

Resistance to Memory:
The European Union and Memory of World War II Resistance

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Introduction

The European memory project could be said to arise from the way in which the ‘New Europe’ of the European Union developed over the course of the 1990s. While the process of integration began in 1951 and progressed through 1987, in the 1990s the endeavor accelerated by expanding its objectives and expanding to Eastern Europe. As the economic and regulatory institutions developed into the robust bureaucracy of the European Union, there had been no proportionate growth of citizens’ capacity to identify with a pan-European culture nor an outlet for its activities to form a new European culture. The fall of the Soviet Union and the opportunity to expand the European project to the East necessitated the effort to promote a European identity through cultural initiatives. Narratives based on a shared collective memory that had been agreed upon in Western Europe over the prior four decades were challenged by Eastern narratives and became insufficient for building a broader Europe Union.

The European Union’s engagement with questions of history and memory politics, reflects the understanding that citizens of its member states rarely see membership as more than an economic matter. European Union citizens are not individually empowered politically, and the European Union’s political decisions have been seen as damaging to national and personal interests. Therefore, European Union leadership has seen promoting a European identity as a way to compensate for the lack of direct political connection. European integration begins in 1951, when Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Luxembourg formed the European Coal and Steel Community, an economic pact preventing European nations from competing for natural resources. In 1957, the Treaty of Rome was signed by the same six countries, to create the European Economic Community (EEC), which created a common market, a common customs union, and free movement of capital and labor. Over the following

40 years, the EEC creates a full customs union and the United Kingdom, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Spain and Portugal become members. In 1987, the project progress with the Single European Act creates a common market, and in 1991 the Maastricht Treaty establishes the goals of a monetary union and European citizenship.¹ The European Union was established in 1993, but the referendums on the treaty barely passed in France and only passed in Denmark and the United Kingdom by opting out of the monetary union. National debates about membership focused exclusively on economic considerations.² The European Union was fundamentally an economic project.

In 1993, the European Economic Community transformed itself into the European Union and became concerned with climate, environment, health, security, justice, and migration. The Western European countries that signed the Maastrich Treaty had a common framework of understanding their connection to Europe, with the European Union simply creating a space for economic and democratic cooperation.³ Yet, individuals still saw themselves as citizens of their nations, rather than as citizens of Europe. Europe first concerned itself with the idea of identity in 1973. At the Copenhagen European Summit, the members of the European Community “affirm their determination to introduce the concept of European identity into their common foreign relations.”⁴ The document was descriptive of commonalities of the nine members, rather than prescriptive and did not lead to tangible initiatives in the cultural or academic sphere. Although integration began for economic reasons, the European Union has devoted resources and energy

¹ “EUROPA - The History of the European Union.” Text. European Union, June 16, 2016. https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history_en.

² Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, “The Political Basis of Support for European Integration,” *European Union Politics* 1, no. 2 (June 2000): 147–71, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116500001002001>.

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⁴ Document on The European Identity published by the Nine Foreign Ministers on 14 December 1973, in Copenhagen.

into European-wide cultural initiatives, ostensibly to foster a European identity given the expanded reach of the organization. As the European Union expanded into the East in 1998 and 1999, and the euro was adopted in 2001, the organization began to represent the entire continent. In 2004, when ten eastern countries joined (including the three former Soviet states: Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia), the question of European identity became more pressing. Since then, with each European crisis, including the financial crisis of 2008, the debt crisis of 2010, and the recent refugee crisis, comes a call for the EU to “build a European identity.” Yet, the need for these projects was first signaled and executed in 1990s when the opening of Eastern Europe altered the post-war narrative.

The European Union undertakes a wide array of cultural projects through funding, grants, and programming for academics and institutions, many of which focus on the atrocities in Europe in the twentieth century, especially the Holocaust and World War II.⁵ The choice to investigate memories of European conflict appears counter-intuitive to the project of promoting European shared heritage. I will explore EU projects that focus on memories of enmity to determine how they contribute to the project of building a European identity. I analyze an archive of oral histories of resistance during World War II, of which the post-war memory on national levels was particularly complex and polarizing, to ascertain why as recently as 2016 the EU chose to fund the memorialization of these narratives. The Eastern narratives provide a lens into the way in which newly opened Eastern countries’ evaluations of the past challenged the post-war consensus of the Western nations upon which the European Union had been grounded.

Currently, the European Union faces domestic threats from right-wing national parties that question why their respective nation should devote resources and grant rights to the

⁵ “EUROPA – Culture in the European Union.” Text. European Union, March 4, 2018. https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/culture_en.

European Union and its citizens. Brexit succeeded as leaders emphasized the threat of immigration and the resulting loss of British identity, even though in purely economic terms the United Kingdom has a beneficial relationship with the European Union. The rise of nationalist and anti-EU parties in Italy, France, Germany, Austria, and Poland, despite various levels of electoral success, raises a question of the ability of EU cultural initiatives to create a European memory that molds identity.

I – Collective Memory of ‘New’ Europe

Europe was defined by the trauma of the twentieth century, most poignantly World War II. Radical conflict and trauma, paradoxically, are often the basis for unity and political integration. Dan Stone writes about the “memory wars” in the ‘New Europe,’ an arena in which, he posits, “World War II is still being fought.”⁶ Memory is more than an academic field, as memory politics have characterized Europe since the end of the Cold War. Contemporary understandings of the past influence attitudes towards the present, and what is forgotten is just as telling as what is remembered. After 1989, instead of Fukuyama’s predicted “end of history,” the struggle over the memory of World War II was reignited. The freedom of Eastern European countries gave them the opportunity to re-explore their post-war memory, as under Soviet rule a specific, inaccurate, narrative was mandated. Vladmir Tismaneanu argues that in East, “fantasies of salvation appeared, as there was a search for national heritage untainted by communism,” allowing for the revival of memories anti-communists, included ultra-nationalists and fascist war criminals.⁷ This change brought discomfort to Western Europe that had settled on placing all

⁶ Dan Stone, “Memory Wars in the ‘New Europe,’” in *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*, ed. Dan Stone, 2012, 714–31.

⁷ Stone, “Memory Wars in the ‘New Europe.’”

responsibility on the Germans, and embarked on European adventure under a “collective amnesia.”⁸ That European enemies united on a shared European project in spite of their historical animosity in order to advance economically reflects the amnesia in the immediate post-war period. The amnesia was assisted by the emergence of the resistance myth. Judt contends that countries such as Italy and France believed that if Germany had been guilty, as an innocent nation they must have resisted. This myth was necessary for cohesion after the war, leading genuine resisters not to object. These myths unraveled slowly from the late 1960s to mid-1980s, often through academic works and due to the interest of a new generation in newly available archives.⁹

Collective memories are defined by Alon Confino as “a set of representations of the past that constructed by a given social group (a nation, family, religious community, or other) through a process of invention, appropriation, and selection, and which have bearings on the relationships of power within a society.”¹⁰ The urge for the European Union to find or create a collective memory stems from the awareness of narrative disparities across Europe in the 1990s. Suleiman defines a crisis of memory as a “moment of choice, and sometimes of predicament or conflict, about remembrance of the past, whether by individuals or by groups. At issue in a crisis of memory is the question of self-representation: How we view ourselves, and how we represent ourselves to others, is in-dissociable from the stories we tell about our past.”¹¹ When liberalism

⁸ Tony Judt, “The Past Is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe,” *Daedalus* 121, no. 4 (1992): 83–118.

⁹ Lebow, Kansteiner, and Fogu, *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*.

¹⁰ Stone, “Memory Wars in the ‘New Europe.’”

¹¹ Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Crises of Memory and the Second World War*, 1. paperback ed (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2008).

defeated communism in 1989, it became problematic that Western Europe had forgotten that communism defeated fascism in 1945.¹² While the nations of Western Europe each had varying collective memories of the national experience, there was a common understanding that liberal democracies had won the war by defeating Nazism and fascism, resulting in a four decade liberal peace.

The Cold War had provided a stable narrative, with the Europeans unified by their opposition to the Soviet Union. The Western European “peace narrative” centered on the emergence of democracy in response to the defeat of Nazism and overcoming the damages of World War II had also contributed to universal understanding of the past; in addition, the memory of Soviet Communism is critical in East, but not for the West.¹³ After World War II, the “never again” impulse led the European countries to collaborate on a new European project. The EU had even brought the Western states historical alignment in its strong policies and funding focusing on memorializing the Holocaust, a shared experience. Furthermore, the Western states had spent the post-war period aligned against the Soviet Union. For Western Europe, the lesson to be learned from the second world war was that liberal democracy triumphed over fascism, with the former axis powers being converted, most notably the strong democracy in Germany. European-wide Holocaust remembrance is conducive to this narrative, allowing countries to grieve the German-led atrocity and congratulate themselves that liberal democracy prevailed.

The European-wide interest in memory politics is a result of the academic interest in the examination of the difference between memory and history, which emerged in the 1980s. The

¹² Stone, “Memory Wars in the ‘New Europe.’”

¹³ Till Hilmar, “Narrating Unity at the European Union’s New History Museum: A Cultural-Process Approach to the Study of Collective Memory,” *European Journal of Sociology* 57, no. 02 (August 2016): 297–329, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975616000114>.

European Union brought this interest to its policies in its 2009 legislation on European Conscience and Totalitarianism. The law included days of remembrance for the end of World War II, the Holodomor, and Srebrenica, condemnation of Nazism, Communism, and Stalinism. It established a view on history, acknowledging the lack of any singular history and calling for remembrance of Europe's "tragic past." It further posits that Europe will not be united until it is able to form a "common view of its history, recognizes Nazism, Stalinism and fascist and Communist regimes as a common legacy and brings about an honest and thorough debate on their crimes in the past century." That in 2009 a law was passed solely focuses on long-defeated enemies demonstrates the European perception that the biggest obstacle to integration is the lack of a shared understanding of its past.

The European Union notably engaged with the issue of the history of Holocaust by passing legislation in 2007 to make Holocaust denial punishable by jail sentences (though not legally enforceable). Although individual countries could choose whether to enforce the law, the legislation was symbolic in pronouncing a definitive EU stance on a major historical event.¹⁴ In 2010, the European Union funded the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure, a research initiative to "support the Holocaust research community by building a digital infrastructure and facilitating human networks."¹⁵ In funding projects dedicating to commemorating the Holocaust and through its legislation, the European Union has in effect made acknowledgement and commemoration of the Holocaust a requirement for member states. Furthermore, the European Union, along with other international Holocaust remembrance organizations, enacted a

¹⁴ Dan Bilefsky, "EU Adopts Measure Outlawing Holocaust Denial," *The New York Times*, April 19, 2007, sec. Europe, <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/19/world/europe/19iht-eu.4.5359640.html>.

¹⁵ "EHRI Mission Statement," Text, September 1, 2010, <https://www.ehri-project.eu/about-ehri>.

“Europeanization of Holocaust memory” that has been especially impactful in development of Holocaust memory in Eastern Europe.¹⁶

As Eastern countries joined the EU, this unifying narrative became insufficient. These states had suffered at the hands of the Soviet Union, an allied force, in the post-war period and therefore have a diametrically opposed narrative of the trauma of the twentieth century in Europe. However, as Judt notes, “the Holocaust has been made the entry ticket to contemporary Europe, enshrined in collective memory.” For example, in 2001 the Polish acceptance of responsibility for the Holocaust was met with great approval from the EU. However, this narrative does not serve to unify as Eastern countries still see their victimhood at the hands of both Germans and Soviets as commensurate to or greater than the suffering of the Jews. Ultimately, backlash in the form of anger at ‘Eurocrats’ for an over-emphasis on Holocaust memory became common. Fundamentally, the one of the challenges of a European identity is the split between Eastern and Western states, notably in their differing narratives since the beginning of the second world war.¹⁷ The East was on the Allied side, but whereas the Western European victors relished in their post-war conditions, in the East the suffering had only worsened after Allied victory. Jan-Werner Müller argued that “the project of a united Europe will probably require the readjustment of historical narratives—and possibly the recasting of various collective memories from East and West.”¹⁸ This impact that institutional efforts can have on public

¹⁶ M. Kucia, “The Europeanization of Holocaust Memory and Eastern Europe,” *East European Politics & Societies* 30, no. 1 (February 1, 2016): 97–119, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325415599195>.

¹⁷ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2006).

¹⁸ Jan-Werner Müller, ed., *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe: Studies in the Presence of the Past* (Cambridge, UK ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

opinion and narrative history begs a larger question of the extent to which the European Union can forge a holistic memory of Europe.

II - European Memory Projects

In the 1994 essay *Citizenship and National Identity: Reflections on Europe's Future*, Jürgen Habermas argues that Europe needs a “new political self-confidence that corresponds to its role in the twenty-first century.”¹⁹ He made the liberal case for strengthening European integration as an antidote to the revival of nationalism. Despite the lack of a European public opinion, the European public sphere had a developing multicultural basis, leading Habermas to predict that “the single European market will be the beginning of a more extended horizontal mobility” and lead to “the proliferation of contacts among member of different nations.” He believed that immigration from the East would increase diversity, and that international social movements would demonstrate that problems needed to be solved at the European level. He predicted the integration of one common political culture, while other cultural forms (arts, literature, historiography, and philosophy) would continue to be national. The political and legal culture of a democracy based on universal human rights could not be compromised, while still allowing citizens individual religion and traditions.

Luisa Passerini challenges these assumptions in 1998, arguing that this uncoupling is artificial, as the two spheres cannot be separated. “The political culture of the Western democracies with their constitutional universalistic claims is the result of their total cultural existence, and an assimilation into political-juristic conventions would not remain without an

¹⁹ Paul Michael Lutzeler, *The Question of European Identity: A Cultural Historical Approach*, ed. Luisa Passerini (European University Institute, 1998).

influence on everyday life.”²⁰ Passerini’s analysis is critical to understanding the relationship between economic and institutional bureaucracy and culture; while one can exist without the other, they cannot be separated and, if never reconciled, will conflict with one another.

The European Union has devoted significant time, energy, and funds into researching and understanding the challenges of a truly European identity. In 2012, in response to a time of socio-economic crisis in Europe, the European Union released a report titled “The Development of European Identity/ Identities: Unfinished Business” under the European Commission’s Director-General for Research and Innovation. It explains that the question of European identity has been a research topic for the European Commission since the 1990s in the 5th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. It not only serves to pay tribute to past research projects, but “looks into this research for answers on how different processes of identification with the European Union and its integration project take shape and evolve over time, and on how to reinforce solidarity among Europeans.”²¹ Furthermore, it evaluates EU-funded research to identify funding gaps and extract policy implications. The report was presented at a EC organized conference in Brussels in 2012. The research projects reviewed looked at the impact on identity of a range of topics, including national museums, arts and culture, language, conflict, media, and democracy. The reports identified key areas of tension in the conceptualization of a European memory and history. Europeans envision the continent as a place of democracy, freedom, and rule of Law, welfare and opportunity, an understanding at odds with the experience of discrimination and racism as experienced by migrants in Europe.

²⁰ Lutzeler, *The Question of European Identity: A Cultural Historical Approach*.

²¹ Robert Miller, “The Development of European Identity/Identities: Unfinished Business,” *European Commission*, 2012, https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_reviews/development-of-european-identity-identities_en.pdf.

Strikingly, the report itself recommends a future mechanism for continued funding so that projects can create a dissemination mechanism to policy makers and the public, implying that academic projects' findings have not been properly informing decision making in the EU or the European public opinion.

The 2012 report discusses several projects that examine the role of history and memory as mechanisms of understanding identity. As an institutional body, this analysis is essential given the role of institutions in building memory. According to Lebow, collective memory is not theoretical, rather, it is reinforced and perpetuated by institutions “based on society and its inventory of signs and symbols.”²² Politics of memory were primarily important in the national sphere, though the falling of the Berlin wall impacted all European national memories, as revealed by Lebow's comparative analysis. Lebow critiques scholarship on the topic of identity for neglecting the variable of collective memory. Scholarship on European identity was “polarized between social psychologists intent on registering entitativity (extent to which a group is perceived as a real entity) of this supranational form of identity and intellectual-cultural historians intent on contesting the theoretical validity of the concept itself or pointing out the constructed notion of Europeaness.”²³ Focusing on mechanisms, including how collected memories are constructed through museums, architecture, religion, post-colonial capitalism, and the politics of international atonement for past crime, obstructs the necessary focus on content of the memories constructed. The question the EU is asking should not be how identity evolves, but on the similarities in collective memory that should be explored to find common ground.

²² Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner, and Claudio Fogu, eds., *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

²³ Lebow, Kansteiner, and Fogu, *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*.

Some historians, such as David Lowenthal, differentiate memory and history as distinct due to the burden of proof in history. In 1989 Peter Burke challenged this orthodoxy, noting that neither memories nor histories seemed objective, as “in both cases we are learning to take account of conscious or unconscious selection, interpretation and distortion [and] cases decisions are socially conditioned.”²⁴ Cultural memories are memorialized by “texts, rites, images, buildings, and monuments, meant to recall all fateful events of history of the collective.”²⁵ In the case of European Union, institutional efforts to construct an identity rely on exploring history in order to build a shared memory, which is

The European Remembrance and Solidarity Network (ENRS) is an EU-funded and Warsaw-based organization that holds conferences and publishes papers on European memory of specific events. It was created by the ministers of culture in Germany, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, and was joined by Romania in 2014. Its purpose is to document and promote the study of twentieth century history and how it is remembered by supporting academic research, educational projects, and promotional events. It posits that its activities contribute to “building better relations between European societies through discussing our common past.” The idea is almost radical—the history of twentieth century Europe, rife with wars, genocide, oppression, and ideological divides, is a history that is worth remembering and studying precisely to promote better relationships among different European societies. The European Union is unique in that it dates its roots back to 1951, yet it is truly a twenty-first century institution. The fascination of the EU and its academics with twentieth century history as a remedy for contemporary fissures is distinctly European. While in the U.S. the second world war is seen as ancient history, in Europe it is often brought up in analysis of current challenges.

²⁴ Lebow, Kansteiner, and Fogu, *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*.

²⁵ Lebow, Kansteiner, and Fogu, *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*.

The ENRS's projects include a European Remembrance Symposium of European Institutions dealing with 20th Century History, Genealogies of Memory, Remembrance and Solidarity Studies in 20th Century Europe, and In Between (promoting local histories), along with specific educational campaigns. The funding for the organization come from the European Commission's Europe for Citizens Programme, which aims to contribute to citizens' understanding of the EU and history, foster European citizenship, and improve conditions for civic engagement at the EU level. It specifically focuses on projects supporting "European remembrance – the EU as peace project."²⁶

The European House of History (HEH) exemplifies how the lessons from academic research are applied to tangible policy outcomes. The project began in 2007, when the president of European Parliament approved and funded the 55.4-million-euro endeavor. History museums of the European Union have been proposed, such as in France in 2010, but the HEH is the first to have received institutional support. Opened in 2017 in Brussels, the EU funded museum "is dedicated to the understanding of the shared past and diverse experiences of European people...to discover different points of view and common ground in European history."²⁷ This mission acknowledges the truth that as there is no single European identity, there is no single history of Europe. The twentieth century history of Europe is a history of nation states and their conflicts. However, to an extent, the museum does seek to "overhaul the past by replacing national narratives with a *transnational* narrative."²⁸ At its opening, European Parliament

²⁶ "Europe for Citizens - European Commission," accessed March 4, 2018, http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/europe-for-citizens-programme/index_en.htm.

²⁷ "Welcome to the House of European History | HOUSE OF EUROPEAN HISTORY." Accessed October 5, 2017. <https://historia-europa.ep.eu/en>.

²⁸ Till Hilmar, "Narrating Unity at the European Union's New History Museum: A Cultural-Process Approach to the Study of Collective Memory," *European Journal of Sociology* 57, no. 02 (August 2016): 297–329, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975616000114>.

President Antonio Tajani described the museum as an opportunity for stimulating “debate for a better future” rather than taking a historical position.²⁹ Curators interviewed about the project explain that the much of the museum focuses on the relationship between the East and West during the traumas of the twentieth century and that representing Eastern narratives was challenging as the historical sources are lacking. Furthermore, Western narratives are deeply entrenched for even for Eastern European curators because of the “academic hegemony” of the university landscape.³⁰ The East-West power dynamic of the EU was problematic even in the very attempt to create a unifying narrative.

The structure of the museum presents a proposed ideal narrative for the EU. The museum begins with Europe’s rise in nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focusing on ideas of liberty, equality, self-determination, and human rights, in addition to racism and social Darwinism. The wars of the twentieth century are depicted as a fall of civilization due to totalitarian ideology and total war, eroding Europe’s relative power in international politics. The exhibit details the division of Europe in the twentieth century until 1989 when Europe was “finally reunited *again*.”³¹ It ends with the specific foregrounding of European Union institutions with the Maastricht Treaty. This narrative includes Eastern Europe by abandoning the Western narrative of Europe “rising out of the ashes of war” and painting Eastern Europe’s integration as a return to, rather than beginning of, European unity. The exhibit paints a picture that could

²⁹ “EU Opens Museum of European History,” *BBC News*, May 4, 2017, sec. Europe, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39804142>.

³⁰ Hilmar, “Narrating Unity at the European Union’s New History Museum.”

³¹ Hilmar, “Narrating Unity at the European Union’s New History Museum.”

readily serve as founding myth for the EU, just as the post-war national narratives allowed for amnesia of the past in exchange for moving forward.

The reception from member states was highly critical, with many questioning the use of funds on a so-called “vanity project” and a lack of positive media portrayal. The Platform for European Memory and Conscience, a non-profit organization consisting of 14 member states and endorsed by European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, prepared a critical report on the HEH condemning its “clear ideological bias towards Marxism and historical misinterpretations, especially regarding European values and the history of the Cold War.”³² The Platform aims to commemorate and educate about the crimes of totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century by spreading public awareness and holding academic conferences, while aiming to contribute to European integration. The report concluded the permanent exhibit,

“does not uphold and celebrate today’s Europe and the European unification process as a victory of European values – freedom, democracy, protection of human rights and the rule of law – over non-freedom, war and totalitarian dictatorships, but is rather an ideological, neo-Marxist exhibition which grossly misrepresents particularly the history of the Cold War and the fall of Communism.”³³

The negative feedback about the HEH from an organization whose goals include utilizing a shared understanding of the past to build European unity exemplifies the futility and risk of attempting to create a single European narrative. Scholar of the EU, Stanley Henig, argued in

³² “Platform Prepares Critical Report on the House of European History in Brussels | Platform of European Memory and Conscience,” accessed April 4, 2018, <https://www.memoryandconscience.eu/2017/10/23/platform-prepares-critical-report-on-the-house-of-european-history-in-brussels/>.

³³ “Platform Prepares Critical Report on the House of European History in Brussels | Platform of European Memory and Conscience.”

2013 that “the quest for a unique and unanimous ‘European’ narrative as an answer to the EU’s legitimacy challenge is a non-starter, there is a deep diversity of narratives about Europe and the EU.”³⁴ Rather than focuses funds on disseminating any one version of European memory, which will never be accepted by its citizens, the EU is better served by the programs that stimulate discussion and debate over contrasting memories, such as ENRS. However, a museum has the potential to reach and impact more people with less background knowledge, rather than enhancing the understanding of dedicated scholars and experts in order to strike a balance between nuance and accessibility.

III –Revisiting European Resistance

"I am delighted that the first video-archive with eyewitnesses of the European resistance could be developed and is online from today on." - Belen Enciso of the European Commission.

The European Resistance Archive, a collection of oral histories of resistance fighters, demonstrates a bottom-up project, in that a local organization conceived of the idea and then obtained funding to expand across Europe. The European Commission funded the pilot project under the Active European Remembrance campaign, which was launched in 2005 to mark the 60th anniversary of the fall of Nazism.³⁵ These resources demonstrate that the European Union has also begun to think about the legacy of the resistance and the possibility of politicizing it as a unifying narrative. The European Resistance Archive (ERA) was developed by Istoreco, a society for the history of the resistance and contemporary society in the Italian province of

³⁴ Stanley Henig, *Uniting of Europe From Consolidation to Enlargement* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2013).

³⁵ Welle (www.dw.com), Deutsche. “EU’s Online Video Portal to Archive WWII Resistance Fighters | DW | 10.05.2007.” DW.COM. Accessed January 3, 2018. <http://www.dw.com/en/eus-online-video-portal-to-archive-wwii-resistance-fighters/a-2483369>.

Reggio Emilia. The organization works to “keep the knowledge of the resistance alive” and demonstrate how “people contributed in the liberation of national socialist rule by their decision to fight against fascism, occupation and extermination.”³⁶ Though Istoreco is a regional organization, the archive is a European-wide project, consisting of video interviews with resistance fighters from Germany, Italy, Poland, France, and Slovenia. The ERA declares itself “a space in which individual stories of people having resisted against the terror, humiliation and despair fascism brought over Europe are kept alive and visible for everybody.”

The project does not just aim to record and memorialize these memories, but to effect European society by creating “a common understanding of European rights as the result of a historical path characterized by the fight against fascism/ Nazism” and to spread awareness about the role of the resistance in the formation of “the new Europe.”³⁷ Noting that national perspectives of World War II and the resistance dominate most educational systems, the ERA aims to “become a forum in which the different national perspectives come together and lead to an understanding of European history for which the resistance played a constitutional role.”

The project receives funding from the European Community, the cultural pillar of the European Union. However, it also lists several local organizations as “project partners,” including DGB-Youth, the youth organization of a German trade union; Young Antifa Berlin, a youth group against fascism, racism, nationalism, anti-Semitism, and sexism; Karta, the center in Poland that originated the project; Istoreco; GAJ, a mixed team of young people who led interviews in Carinthia/ Koroska; Institute of Contemporary History, a Slovenian group; the

³⁶ “Istoreco - Istituto per la Storia della Resistenza e della Società contemporanea in provincia di Reggio Emilia,” Istoreco, accessed April 4, 2018, <https://www.istoreco.re.it/>.

³⁷ “About ERA,” accessed October 4, 2017, <http://www.resistance-archive.org/en/about/what-is-era/>.

province of Reggio Emilia, Italy; the Research Society of Flight and Migration, a group that researches and publishes the situation of refugees and migrants in the periphery of the European Union; CEMEA, a French organization created in 1937 related to Education Populaire; and PULSE, an Italian non-profit that promotes research, communication, education, training, and international cooperation. The diversity and number of partners demonstrates the project's unique approach of partnering with local organizations to contribute to the international project, bypassing national cultural authorities such as major museums and universities. In this way, the ERA is unique in attempting to integrate local memory and stories into a resistance legacy, rather than working with the established and often misrepresented national histories.

The ERA prioritizes transferring historical knowledge to the next generation by partnering with youth organizations. Many of the interviews were conducted by students under the supervision of historians, especially poignant as many of the interviewees were teenagers during the resistance. The project originated in 2006 with eleven high school students in Poland. They worked with coordinators from the House of Historical Meetings and the Karta Center to interview three witnesses from the Polish resistance movement from 1939 to 1945. In September 2006, the first participants of the ERA met in Reggio Emilia. In March 2007, the organization went on a memorial trip to Krakow and Auschwitz. Unlike most archives, which exist to preserve historical records and serve as a resource for academic research, the ERA is both an archive and an activist organization. The project also received technical support from two German firms, Culture Labs eG and Bidargumente, which helped with the design and technical challenges of digitizing, translating, and presenting the interviews online. This effort made the ERA extraordinarily accessible, with original interviews posted online, accompanied by translations and transcripts.

The ERA seems to take inspiration from the methods and approaches of Holocaust museums and memorials, which have historically focused on recording and preserving individual testimonies to ensure that the atrocities of the Shoah are never forgotten or doubted. This information is presented to the public through documentaries, museums, and memorials in major cities, such as Paris, Washington, D.C., Prague, and Berlin. The sites of atrocity, specifically many of the concentration camps, have been preserved as evidence and opened to the public to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive. The resistance movement has fewer and less powerful remnants of its struggle. On the local level, there are plaques and sometimes memorials commemorating the deaths of resistance fighters. There is no comprehensive approach to remembering a national, let alone European, resistance. Therefore, the oral histories collected through the ERA become that much more crucial in preserving the stories, especially as the last surviving witnesses are over 90 years old.

Unlike Holocaust remembrance efforts, remembering the resistance is meant to inspire positive action. In explaining the motivations behind the project, the ERA proposes that resistance memory must be passed on to inspire future generations to follow in their footsteps by lauding the character and bravery of resistance fighters. Therefore, the ERA's mission is relevant and timely in contemporary society, as one witness notes, "we had not and have not totally liberated ourselves from fascism." While the Holocaust exemplifies the failure of the state and political institutions, the Resistance exemplifies individual righteousness. Where world powers ignored atrocities and injustices, resistance fighters risked everything, including the retribution of civilians, to express their political will. While resistance movements did not materially impact the war, they became a symbol of hope in states that were on the side of axis powers. Where the Holocaust demonstrates the ability for a state to legitimize atrocity, Resistance is about

individuals subscribing to larger value system. In this way, the lessons of Resistance have the potential to form a narrative that is supportive of European identity. To be European is to ascribe to a set of values and ideals, namely democracy, freedom, justice, and welfare. The EU knows it cannot displace political nationalism, but rather seeks to create a cultural connection to an idealized “Europeaness.”

In contrast to Holocaust survivors, who are almost universally viewed as innocent victims, the role of resisters was much more complex. Acts of resistance often incited retaliation. In Nanterre, France, the death of every German due to resistance was followed by the killing of one hundred resistance fighters who were being held hostage. Interestingly, the archive does not include Dutch witnesses; in the Netherlands, retaliations focused on innocent civilians and were so horrific that the resisters were controversial figures during and after the war. Because of this reality, resistance fighters were not universally praised following liberation. While on a national level, especially in France, the idea of resistance was lauded, in local communities, resisters were often responsible for many other deaths and harsh treatment by the occupying Germans.

The history of resistance is inherently difficult to research and preserve as resistance networks were purposefully secretive and often there was no nation-wide organizational level. Purposely, there was little written documentation. Resistance was often acts of simple civil disobedience or subtle sabotage that went unnoticed. Furthermore, many resisters were executed by the Germans during the war, either for their own acts or to retaliate against new acts. The politicization of the memory of resistance, which was most prevalent in French politics, did not correlate with efforts to research, record, or reexamine resistance from an academic approach. Much of the media that popularized the resistance movement was fictional, including movies and novels. Sometimes these were loosely based on factual events, but many were pure works of

fiction. This trend created a popular understanding and appreciation for resistance, with little basis in its facts or complexities.

The resistance memory in some ways is intertwined with Holocaust memory, as a significant number of French resistance fighters were deported to concentration camps, including Auschwitz, where they witnessed the massacres of Jews and Gypsies. In Poland, resistance fighters include those who militarily challenged the Germans and those who protected Jews. However, the story of resistance as told by the ERA is not one of liberal ideals of religious and political freedom. Nor was it a story of nationalist resistance against a foreign occupier. Specifically, in France and Italy, the resistance was synonymous with the Communist movement. The lack of a European-wide resistance memory may be explained by the intellectual complexity of bringing attention to the positive actions and impact of members of the Communist Party, an ideology the liberal conservative-liberal West combatted for nearly fifty years after the end of World War II. Reclaiming the resistance as a viable force for aggregating people in the name of a good European past was both powerful and fraught with complications.

While institutional initiatives influenced a change in Holocaust memory in Eastern Europe, in 1992 the publication of *The Vichy Syndrome* by Henry Rousso drew attention to an opposite issue in France. The work chronicles the history of the *memory* of the Vichy regime. Whereas because of years of Communist rule the Eastern countries often neglected or denied their nations' history concerning the Holocaust, post-war France over-remembered the relatively small French resistance movement to German occupation. Rousso explores how politicians since the war have exploited and over-emphasized the French resistance to avoid responsibility of Nazi crimes and repress the memory of the Vichy collaborators. *Vichy Syndrome* analyzes periods of repression of the collaboration and later obsessions with Jewish memory and French politics of

the 1940s, as well as the wider impacts of these vectors of memory.³⁸ Rousso further explores the “vectors of memory” and the “diffusion of memory” that account for transmission of the syndrome over time.

Similarly, the legacy and memory of resistance in Italian has been deeply politicized in the post-war era. Using *Vichy Syndrome* as a framework, Philip Cook explores the ways in which the “Italian State has attempted to create a national Resistance memory and how this has conflicted with the regional and highly localized nature of the Italian experience” and the Resistance legacy has been transmitted through different “vectors.”³⁹ Italy’s relationship with the resistance movement is further complicated by the Communist’s party hegemony over the resistance legacy. Both Cooke and Rousso have analyzed the legacy of the resistance and the politicization of the memory of resistance within the scope of their respective nations, Italy and France. However, the European Union, just as national governments in France and Italy, has become interested in the legacy of the resistance and its place in the European memory.

The ERA interviewed two members of the French Resistance, Lucien Ducastel and Vincent Pascucci. Both were members of the Communist Youth organization in Nanterre, and simply continued their political activities after the French government outlawed of the Communist Party following the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact in 1939. Shortly before the German invasion in 1940, the Communist Party formed the National Front movement. Following the invasion, *la débâcle*, the party worked with Francs-Tireurs et Partisans (FTP), an armed resistance group, and Charles de Gaulle’s exile government, Free France.

³⁸ Henry Rousso and Arthur Goldhammer, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1991).

³⁹ Philip Cooke, *The Legacy of the Italian Resistance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Vincent Pascucci was born in Italy in 1923, but soon after his parents moved to Nanterre, France as part of a program that allowed anti-Fascist workers in Italy to legally leave the country. He begins working after finishing school at age 13, and soon after joined the Communist Youth Movement. In 1935, Nanterre elected a Communist government. Vincent Pascucci distributed the Communist newspaper, *l'Avantgarde* until the banning of the party four years later. After Vincent's family failed to escape to the South of France, he returned to Nanterre and reconnected with his "comrades." In less than one month, France had gone from a free democratic state to a police state. Its agriculture and industry had been taken over, leaving the population cold and hungry. Vincent Pascucci describes the motivation of distributing materials, "we felt the need to explain to the people why we were in this situation." He was part of United Forces of the Patriotic Youth, *Forces unies de la jeunesse patriotique (FUJP)*, a political youth movement. They had no weapons but had pulled together printing machinery to print inflammatory banners, such as one reading, "Out with the Invaders," and leaflets.

In looking back on his experience, Vincent Pascucci acknowledges that simply distributing literature from today's perspective seems "relatively banal." However, at the time it was an extremely dangerous act of resistance. Others who were arrested while distributing the leaflets were arrested, deported to Auschwitz, or executed immediately. Because many of those arrested were beaten and tortured to reveal secrets, the resistance was organized through a triangle system, so it would be easy to deduce who had leaked what information. Some resisters were held as hostages and would be executed as retaliation for later acts of resistance. Vincent Pascucci says, "those who say they were not afraid during that time, are either dumb or liars. Or they didn't do anything," alluding to the post-War misinformation surrounding the resistance and the overly glorified fictional narratives.

Vincent Pascucci decided to go underground in 1942 when he was selected to be sent to Germany as a forced laborer (as Germany had mobilized its entire population to fight, there was no one left to work). He tried to meet up with *maquis*, rural guerilla bands of resistance fighters, but was stopped by German authorities. Instead, at his day job at the Simca factory, an Italian car producer that was forced to produce axles for tanks, he started sabotaging the machines and later at a factory in the department of Marne had a concrete wagon destroy a German barrack. He returned to Nanterre undercover without his family's knowledge. He then joined the Francs-Tireurs et Participants, and his role was to protect the safety of the comrades when they made public speeches. They would take over movie theatres, which showed propaganda of the French and German governments, stop the authorities from calling for reinforcement long enough for speaker to address the audience. Often, Louis Meunier was the speaker. He also helped a Soviet prisoner of war escape, who then joined a *maquis*.

On August 20, 1944, the resistance served an integral role in securing the liberation of Nanterre the following day. They arrested the collaborating mayor and resistance fighters had been freed from the jails. Vincent Pascucci and his comrades attempted to take over City Hall and establish a Liberation Committee. However, his friend Louis Meunier was caught with a weapon by retreating German soldiers and killed. Despite the victory and joy of liberation, he felt responsible for the death as he had convinced Louis Meunier to carry the weapon and realized "how thin the thread is life hangs on. Just a little bit of luck."

As an FTP-FFI member he assists during the fall of the fortress Mont Valérien. The fortress had been the site where the Germans held resistance fighters prisoner and then executed them. The Nazis would not surrender to the resistance leaders, only to the French army and . After taking the fortress, they found corpses of 1,015 people who had been executed between

1941 and 1944. Even after liberation, Vincent Pascucci had to protect the former Communist mayor, Raymond Barbet. As Barbet had organized the railroad worker strike in 1944, which in turn sparked a nation-wide insurrection, there were still collaborators posed a threat.

In 1943, he joined the still clandestine French Communist Party, demonstrating the liberation from the Germans did not equate to full freedom. Vincent Pascucci did not just resist the Nazi occupation but was a true and committed member of the Communist Party. His devotion to the resistance seems to have been driven by this identity rather than French nationalism. Vincent Pascucci notes that after liberation, “it was like a big party. Even those who hadn’t done anything or maybe taken advantage of the situation now called themselves resistance fighters.” This recollection provides evidence that the collective guilt of collaboration and false memory of resistance in France began immediately after the defeat of the Nazis.

In June 1945, Vincent Pascucci was demobilized and returned to Nanterre and takes up his former profession as a mechanic in the Simca factory. He only became active in the association of former resistance fighters after being convinced by a friend several years after the War. However, he later realized that the only story of World War II being told in France and through the school history books centered on Charles De Gaulle’s 1940 speech and the holocaust. He began visiting schools along with other former deportees to tell his story of being a resistance fighter. Along with other comrades, he led groups of students to Oradour-sur-Glane, the site of a Nazi massacre; Struthof, the only concentration camp within France, and Auschwitz-Birkenau, where many of his comrades were sent.

Vincent Pascucci explains that he does this not only to commemorate his comrades who died in the resistance, but also because there is again a dangerous rise of fascism in Europe. He reminds that Hitler gained power legally and says, “we have not finished our work. We need to

talk to young people, guide them for the future, show them the importance of being brotherly.” His words reveal that he has never truly stopped being both a resistance fighter and a communist worker at heart. While witnesses are still alive, the role they play in reigniting the memory of resistance is essential. Vincent Pascucci does not glorify his experience. He says he will not answer when he asked how many Nazis he killed. The legacy of the resistance for him is about the unrelenting threat of fascism to peace and freedom. His insight gives credibility to the ERA projects’ claim that it wants to remember and understand the resistance as a unifying force for Europe. Unlike the dramatized accounts in novels and movies, Vincent Pascucci’s account is not driven by a hatred of Germans. He does not critique the collaborators, instead he states that the majority of the French population was starving and trying to survive.

Vincent Pascucci’s comrade, Lucian Ducastel, was one of the resistance fighters who was caught early on distributing leaflets and deported. Lucian Ducastel also shares his story with the ERA in a video interview. He too was humbled by his experience and gives the advice to young people, “Don’t fight with each other. Be collegial. Be friends because you don’t know what tomorrow will be like.”

Lucian Ducastel was born in 1920 in Darnetal, France. Like Pascucci, he began working at a young age after finishing school at age 13 and began working in a factory in 1934. He joined the Communist Youth Party in 1937. He too was involved with producing and distributing leaflets, primarily to workers outside the factory. He describes the challenge of finding the materials and machines to even produce them before the struggle of distributing them without getting caught by the police. He was active in the town of Petit Quevilly, a small town of 20,000 where the police knew everyone. Lucian Ducastel was arrested in October of 1941 by French and German police for being a politically active Communist. Along with a hundred of his comrades,

he was taken to Rouen for questioning. When asked why he did not hide, Lucian Ducastel explains that most people were too scared to take that risk. He had been planning to go undercover but was arrested before he had the chance.

After the arrest, the resistance fighters were taken to the camp of Compiègne where they were treated as hostages, and many of them were executed in response to attacks. After eight months, they were moved to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where they were given striped uniforms and tattooed with registration numbers, which they quickly had to memorize in both German and Polish. The transport became known as the convoy of 45000s, as the group of political opponents were given the numbers 45157 to 46326. Lucian Ducastel received the number 45491, which remains on his arm to this day. They were intermingled with other prisoners and tried to fight back but found it impossible. The arrested French resistance fighters were separated from each other and there were never more than two or three among hundreds of Poles and Germans, who had also been arrested for political reasons. The camp was liberated in 1945, but the prisoners continued to be abused by Kapos until the end. Of 1175 deportees, only 19 returned. Along with four others, Lucian Ducastel returned to Rouen and then to his parents.

Soon after he was called to the police station to help a family get information about their son. Upon arrival, he saw one of the officers that had arrested him four years earlier. He recalls exploding and making a fuss, yelling “ask what that cop did the night of October 21, 1941!” The fact that from the start of the war to after liberation the police force remained unchanged demonstrates the strong degree of collaboration, even in areas with strong resistance movements. From the perspective of resistance fighter, to return from deportation only to see the same people in positions of authority showed an ambivalence of the French population to collaborators. Even

as the resistance was glorified in national political discourse, the local acceptance of collaborators demonstrated strong ambivalence.

After the war, Lucian Ducastel returned to work at construction sites and became involved with political activities of the French Communist Party and the Workers Union. Like Pascucci, he was dedicated to his identity as a Communist and a worker, rather than to the new French regime. Meanwhile, De Gaulle's government emphasized the role of the French resistance, while the Communist Party itself remained illegal and underground.

Lucian Ducastel began speaking in schools at the request of a friend who taught history. While his friend understood the danger of history being forgotten, he admitted he "hadn't really thought about what that meant." He found it difficult to tell children about the atrocities against the Jews and the Gypsies, but spoke about what National Socialism had done, "with all its horror and atrocities." He too continued to invoke Communist-style language, asking students to "be fraternal with each other no matter what origin you are from."

Lucian Ducastel dedicated a section of his oral history to emphasize distinguish between Germans and Nazis. He met "civilized, working Germans" and understood that they were not necessarily Nazis, but simply German workers who were kind to the prisoners. The SS, *Schutzstaffel*, on the other hand, had "opted for the regime, the system." After the war, Lucian Ducastel traveled to Germany with friends, despite their reluctance. He promised that he would not disparage "THE Germans," but would not be stopped from sharing his experiences in the camps. The lack of animosity towards Germans is surprising, especially as many Allied soldiers and survivors of concentration camps remained deeply angry at the Germans for the massacres committed. The importance of this topic to him reveals that as a resistance fighter, he was dedicated, as he says, to helping the French rather than simply destroying the Germans. Though

he spent the majority of the war imprisoned, his desire to not spread hate and to encourage unity exemplifies the project of the ERA.

Though the ERA has only recorded the oral histories of the resistance from two French men whose work overlapped, they each had markedly different experiences during the war. Despite one remaining free and the other spending years in concentration camps, the lessons they drew from the experience and their advice to future generations was similar. The strong connection between the communist movement and the resistance was not celebrated by the politicians who exploited the memory of the resistance in place of grappling with the more difficult subject of collaboration. Neither man receives individual acclaim following the war and returned to being average workers. Beyond their interactions with local students, their legacies are preserved due to the ERA project. Given that the project began fifty years after the end of the war, the perspectives of the youngest resistance fighters are the ones that are represented. The stories told by these men had not been previously recorded in histories of the French Resistance, demonstrating the limits of the existing scholarship in tracing a movement that was underground and whose participants were largely executed during the war.

The resistance in Italy was stronger and larger, as it began in response to Mussolini's rule, long before the beginning of the war. The resisters were known as partisans and were affiliated with the Communist party. What began as a struggle against fascism evolved into a fight against foreign occupations, with many partisans fighting in Garibaldi's forces after 1943.

Anita Malavasi was born in Roncolo di Quattro Castella, a village in the Reggio-Emilia region, in 1921. Her connection to the resistance began with her parents, who refused to sign her up for the fascist youth group, Piccole Italiane, and was therefore retaliated against at school starting at ten years old. Her family left the country to move to the city and gained exposure to

working women, along with Communists and Socialists men, who explained to her the reasons for fascism. When these men left for war, Malavasi became their communication point. Her family housed an anti-fascist, who told her about the effort to send away the Germans and the Communists. Malavasi decided to join the resistance after an incident with the SS. She had returned to her home during an air raid, and the SS were outside, yelling at her in German while pointing their machine guns at her, and did not allow her to go inside her own home. On She notes that her issue was not fear, but the realization that she meant nothing to them and that foreign men had immense power over her life.

Her family made an effort to help older men, veterans of the first world war, in the community, who would have otherwise starved and protecting them from the SS. This was not for political reasons, but for humanitarian reasons. She says, “as a woman, you saved another woman’s son, that’s what got us to face danger.” She came to the decision that her resistance had to be conscious, and she had to commit herself to the cause. Her father hid weapons and ammunition in their wine cellar and under tiles. The anti-fascist staying with her family, Torelli, told Malavasi she had to do more and had her organize a meeting with all the women she worked with. He brought Paolo Davoli, a Communist leader, to the meeting. He told Malavasi that women must think about their futures, and that after the war they would have the same rights as men, spurring the women to develop a consciousness about their partisan work.

Malavasi transported weapons and communication technology to the mountains, coming in close contact with the SS looking for illicit goods. Malavasi was interrogated by the chief of OPI and, one of the commissioners, after a partisan she had transported a gun for was tortured and gave up her name. She denied all allegations and was able to convince the SS that she had not been involved in partisan activity but had rather been forced when the man randomly

approached her. They let her go, under the premise she was staying with her family who were involved in the fascist regime. She knew she had to flee or would soon be tortured. Her father had not even known that she had become involved with the partisans, as she had kept it an absolute secret. Her two brothers had also been gone in the mountains for months. Her father was disappointed to see her flee as well but told her she “made the right the choice. At least you’ll have the chance to save and defend yourself, unlike us who will end up like mice trapped at home. Just remember that your father thinks a lot of you.”

When Malavasi reached the mountains, the commander told them they would need to learn to fight, and that from that moment on “you’re not men or women anymore, you’re partisans.” Malavasi was to learn to handle weapons, mount guard, and take part in patrols, with the same rights and obligations as everyone else. Most importantly, they had to behave so that no one else would get in trouble because of them. Women were vital to the partisans because they could go where men could not. Any man was immediately taken, searched, questioned, and sent to a concentration camp, as they had broken the law by avoiding the draft. Women were responsible for communications, propaganda, and weapons, and would lead the way as dispatch riders ahead of partisan movement. The partisans often adopted fake names to prevent tortured partisans from revealing any one’s true identity. Anita chose Laila as her battle name, after the wife of an Aztec prince who was killed in battle with the Spanish. She chose the name of a woman fighter, aware that she would participate in combat.

More women began joining the partisans after being tortured by the Germans, and concerns grew over the impropriety of the situation. When Malavasi reunited with her fiancé, he insisted she leave with him, proposing they married and moved to another city where no one would look for her. Malavasi thought the idea that she would be able to leave the partisans and

avoid torture or death to be laughable. Her fiancé gave her an ultimatum, declaring that if she stayed she would not “be worthy of raising his children.” Malavasi found this absurd, no longer being able to tolerate being considered a nobody due to her gender and could not stand that she would be married only to serve as a maid and mother or that her husband would be in charge of her decisions, especially around how to raise children. She left him to return to the mountains, after many years of engagement. She now had a different vision for her future and would not settle for a man with those principles, knowing that it would be difficult for her as after such a long engagement she was almost considered a widow. Partisans, via communism and necessity, introduced this extremely modern, liberal idea of equality of the sexes.

When Malavasi returned, she was put in charge of a special unit called the information office, to take care of communications within the brigade and other units, undertake surveillance, and seek information. She led armed dispatches, which was extremely dangerous as if she encountered the enemy and they saw her weapon she would be killed. She took the risk because she needed a mechanism to warn those behind her if something went wrong, as she was responsible for many units. Malavasi joined the 144th Garibaldi Brigade, taking part in the armed struggle in the Appennini mountains from January 1945 until liberation, finally being appointed Sergeant-Major. Women were not just spies and messengers, but active combatants and leaders in the struggle.

By the end of the war, Malavasi and her fellow partisans were badly malnourished and suffering from a lack of crucial vitamins. At the moment she learned that the Germans were defeated, she was struck with sadness over the losses of so many comrades. Returning home was difficult, as she had become another person in the mountains. She was respected and esteemed and was not ready to become subservient to her male relatives again. She decided not to work at

home anymore and got her own job to become self-sufficient. Along with working, Malavasi organized women's groups and feminist movements. She studied in a Communist school and was put in charge in trade unions. She decided to work for all those who died and promote their shared dreams: a job, a chance to support one's family properly, the right to send one's children to school, to live in a democratic society, maintain individual values and defend the rights of one's community. The women-only groups of the party responded to the poverty resulting from the war and the many hungry children on the street waiting for their working-class mothers to return from work. One of their first initiatives was a campaign to create nurseries, along with the right to vote and equal payment.

Malavasi explains her participation in the project, "I care about stories. Not so much for myself, rather for the benefit they convey to those who listen and want to think about them." She stresses that despite the sensational nature of her stories, they were real and lived. She admits "I rather focus on them. It's all about the twentieth century, about the way we lived through it." Her reasoning for her interest in this topic resonates with the current project of the EU. Nearly two decades in the twenty-first century, Europeans are still defined by the trauma of the twentieth century.

Giacomina Castagnetti was born in the same town as Anita, also to farmers. She speaks about the inequality between men and women from a young age, where education for girls only went to the third grade, and they were encouraged to focus on physical fitness over other subjects. Like Malavasi, she was impacted by the exclusion she faced in school at young age because she did not have the uniform of the *Piccole Italiane*, which was required by Mussolini. She never discovered if her mother actually could not afford it or did not want to support the

Fascist efforts. At Easter, teachers gave Easter eggs as rewards to all the children but her, demonstrating the far reach of Mussolini's policies.

Castagnetti came from a poor farming family, and her father had died. The local school only went to the third grade, and her mother could not afford to send her to the one further away for two more years. Instead, worked in the fields and learned to sew from the nuns, the one skill required before marriage. Her brother was an anti-fascist, which caused problems for her family, as no one wanted them working their land. Her and her brother moved to a different area, working the land of another anti-fascist, who asked Castagnetti for her to help. Castagnetti was happy to be joining the Communist Party, as she saw it as a chance for people to live better. Many of her brothers were at war, so she and her sisters were the head of the family although it was not legally permitted.

As Mussolini prepared the country for the war in Africa, he stressed conserving food for soldiers and the importance of farmers going to war in order to conquer more land to work. Castagnetti's neighbor told spoke of the fact that war had never brought anything good for the poor. The landlord made all her tenants stand outside her house to listen to Mussolini's declaration of war, and her mother left in tears realizing that her six sons would be drafted. Castagnetti's cow shed became a central meeting place for those who disagreed with fascism and understood that war is never good for the poor, and that is the poor rather than the rich sons who fight. When her brother was arrested in 1938 for being subversive, Castagnetti realized her true hatred of the regime. Although Communist leaders had been arrested long before, young and fragile networks of "subversives" were secretly growing. After her mother's death she and her brothers had to move, as the landlord knew of their anti-fascist activity. Their new landlord, an anti-fascist, gave Castagnetti the opportunity to contribute to the cause by collecting money,

“soccorsso ross” or red aid, to support families in which the men had fled to the mountains. She recalls being happy to do something to achieve the vision she had developed and becoming a Communist day by day. At fifteen, she was not entirely understanding of political complexity of her decision but given her life Communism was the natural answers. She maintains, “there was no other solution, no doubts of any sort.”

After Mussolini’s surrender and the German occupation, Castagnetti began setting up women support groups. It attracted even formerly fascists women, as they had seen the result of Mussolini’s ambitions on their families and communities. They all agreed to fight for peace, meaning ending the war as soon as possible. Their primary job was to support the partisans, often by smuggling supplies to them past the Germans, who would arrest and torture whoever they caught. In her work in the lowlands was dangerous as the women had no battle names and could easily be caught with propaganda, which would result in imprisonment. They also transported weapons and passed on observations of German activity.

At a German checkpoint a soldier took her bike and then threw it at her, but luckily did not check her backpack which contained partisan materials. Even stockpiling sweets and cakes in her house to send to partisans for Christmas was a dangerous undertaking. This project attracted many women who had not before been involved, and each woman wanted to send a note showing they were close and not suffering in the absence of the men. Two thousand women descended on the prefecture’s courtyard, each traveling the ten kilometers alone to avoid suspicion. The first three to approach the leader were arrested, but then the rest joined and shouted that they would not leave until the prisoners were released. Two hours later, they saw the comrades coming out. The women were also asking for food, as children were starving. They had also found out that the Germans had a plan to take the men away to work in Germany, while

taking supplies from the Po region for the German army. The women realized by shrinking the pool of supplies, they could starve the Germans. The partisan leader came to meet women at a meeting and spoke about women's liberation after the war and the right to vote. This was the first time many of the women had even heard the word for emancipation.

Surprisingly, Castagnetti also speaks of a certain sadness of watching the an army in retreat, even the enemy. There were trucks full of injured men. A weak, young soldier came to her house asking for cover as the Americans were approaching, not knowing she was a partisan. She points out that in the moment they were just a young boy and young girl. He was only trying to return home and she was waiting for her country to be freed. At that moment she felt that she could she could hate neither him nor the Germans. All she wanted was for the war to end and things to change. Castagnetti was twenty when the war ended, and the first thing she did was open her windows, which had been covered to keep out light for ten years. There was a immediate joy, and she paraded along with Americans and partisans along the Via Emilia, and there were many more celebrations. She then waited for her brother to return from the front at the train station, but he never did. Of her six brothers, three died, one was a victim of political persecution and one was a hostage. There was not much to be happy about, despite the liberation.

Castagnetti always accepts opportunities to talk about her life, "not because it I think it's very important, or interesting, or even unique, but because I've lived through the darkest times of Italy's history." She says that of all her efforts, the biggest battle she fought was after the war. She is only still here, eighty-one at the time, because she "believes that victories are not everlasting. Things can always be changed." Although there have not been wars in Italy since, they have indirectly taken part in many due to her actions she and the other women who share her values had taken. The feeling that the gains after the war were in no way permanent differs

from the political narrative pushed throughout Western Europe. The end of the second world war was heralded as the triumph of democracy over fascism, and the following four decades were spent ensuring democracy defeated communism. However, those who were part of the resistance seem to have a shared belief that the war against injustice is never over, and that once the world becomes complacent in its self-righteousness, the attitudes that propelled fascism in the 1930s begin to creep back. To maintain the gains, both for democracy and women's equality, is a constant struggle that can never be deemed complete. After the fall of the Soviet Union, and the communist threat to capitalism, the Western world lowered its guard, perhaps setting the stage for the resurgence of fascism in today.

Giovanna Quadreri was born in Caprineti in 1928. Her father was involved in the anti-fascist movement, while she was working for a fascist family in the city of Parma until 1944. During that time, she was helping her father and other anti-fascists communicate. He would check for Germans to warn the partisans. She remembers that if a single German were killed a whole village would be burned and kill ten Italians. In Marola, only one house was burned as her father was very careful. Quadreri's sister joined the partisans because she had fought with the mayor; she just wanted the war to end. Her father had slapped the podestà (mayor) and was sentenced to three days in prison. Her father could not work because he was not a member of the fascist party. Her mother would help by going to the mountains and giving injections to those who needed medicine. Her sister was a partisan in Carpineti, and Quadreri would go back and forth to check on her for their parents. This was difficult, as they were constantly moving to avoid the Germans. She also guided boys from her village who wanted to join the partisans.

Even though she went back and forth to her parents, she was essential and given a battle name. Her battle name at first was Libertà, then it was altered to Giorgio, as it disguised her

gender. She first joined out of duty yet had the enthusiasm to travel large distances quickly without noticing the pain. One her crucial assignments was to sabotage the train that brought ammunition to the front line for the Germans. The bombs were transported via car, but Quadreri had to walk first to warn the partisans that a German car would be approaching, to ensure they did not kill them, thinking they were the enemy. At the battle of Albinea, which was a joint effort with partisans, the English, and Russians, her job, along with two other women was to retrieve the dead and wounded the next day. No partisans returned, as they spread in all directions. They found one English man with a bullet in his knee. A farmer offered to bring them to the nearest town but heard gun shots and detached himself from the wagon carrying the partisans, leaving them in the middle of a ditch.

In September 1944, she went to Como, a free city, to find her brother who was fighting for the fascists. They received housing and a ferry ticket along the way, saying they were visiting the army. When they reached the base, he was not with his unit, as he avoided combat by working jobs. Once found, she told him to desert because the war was coming to an end, and he would be killed by either the partisans soon, or after coming home as he would be held responsible. She was able to bring him clothes after his unit was moved closer to Ferrara, and him and the other soldiers from Marola escaped and made it home by running away in the night. The fact that her partisan family went out of their way to save fascist soldiers, including her brother, demonstrates that the divide was not entirely black and white. The majority Italians were in the fascist party as it had been the status quo, while the partisans were the exceptions. Interestingly, it does not seem that the divide lasted long after the war, people were just happy for the poverty to end. Quadreri was involved in the final liberation, joining the special unit

called Gufo Nero (Black Owl), which received orders directly from the central headquarters of the mountains and communicated with the Allied battalion.

She discusses how happy her family was after the war, even though they had no money. She helped her family by doing domestic work in exchange for necessities, like clothing as there was little money after the war. She also notes that women then were highly respected. She thinks about how happy the partisans were when she brought news from their families. She would arrive covered in dirt and would drink from the ground along the way. Although she praises her sister's bravery, her role seems just as grueling and instrumental.

Lidia Valeriani, born in Montecavolo di Quattro Castella in 1923 shared a similar background. She came from a poor, anti-fascist family and was discriminated against as a child. She too began by helping the men who had deserted and fled to the mountains with communications, bringing supplies, and spreading propaganda. She had formally joined the Communist Party starting in 1939. She was a member of the committee who organized the successful March 1, 1944 strike against the war and recruited participants, including farmers and factory workers. The strike was also against the hunger created by the war, as farmers were required to bring all of their crops to the fascists (during the strike they raided the stockpiles). Her father told her she was doing the right thing because it was important, but her life was going to change afterward. She began to feel more responsible for the cause and was proud of her contribution. She even stopped a bus of soldiers during the strike, though they willingly gave up their weapons and went to their homes. However, one fascist who had already fled to Montecavolo had a machine gun and shot at the protesters in the main square, but the strikers were able to disarm him. They sent the confiscated weapons to the partisans and broke the strike. The fascists burned the house of one of the strikers, and warned neighboring towns in Reggio,

where strikes were also planned. Valeriani's family was targeted; three of her siblings were arrested, and after they found her father he was sent to a concentration camp in Germany. From her town they could see many homes being burned in nearby Scampate.

Valeriani's next job was to serve as secretary and dispatch rider. She went to Bologna to pick up weapons and ammunition, as well as orders from headquarters. The partisans throughout Reggio for a time were able to establish a free zone that the Germans could not penetrate. However, when they realized the Germans were going to attack with machine guns and heavy force. Valeriani chose to take the dangerous job to inform the others, traveling through gunfire on her bicycle, who would be killed if they did not find out in time to prepare or retreat. The partisans won the battle and survived. Valeriani did not know this battle was even remembered until she was awarded a silver medal for military valor after the war. Valeriani speaks of Communist party leader organizing in Modena, Carmen Zanti, whose father had been influential in the French resistance. They worked together transporting weapons, and Valeriani fully joined the partisans in Saliceto San Giuliano for six months. She stayed up all night preparing for liberation on April 25th and traveled to transmit final orders. She was unable to return as she was stopped by the retreating Germans.

Valeriani speaks of the luck of her family, as they all survived and returned home. She says afterwards they always worked for peace, freedom, and equality, noting "We're still working for this!" She recalls that sixty years ago she thought things would be better for the next generation and life would be more peaceful, given they did everything to create a better world. They hoped the world would be "freed from wars, hardship, all terrible things," but there are still terrible things. However, she does not feel she fought for nothing, as they were fighting for a

prosperous future and felt the value of living a life of sacrifice. After the war, they were happy to work and continue fighting for their values.

Successfully resisting was not easy, especially for men. Carlo Porta was an anti-fascist from birth and refused to join the party. He worked at a plane manufacturer and was ordered to join the air force. He went, but while in training a letter from his mother gave away his anti-fascist connections, and he was subsequently detained for four years, first in Italy, then in Austrian and German camps. When he was freed he was sent to join the military in Albania, despite his protests. While there he was sent home, as an anti-fascist was not supposed to be serving. He was detained by Germans on his way home, just as Mussolini had surrendered, and then became a prisoner of war, known as the IMI (Internati Militari Italiani). Porta's story is intriguing as he considers himself an anti-fascist but did not take extreme measures to desert when called to serve. However, after the war he became involved with the ANPPIA (National Association of Persecuted Italian Political Antifascists), and association in Reggio Emilia that holds documents concerning over two thousand antifascists and works to tell these stories. Porta's pride in his role during the war, as a prisoner on both sides, stems from his strong identification with the movement. Furthermore, while in camps he learned from Communists who strengthened his political beliefs.

The women in Italy tell an interesting story, as their passion in many ways came from a desire to act humanely and help family members or friends. However, their main take away after the war was about women's equality. Considering their immense help during the resistance, and the Communist ethos of equality, they brought their new feminism to post-war Italian society, using these ideals in the rebuilding process. While the narrative of Italian men fails to fit into the post-war anti-communist Western narrative, the women's liberation certainly does.

The ERA interviews with Polish resistance members paint a vastly different picture, and call into question whether all of these experiences can fairly be grouped together under a common theme. Where French and Italian resistors fought fascism, largely due to Communist sympathies, the resistors in Poland and Slovenia were resisting both the Soviets and the Germans.

Stanislaw Baranowski, born 1924 in Warsaw, participated in the Main Tutelary Council (RGO), helping the poor and prisoners of war. He illegally provided food using ration card that his factory produced and helped Polish officers escape prison. To reconcile the body count, he replaced the escaped prisoner with a dead body from the hospital, where his father worked. He became involved through the “scouts,” which was a nationalist organization that taught loyalty and dedication to Poland. The Armia Krajowa (AK) was unique in that it was a consolidation of all of the Polish political parties. He traveled by horse and cart to the new airport the Germans had built to supply guns and ammunition, which were used to kill a German general. He obtained an ID card for the “receivers of Jewish property” that allowed him to freely move in and out of the ghetto. He supplied food, which was allowed in when Jews had bribed the German guards. He recalls a friend who delivered firewood and coal, and smuggled food in along with it. They even helped Jews escape with these carts, as he estimates that 70 percent of the Germans could be bought off for huge amounts of money. He recalls that girls were no issue, but boys were an issue because of circumcision. He recalls that many priests forged birth certificates for boys, and many monasteries took in children who were snuck out of the ghetto. Baranowski, recalls that he was only part of a chain, but that everyone had to be bribed at a high price.

Throughout Warsaw, people were naked and starving in the streets. Baranowski recalls that in some cases the ghetto was more plentiful than the rest of Warsaw, saying a Jewish

restaurant in the ghetto had everything, where on the Aryan side there were only dead bodies. He was only scared of the Jewish police, who were worse than the Gestapo, as he never saw the Germans kill Jews in the ghetto but did see the Jewish police kill Jews. He says he understood after being at a camp himself, as the Jewish police had to deliver certain numbers of Jews for transport. He took a Maria, young girl, out of the ghetto in the beginning and she lived with his family even after his arrest in 1942. In 1943, according to his mother, Jews were told that they could report for an exchange to Turkey, being told they would be exchanged for German prisoners. This was likely done to entice the thousands of Jews on the Aryan side of the city. As things were getting tough in Warsaw, Maria saw this as an opportunity and went. The transports went to Treblinka and Belzec instead.

The Germans came to search his apartment, but luckily missed the illicit radio hidden behind a curtain. However, in November became a subject of investigation and was tortured. He was then sent to the Majdanek camp in January of 1943, alongside four transports of Czech Jews that were close to death. One of his Polish comrades died the first night, and the Czech Jews jumped to take his clothes, appalling the other Poles. The next night, the Poles did the same, and Baranowski, noticed how in one night all of their mentalities changed.

Stefania Dambrowska was born in 1916 in St. Petersburg. Before the war, her family had bought an estate in Orwidow Dolny in Vilnius county, today Lithuania. In 1939, the Soviets invaded, and Lithuanians were given authority of the Vilnius region, oppressing the ethnic Poles by making them work without wages. Dambrowska had worked for the National Agriculture Bank and was fired because she would not become Lithuanian. She then returned to the farm and worked the land, as there were no men. She worked in the forest, hauling carts and sleighs to transport timber and firewood. In June 1941 while visiting Vilnius and the Soviets began

deporting Poles, including her mother. She lived alone on the estate, but as people approached looking for safety she took them in. Various families came and went at the house, and they took in families fleeing to and from Warsaw, Jewish families, Jewish children, Catholics of Jewish descent, and left-wing Polish conspirators. The people she hid came from various nationalities and religions with or without papers. Dambrowska further helped by retrieving forged papers from Vilnius when needed, which were provided by two priests. One day Lithuanians and Germans came, separated the adults and children and questioned them, scaring one girl who did not have papers into fleeing to the forest. While the Lithuanians were cruel to the Poles, there were two village leaders who stopped the Gestapo from getting to Orwidow and warned her when the investigation began. Earning money was tough, both under Soviet and German occupation.

After the Soviets took over, they recruited Dambrowska and one of her residents to return to Lublin to work in the offices of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN), and they were amazed at the success of the Poland in 1944, as the Polish army was in control. Dambrowska's job included surveying the Majdanek camp and sites of mass murder in the forest to record the atrocities. Dambrowska keeps in touch with the people she helped to survive, who have now ended up in Australia, France, and Israel. She is recognized as the righteous among the nations for hiding at least eight people for the entirety of the war.⁴⁰ Her compassion did not extend only to Jews, but to anyone who approached her seeking help or shelter.

Tadeusz Sulowsky was born in 1929 in Warsaw, and like Baranowski belonged to the Scouts, which recruited teenagers from schools. All the instructors were from the Home Army, and Sulowsky soon rose in the ranks, from combat school to assault groups. Lying about his age,

⁴⁰ Interestingly, although her actions are recorded by the USC Shoah Foundation, Yad Vashem, and the Museum of Polish Jews, the ERA has the only complete, translated oral history.

Sulowsky entered an officer school and was trained in intelligence activity. His brother had joined the Polish Socialist Party (not under the aegis of the Soviet Union), and his commander decided to recruit him. His first jobs included look outs and waiting for targets to arrive, then offered him a real sabotage job. His first assignment was to help blow up German police cars and military trucks under a bridge. His job was to walk opposite the guard while smoking a cigarette as a signal to those planting the bomb of where the guard was at the moment. Before leaving, his brother gave him a vial of cyanide in case he was caught, as to avoid torture.

His brother also worked in intelligence, pursuing informers who may have harmed Poles. In an assassination attempt, his brother ended up getting shot and killed. In 1943, Sulowsky joined the Home Army, which at that time had little to no weapons besides grenades and two machine guns without feeders from World War I. The regiment failed in an attempt to attack the airport, during which 125 men were killed, and the regiment disbanded into the forest and back to Warsaw. Sulowsky then joined a guerilla unit that operated outside Warsaw and defeated Kalmucks, Soviet prisoners of war incorporated into the German military. He then joined guerillas who had survived the Warsaw uprising, and then joined aregiments and fighting more battles. Sulowsky ended up in the third regiment of the Polish legions as the Russian front was approaching. Ending up surrounded by Germans on all sides and was almost taken prisoner but was able to hide in the forest. Sulowsky recalls and sings the song of the underground, including the lyrics, “the underground is the underground! That’s the bread of our lives! It is fab, it’s bliss to carry an MG! (gun).” Throughout his testimony Sulowsky remembers his time in the resistance with excitement. Despite the danger, he was a willing volunteer and excited to fight for his homeland.

The Polish resistance took distinctly different forms, with these three testimonies showing three different components. There were the nationalists and socialists fighting for independence, Poles protecting Jews, and Poles protecting themselves from the Russians and Lithuanians. Poland was resisting both the Soviets and the Germans, both of whom treated all Poles cruelly, not just the resisters. In a sense, resistance was the more obvious choice than in France or Italy, where cooperating could guarantee safety. Sulowsky's first memory of the war was German soldiers bombing farms and fabricating reasons to arrest and execute his aunt. Whereas the Germans saw the French and Italian as other civilized Aryans, they saw Poles as inferior and an inherent obstacle to the land they were seeking to occupy. During Soviet rule, only the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was in official history books, whereas the Warsaw Uprising against the Soviets was excluded. This memory re-emerged after the end of Soviet rule, encouraging pride in Polish resistance.

The resistance more intertwined with the Holocaust than in France or Italy, likely because there was a larger Jewish population in Poland than in the other areas. As Germany was the invader, the partisans did not pre-date the war as they did in the West but were a direct reaction to it. This may explain why interest in the resistance has increased as the European Union expanded to the East. In the East, the partisans fought against a foreign invader, while in Italy the memory is so much more complex as they were fighting against Italians in many cases.

Oral histories are inherently flawed, and those in the ERA cannot be assumed to representative of resistance movements themselves. Yet as Robert Gildea notes in his analysis of French resistance histories, "only first-person accounts can lay bare individual subjectivity, the experience of resistance activity, and the meaning that resisters later gave to their actions,"⁴¹

⁴¹ Robert Gildea, *Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance* (Harvard University Press, 2015).

The stories of resistance told by the ERA are not inherently unique and fit within existing scholarship of the resistance. However, the motivation behind telling the stories as part of a European project is inherently forward-thinking, at a time when resistance against fascism has again become relevant.

The oral histories become interesting due to the circumstances surrounding their creation. Why, in 2016, did the European Union choose to fund the memorialization of such a polarizing and complex topic? The European Union has not been substantially focused on Resistance as part of their research agenda. The ERA grew out of a distinctly Italian initiative, with Istoreco first proposing the idea in 2005. The European Commission provided funding in 2006, but the interesting aspect is how Istoreco turned a distinctly local project into a European-wide initiative by partnering with institutions throughout Eastern and Western Europe. This desire to draw a connection between local histories and the rest of Europe demonstrates a manifestation of Europeanization. The impulse to find similarity across borders with the hope that by recording and sharing these stories, some greater historical truth will be realized and preserved. Rather, examination of the ERA demonstrates the key differences on the narratives of the twentieth century across member states. Across countries, these stories reveal differences in the methods of resistance and motivations. However, the collection of these seemingly disparate memories is striking in that all the resisters demonstrated hope for the future of Europe. The individuality of the narratives is paradoxically what makes these stories transcend their historical context. The values the resisters emphasize in their accounts varying widely, including fraternity, justice, duty, and adventure. Rather than using Nazism as a negative blueprint, as Western European

often does, both the Eastern and Western accounts demonstrate the positive idea of radical, local action against injustice.

Conclusion

There is a European commonality of striving to grapple with the past as a means of understanding the present and future. The process of exploring memories of the past, even when the conclusions provide no common understanding, is in and of itself unifying and uniquely European. Across the political spectrum in Europe today, collective memories dating back to World War II are still invoked and often distorted for political gain. Engaging with memories of the past, even when bring back unpleasant or controversial memories has inherent value as serving to understand how and why collective memory can be manipulated.

Ultimately, the ERA project highlights an inherent paradox of Europe and the European Union—exploring memories of the past reveals more differences than commonalities. The ERA documents memories of the resistance, already a complicated and debated memory on the national scale, from a European perspective. The narratives exposed by the project reveal the complications and nuances of the resistance that have implications for the understanding of the ideological paradigms of both the second world war and the conception of Europe built in the post-war period. Resistance fighters had varying motivations for their actions and by focusing on narratives outside the masculine, nationalist fighter that emerged after the war, the ERA demonstrates Europeans have a strong propensity for ideological and political diversity.

The common thread in the interviews is one of humanity. Regardless of ideological background, the resisters' actions were essentially about ending the suffering created by the war,

even for those on opposing sides. Resisters share an understanding and motivation for sharing their memories—future generations must learn from the past in order to continue fighting for a better future. Though there is no single European identity nor ideology that all Europeans are likely to unite behind, the memory of the resistance may be a unifying mythology in that there is a pride in acting on one's values in spite of the status quo. This spirit of resistance is inherently in opposition to the bureaucratic structures of the EU, suggesting that a European identity formed from a shared collective memory is not only impossible, but unnecessary.

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