not exclude them from my analysis so as not to produce too "clean" an impression of the spectrum of people's intentions.

Since the second half of the nineteenth century at least, the idea of a united Europe – or even of a world union or global state – has been a close neighbour to the legal, constitutional and democratic convictions of civil society. I do not wish to plead an exaggerated interpretation, but it seems to me that since that time, the idea of European unity or unification has been part of the core principles for which civil society stands. The distinction I have made above is therefore crucial, for the notion of a united Europe has likewise been held by a great many people who were not democrats or defenders of human rights. To put it another way, being in favour of a united Europe does not automatically make someone a member of civil society.

The French Prism

Immediately after World War I, authoritarian regimes and dictatorships began to spread throughout Europe. France soon began to function as a platform for many of the associations constituting European civil society, and by the late 1930s it had become the primary destination for people exiled from their respective countries. Emigrants founded innumerable new associations that interwove with existing organizations. One might say that for a few years during the interwar period – before the outbreak of the Second World War disrupted the entire continent – France, and especially Paris, was the site of the establishment and flourishing of a truly *European* civil society. This is the "French prism" through which we must conduct our examination.

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45   See Heyde, De l'esprit de la Résistance, op. cit., part I, ch. 1.

The survival of Europe was viewed by civil society organizations not merely as a political and economic problem, but as one of civilization itself. France continued to claim for itself the leadership in European or Western civilization, and the European democratic civil society largely acknowledged and supported this claim. The United Kingdom, however, was drifting away from the continent in this regard. While there were still strong ties to the continental civil society, many aspects differed significantly: The British civil society advocated human rights, but it did not join the International League of Human Rights founded in 1922 (see chapter III). The British Freemasons became the largest Masonic group in Europe measured by membership, but they did not participate in initiatives promoting the pacification and unification of Europe launched by the French and some German Masons. For these reasons, I have chosen France as the central region for my research on the interwar period.

We will see in the following chapters that the French civilization model was largely accepted on the continent and served as a reference point. This continued or became the case again after the Second World War when France became one of the driving forces of European unification. However, many scholars today interpret the role adopted by France in the unification process as that of a hegemon.[46]

Resistance Movements

For the most part, the resistance movements existing during the Second World War can be subsumed under the label of civil society. That being said, one naturally cannot assert that all resistance fighters were pure democrats, since their ideologies ranged from communism all the way to aristocratic or elitist concepts of a Christian class society. They were united by the fight against the most inhuman regime that Europe has ever known[47]: Leading members of the resistance of nine countries met in Geneva in the flat of Mr. Visser 't Hooft (1900–1985), the first secretary general (since 1938) of the *World Council of Churches*, in the spring of 1944 to elaborate principles for a federal European union.[48] After the war, the influence of the resistance movements on policies seems to have been modest, though this is still a matter of debate: Mikael Rask Madsen emphasizes the role played by resistance members for the human rights protection system elaborated by the Council of Europe.[49]

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46 See Siedentop, Larry (2000): Democracy in Europe. London. Patel, Kiran Klaus (2018): Projekt Europa. Eine kritische Geschichte. Munich, ch. VIII and passim.

47 Walter Lipgens has extensively studied the resistance movements' plans for European unity. Heyde, L'esprit de la Résistance, op. cit., part I, ch. 2 ("L'Idée européenne dans la Résistance") returns to the debate in the light of more recent research literature.

48 See on this and on the historical context Schmale, Geschichte Europas, op. cit., ch. 5.7, p. 129–136.

49 On former resistance members and their role in the European youth movement in 1951–1958, see Norwig, Erste europäische Generation, op. cit., p. 10. On the Council of Europe, see Madsen, Mikael Rask (2011): 'Legal Diplomacy'. Law, Politics, and the Genesis of Postwar

This lack of influence was of course partly due to the fact that many resistance fighters had died or been murdered. In very general terms, the prewar civil society was largely destroyed by Nazi occupation and the war. Structures were broken up, and many people were either killed or went underground or into exile. Civil society was forced to reorganize or start anew under changed conditions after the war, but things would never be the same as before.

With the exception of communist resistance and the communist parties, the other resistance groups in the various countries – with the exception of the "partito d'azione" in Italy – did not change their nature into that of a political party. To measure the likely impact of former resistance fighters on the beginning process of European integration, one must delve into individual biographies. Some former resistance members participated in the Congress of Europe in The Hague in 1948, some joined the new European federalist movements, some joined Christian democratic, social democratic or liberal parties, and some assumed government offices. This has led most scholars to conclude that the project of European integration was a project of the elites.[50]

We would be well advised, however, to change our point of view in this regard and consider Europeanists first of all as individuals and ordinary citizens who, in pursuit of their convictions, created or joined existing structures such as civil society associations, parliaments or governments, freethinkers like the Monists and Masons, resistance movements, European unification movements, human rights leagues – and not infrequently even several such organizations or associations. This applies primarily to the interwar period, but also to postwar Europe. Having survived the war, Europeanists did not change their fundamental convictions and continued to champion them wherever they went on to be active.

To focus on civil society is not the same as to analyse the history of the idea of European unification, however. The latter certainly constitutes a large and broad field of study, encompassing monographs and treatises published by hundreds of authors as well as newspapers and other mass media such as the "Wochenschauen", which contributed significantly to the European unity discourse during the twentieth century – as Florian Greiner[51], Eugen Pfister[52] and other scholars have shown. But the aim of this book is not to provide a synthesis of all these ideas; instead, it sets out to examine the driving forces of Europeanism in civil society by way of individual case studies.

European Human Rights. In: Hoffmann, Stefan-Ludwig (ed.): Human Rights in the Twentieth Century. Cambridge, p. 62–81, here p. 70 (on Pierre-Henri Teitgen).

50 All of these aspects are summarized in Heyde, L'esprit de la Résistance, op. cit., part IV, ch. 1.I.

51 Greiner, Florian (2014): Wege nach Europa. Deutungen eines imaginierten Kontinents in deutschen, britischen und amerikanischen Printmedien, 1914–1945. Göttingen.

52 Pfister, Eugen (2014): Europa im Bild. Imaginationen Europas in Wochenschauen in Deutschland, Frankreich, Großbritannien und Österreich 1948–1959. Göttingen.

Civil Society and Ordinary Citizens

To conclude this introduction, I will summarize the key aspects of the concepts of civil society and ordinary citizens as they are used in this book. "Civil society" is more than non-governmental forms of organization; it is linked to specific convictions that are among the main characteristics of a democratic society. Despite the fact that the concepts of human rights and democracy have evolved significantly since the age of the American and French Revolutions, this connection to fundamental democratic values is and must remain a criterion of differentiation with regard to the various non-governmental organizations that promoted nationalism or motherhood or pursued exclusively charitable goals. Historical research has the tendency to enlarge the concept of civil society too much.

"Ordinary citizens" are those people, men and women, who subscribe to the fundamental values of the rule of law, human and civil rights, political participation of the people, humanitarianism, peace and respect for human dignity; they live out their conviction in their daily lives and eventually participate in some form of organized association that peacefully promotes these ideals. This is essentially democratic behaviour. Ordinary citizens transcend national boundaries in terms of their horizon of thinking, and they often cross those borders physically as well. Their thinking is transnational, European, and often global, and men and women ideally participate equally in activities. Sociologically, they belong to various classes or strata, obtaining their standing not from their station in life but from their convictions and their willingness to fight for their ideals. "Civil society" thus also specifically refers to the network created by ordinary citizens through the linking of their individual and collective activities serving the general principles listed above. Non-governmental associations, organizations and the like are part of this network and establish the links. The organizational base supports the flow and transfer of knowledge as well as the effectiveness of the various activities. There are usually figureheads, and the larger an association or organization becomes, the more hierarchical levels are implemented within it. Civil society ends where such inevitable hierarchies become club absolutism, since by definition it is closely linked to human rights and democracy.

Organizing the flow of knowledge is among the most challenging tasks of civil society organizations. I will be devoting special attention to this aspect during the case studies, as the effectiveness of such organizations heavily depends on it.