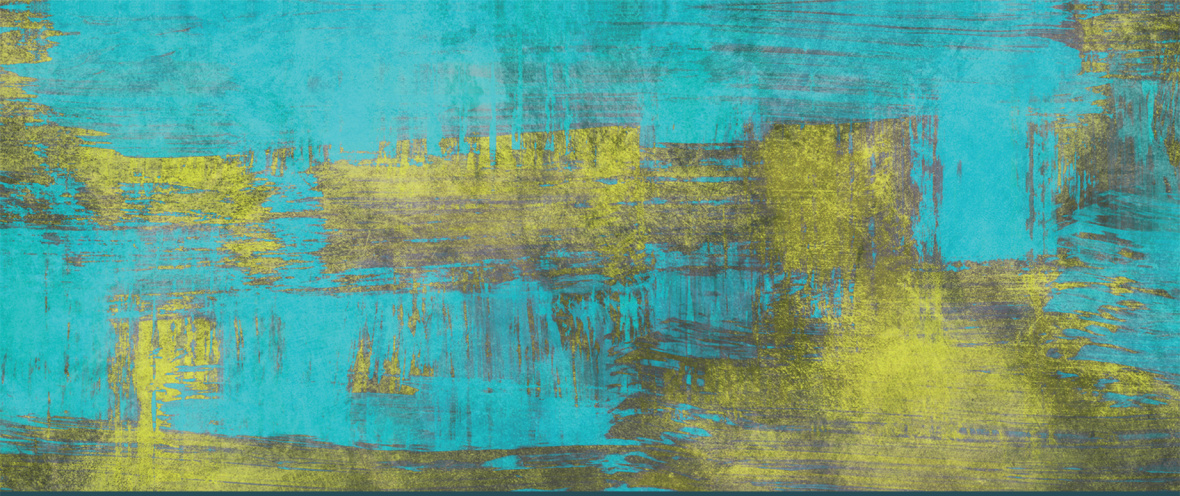

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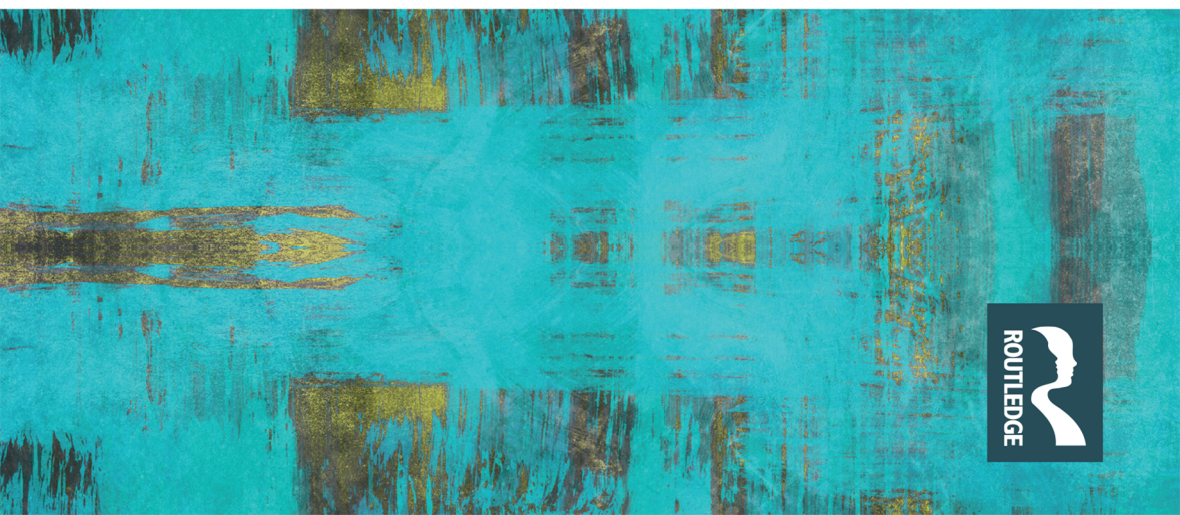

ROUTLEDGE

Europe between Migrations, Decolonization and Integration (1945–1992)

This monograph addresses mobility and migrations as contributing phenomena in shaping contemporary Europe after 1945, in connection with decolonisation and the creation of the European Community. The disappearing of the colonial empires caused a large movement of people (former colonizers as well as formerly colonized people) from the extra-European countries to the "Old continent"; while the European integration project encouraged the movement of the citizens within the Community. The book retraces how, in both cases, migrations and mobility impacted the way national communities, as well as the European one, have been defining themselves and their real and imaginary boundaries.

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Edited by Giuliana Laschi, Valeria Deplano, and Alessandro Pes

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Introduction

Giuliana Laschi, Valeria Deplano, and Alessandro Pes

Migrations and the idea of Europe

In 1996, the sociologist Saskia Sassen presented her book on immigrants, colonists and refugees as a response to the widespread perception, amongst Europeans, of immigrants that had suddenly arrived from poor countries as a threat to rich ones. The aim of her work was, on the one hand, to make both the figure of the immigrant (breaking it down it into different, although sometimes overlapping categories) and the framework of reasons which pushed people to migrate more complex. On the other hand, Sassen offered a long-term interpretation of immigration towards Europe that showed how migratory flows linked to work had contributed significantly to its urbanisation and industrialisation since the eighteenth century at least and how, therefore, immigrants represented neither an emergency nor an alien element in the history of the continent. On the contrary, immigration had been an essential element in shaping modern Europe.

Over twenty years later, the theme of migrations towards Europe plays an increasingly central role in international political debate, and the defence of borders – both national and European Union – is increasingly frequently offered as a defence of not always clearly specified European values. Once again, therefore, an interpretation is given in which contemporary Europe exists regardless of and, in a certain sense, in juxtaposition to migrations and the presence of immigrants. This narrative has been exacerbated further since 2015.

The migratory crisis has been handled badly by the European Union and in many of the member states the topic of migration has been and still is the focus of what, to all intents and purposes, is a fear strategy that helps the many sovereign political parties that exist on the continent. A fear of immigrants has led to a sentiment of exclusion that has endured the passing of time and change and has called into question the multicultural model adopted by the process of European integration. In fact, as recently as 2018, 38 per cent of Europeans thought immigration was the main threat to security, despite the drastic fall in the arrival of migrants into Europe, with only 29 per cent choosing terrorism (Eurobarometer, 2018). This is despite the fact that the presumed direct correlation between immigration and a sense of insecurity has only proved to be sustainable at a debate and propaganda level, as it has no scientific

foundation and has been disproven by empirical analysis (Fasani et al., 2019). Instead, multiculturalism has been a complex, but determined choice by the European Community, as well as by the Council of Europe. Although in very different measures, since the 1950s all European societies have experienced growing multiculturalism that has proved to be difficult for governments that had, until then, been used to managing fairly homogenous, white and Christian societies. The initial reactions of Great Britain, France and the Netherlands were debatable, but largely racist and discriminatory (Taras, 2012). Gradually, however, European countries developed tools capable of responding to the challenges of ethnic and cultural pluralism thanks to the fundamental principle for free societies and the equal treatment of citizens (Chin, 2017).

The European Community first and then the EU adopted the same principles, and although starting from such a complex position made the equal treatment of citizens from various European countries difficult, it nonetheless achieved the protection of human rights and the respect of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity as set forth in Article 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Human Rights. Member states had to guarantee cultural specificity and combat discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic origin, religion or faith.

However, multiculturalism and its basic principles were evidently not that well rooted in European societies, as management of the migratory crisis has jeopardised the rights acquired by law and provoked racist, xenophobic and absolutely discriminatory reactions, as clearly shown by the requests of Poland and Slovakia to take only Christian asylum seekers in order not to put their national culture 'at risk'. If multiculturalism presents such significant vacuums on a cultural and political level, fuelled by its denial – and politically supported by sovereign parties that have enjoyed extraordinary electoral success – it is clear that the historical process that has led from decolonisation to the immigration crises is flawed and a far-reaching, continental-wide failure.

This book aims therefore, to elaborate on and historicise both internal and external mobility, reconstructing the stages and analysing how it was and still is closely connected to the formation and refoundation of Europe after the Second World War.

In fact, despite being aware that inward migratory movements have been a feature of the history of the continent since long before, the book focuses on the period from the late 1940s and early 1950s: in other words, from that period when Europe was forced to rethink and rebuild itself from several points of view (Hobsbawm, 1994; Judt, 2005; Kershaw, 2018).

In strictly material terms, the conflict that ended in 1945 had caused the destruction of entire cities and industrial and production sites. Restarting them was fundamental for a return to normality and production, but hugely dependent on the availability of funds and labour. From a political point of view, from as early as the First World War, Europe had seen two non-European (or partially) superpowers emerge on the international scene that had deposed it from its dominant role on the global political and military stage. At the same time, it had experienced first-hand the weakness of its political systems, as well as the

negative outcomes that technical and industrial skills and know-how could bring, despite having up until then been considered the champion of unlimited wellbeing and of being the measure of linear progress that also propounded to be universal.

After 1945, there were at least three processes that resulted in a rethinking of the role and meaning of Europe. The first, which called into question its very existence and not merely in geographical terms, was the Cold War, which divided the European territory into two separate and opposed blocs. That played a fundamental role, as we will see, in the development of one of the key concepts for the history of mobility in the contemporary era, the figure of the 'refugee'. For over 40 years, the Iron Curtain separated the history of western countries on the continent from that of the eastern countries. Until the fall of the Communist bloc, the latter were in some ways excluded from the political and even historical debate about what would become recognised as Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall, before being included again in the 1990s.

In the meantime, countries to the west of the Curtain had to deal with and oversee two other processes that necessarily implied a rethinking of the very idea of Europe: decolonisation and the creation of a supranational Community subject. This book does not consider the process of European unification and the demise of colonial powers as phenomena directly linked by cause and effect; in other words, it does not interpret the creation of the Community as a response to the fall of empires (Laschi, 2015, pp. 177–183). However, it also does not consider them as phenomena that simply developed at the same time: instead, the perspective taken is that of analysing how both processes helped to define the history, policies and borders of the new, post-war Europe.

In the three decades after 1945, all the countries which had come into the war as colonial states (France, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain) had to deal with the loss of their African and Asian domains. Each of the European powers interpreted the new situation and related to the creation of new and independent states differently, considering it a question of national interest that had to be managed autonomously. However, they all viewed the independence of their colonies and the subsequent loss of a central role in global events as an incentive in the search for a new identity.

This identity did not necessarily contrast head-on with the previous one: in a scenario further complicated by continuing tensions in a Europe which had been devastated by the Second World War, in all national contexts new colonial aspirations counterbalanced initial decolonisation (Hopkins, 2008, p. 2016). Thus, Great Britain reacted to the independence of India by repositioning its empire in Africa. The independence of India itself in 1947 was only superficially perceived as the end of the British empire. Just a few years later, a report by the Colonial Office in 1950 pointed out that 'the transfer of power [in India] is not a sign of weakness or of liquidation of the Empire but is, in fact, a sign and source of strength' (Buettner, 2016, pp. 39–40). Therefore, throughout the 1950s Great Britain responded to the crisis of its empire with an attempt to reform that imperial community without taking into consideration an authentic process of

decolonisation. In this sense, the reorganisation and consolidation of the Commonwealth, the new drive given by the British government to the imperial community project in those same years, are indicative of a period which, although described as a phase of initial decolonisation, was in fact far from being effectively decolonised. For Great Britain, the Commonwealth really represented an alternative to the process of integration, as various British representatives pointed out during each negotiation phase prior to the creation of the European Community. The central idea was still that of a great international power – achieving this status thanks to a network of former colonies – which did not want to be closed within the borders of a continent that the United Kingdom has never felt fully represented by.

In the meantime, in 1944, as the war was still raging, at the Brazzaville Conference the French Committee of National Liberation had laid the foundations for a rethinking of the motherland/colony relationship without, however, questioning the hierarchical and dependent nature the relationship had. Subsequently, at the end of the conflict, the country took part in a long series of wars, initially in south-east Asia and then in north Africa, to defend its imperial dimension. The emblematic case of the war in Algeria and the continual reassertion in France of Algerian independence as an amputation of the French body politic, exemplifies the complexity of the relationship between country and colony which European nations had to tackle, in some measure, in the decolonisation process.

In different ways, at different times – some continuing into the 1970s – and in different decolonisation contexts, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy and lastly Portugal also sought, if not to maintain their colonies, at least to maintain a colonial-type relationship with their former territories overseas. This therefore emerged as a common trait in the attitude of European countries with regard to the independence of their colonies. Although the principle of self-determination of people had been set forth and widely shared on an international level and the idea that the colonial world had to be reorganised after the end of the Second World War had been partially shared on a theoretical level, events tell a different story with regard to the application of such principles.

If considered from the perspective of European countries, and if analysed through the translation into practice of the ideals expressed, decolonisation appears to be a historical process which could be described as contradictory, if not incoherent. The response of European countries to the demands or expectations for independence from their colonies was almost always the attempt to reassert colonial order; order that concerned not only the sphere of administrative control, but also, in a broader and deeper sense, the colonial culture which justified that control, the belief in the superiority of European civilisation and modernity. From this perspective, for European countries and for Europe the search for a new identity in the post-war context did not imply criticism of the colonial culture and supposed European superiority.

The nature and importance the loss of colonies has had in European history can be inferred by the ways that same history has been narrated: in historiography,

decolonisation or rather the various forms of decolonisation have been effectively and convincingly reconstructed in terms of the events and the significance and problems linked to the end of formal European control for the former colonised countries and their populations. Moving to the European side of the sequence of events, there are still many unresolved questions on what decolonisation meant for former colonising countries and their populations.

Historiography has brought to light how the colonial system was built on political, economic, social and cultural elements together and how these influenced both the colonised and the colonisers, producing hybrid societies rather than copies of the metropolitan social model. We can now consider obsolete that historiographical interpretation of colonialism as a process which has to be understood and interpreted in a one-directional manner by which the motherland influenced and shaped the colony.

However, the history of decolonisation tells us very little of how this process influenced European societies after the end of the global war; of the two main players in the colonial world, the coloniser and the colonised, decolonisation seemed to lose one – the coloniser. This aspect seems so pregnant as to make one doubt that for the history of Europe and the European countries, decolonization means more than the mere chronological fact that marked the moment one overseas territory moved from the state of being a colonial domain to being an independent territory. The history of the coloniser therefore appears to be limited to the period of colonisation and decolonisation seems to mark the end of it.

For a real and deeper understanding of the history of the 'new' post-war Europe it is instead necessary to question how a process as radical as that of the formal end of colonial empires has, to some extent, also influenced colonising societies. After all, although it began at the end of the Second World War and continued for about thirty years, decolonisation in fact proved to be a political problem for European governments as early as the First World War. The involvement of colonial troops in that conflict were proof of a deep connection between Europe and its colonies which went beyond the bonds deriving from a relationship with dependent markets. However, at the same time it revealed a clear desire of some of those colonies to liberate themselves from the relationship of dependency, putting the question of independence on the agenda. At the same time, in particular in France, but in Great Britain too, the first movements of people from colonies towards the motherland, and the first social tensions linked to these movements, highlighted the 'strength' of the colonial bond, but were also precursors to a move away from 'homogenous' national societies towards multicultural societies, along with the difficulties and problems these would give rise to.

The Second World War brought the process of awareness of the colonial bonds to a head and also called these bonds into question; in some ways, this maturity was inevitable due to circumstances and agents external to Europe. From as early as 1941, the Atlantic Charter had issued a clear signal regarding the affirmation of the principle of self-determination of people, which was reiterated in the Declaration of the United Nations in 1942. These initial general signs of the

demise of the colonial world were followed in 1943 by the declaration of the US Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, according to whom colonising countries would have to guide colonised populations towards independence (Bagnato, 2017, p. 133). Despite this, the Second World War marked the theoretical and political moment when Europe had to tackle the colonial question and its relationship with the African continent in general without further procrastination. If the involvement of colonial troops in the First World War had demonstrated the complementarity of the colonised and colonising world, the Second World War, with the call to liberate France made by Charles De Gaulle from a colonial territory, the only 'patch' of French territory not controlled by the German armed forces, was the conclusion of the long process of unity between the colonised world and the colonising world, so much so that it referred to the colonial territory as a part of that national and European territory, the only space in that historical context capable of representing 'real national values'.

The framework of Europe's relationship with colonialism and decolonisation is further complicated if we consider the European colonial space as a long-term response to the 'American danger' (Beckert, 2017). From as early as the end of the nineteenth century, amongst the European elite the idea spread that colonial space represented the only resource which could permit the continent to remain competitive with the United States of America. Whilst the latter combined industrial development with increasing internal expansionism and the integration of new territories, Europe identified colonial expansion as the only possible response, so much so that the European elite thought that, for Europe, Africa could represent the American West. In this perspective, decolonisation could not fail to assume the characteristics of the ultimate European defeat at the hands of the United States of America. It is easier to position in this context the re-emergence of the concept of Eurafrica, in conjunction with the start of the process of independence of the colonised territories.

The start of negotiations for the creation of a new supranational subject in the space of western Europe was a response to all the stresses arising from the new post-war context. The first was the need to 'defuse' internal disputes which had, more directly, led to the explosion of the most recent conflicts. However, there was also a need to earn Europe a new role on an international scene dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union, and more generally, the need to redraw the profile of a continent which had now been forced into political borders that were smaller compared to the recent past.

If theoretically this publication refers to some key concepts in order to understand the historical, political, social and cultural processes it tackles, such as migration, decolonisation and integration, from a merely chronological point of view the book identifies a phase which goes from immediately after the Second World War to the present time, when these processes take place. There are no precise dates for when specific processes ended or started; instead, the idea is confirmed that the processes this book takes into consideration take place and develop over time and, above all, that these processes, which are apparently separate, dialogue with and influence each other.

Compared to the process of decolonisation, the process of the construction of the Community saw countries not tackling the question of a search for a new identity and a new international positioning of Europe individually, but forced them instead to dialogue, expressing their differences and shared ideas. The debate on these themes developed initially along the direction of national boundaries, in line with national interests, as we will see in greater detail with regard to mobility in this book. At the same time, however, debate brought to light political disagreements of a transnational nature and even highlighted *different approaches* between Community institutions, in particular between the Commission and Parliament, on the one hand, and the Council, on the other. As with decolonisation, in this case too, the main focus of dialogue and policies was the difficulty – and often the unwillingness – to discuss the significance of being European and the cultural and political foundations of Europe and its relations with the outside world. Alongside the search for a new *modus vivendi* with non-Community and former colonial countries, one of the many consequences of this difficulty was the failure to redefine the international role of Europe.

Mobility, migrations and the rebuilding of Europe

After 1945, both the geographical and identity-defining borders of Europe and European countries were therefore analysed, debated and redefined or reasserted in relation to the processes of decolonisation and integration. On the one hand, the end of the empires had pushed European countries back into narrower political borders; on the other, perhaps with greater force than before, it had reiterated the problem of the identity-defining borders of post-colonial countries – who was part of them and based on which criteria? The same question was the basis of the creation of the European Community which posed itself the problem of expansion, quickly identifying the countries which could feasibly join the six founding members based on political criteria (the door was only open to democratic countries) and economic and social sustainability.

However, before that, the attention of the founders focused on the question of borders within the Community: borders that the very idea of a supranational subject had to question in some way, making them permeable and crossable. For this reason, four fundamental freedoms were introduced in the Treaty of Rome in 1957; these were all freedoms linked to circulation across borders with regard to goods, services, capital and people (workers).

It is precisely the crossing – and the ability to cross, made possible or not by specific legislative provisions and fluid regimes – of political and identity-making borders that is the subject of this book. In fact, the debate around questions linked to mobility and migrations is an element common to the two processes studied. Decolonisation caused a large flow of migrants from different areas of provenance, who arrived from non-continental contexts. At the same time, the process of European unification and integration saw the freedom of circulation within the continent of workers first and citizens later as one of the objectives and symbols of unification itself.

Keeping both processes together, the book retraces the way the notions of 'migration' and 'mobility' have been articulated and historicised, by highlighting the different meanings they have assumed and the different people they have addressed in Europe since 1945: workers, postcolonial returnees, postcolonial migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. The debates and policies about such different cases are analysed in order to provide a complex picture of the reasons why and the ways in which migrants have been included in or excluded from national and European communities over time.

The thirteen chapters, organised in four parts, examine these policies from different perspectives and on different levels, providing a European framework along with a comparison between different national cases. In particular, the first part 'Workers or citizens: the European Community faces mobility' examines the way the issue of mobility has been addressed at a European level (Ricciardi) or by Europe as a community (Laschi, Paoli), while the last part, 'Migrants and citizens: policies in comparison', mainly focuses on the way migrations have been addressed at a national level and how migration policies have changed over time (Spire, Garau).

The second and third parts, which deal respectively with migrations from the former colonial empires to Europe and the issue of refugees in Europe from different perspectives, combine a comparative view of specific issues (Deplano, Ertola, Carotenuto) from a European point of view (Pes, Fois, Gerli, Vitiello).

Where these different perspectives intersect provides a better understanding of the ways in which mobility and migrations have contributed to the above-mentioned action of tracing and retracing both concrete and cultural boundaries from 1945 to the present day.

In particular, in the opening chapter, Laschi retraces the crucial role played by mobility in the integration process from the beginning and highlights how it was a positive issue while it referred to Europeans in the Western bloc, but that going forward it became an 'increasingly divisive issue among Member States, ever more rigid toward third countries'. The chapter by Paoli focuses on third countries, namely Mediterranean ones, and deals with the historical evolution of the link between the Mediterranean and the migration policies of the European Community and the European Union. Following the same interpretative path as Laschi, Paoli highlights the shift between the 1970s, when mobility aimed to integrate immigrants from the southern Mediterranean, and the 1980s and 1990s when the focus turned to combating illegal immigration from the south. Transformation is also the keyword for Ricciardi, whose chapter analyses the transition from colonialism to the migration policies of the 1950s using international migration as an interpretative key.

The second part adopts a geographical perspective, addressing migrations to Europe from the former colonial empires and analysing both the history of the people of European descent and those of Asian and African descent. The latter issue is at the core of Deplano's chapter which deals with the topic of former colonised people, analysing their inclusion in or exclusion from their arrival communities by comparing the citizenship policies adopted by the different European countries over time. Deplano stresses the importance of the citizenship

regimes towards postcolonial migrants for strengthening the national dimension within the European context. Then, with a focus on Italy, Ertola looks at the other side of the coin, retracing the difficulties faced by former colonial settlers when they returned to their homeland, where they struggled to have their rights recognised. Both these issues, the one concerning people of African and Asian descent and the one concerning people of European descent, have been managed by each country independently. However, the similarities between the problems faced by former colonisers when they returned from the colonies and their ability to organise took the issue from a national to a European level, as the chapter by Fois on the 'Confédération Européenne des spoliés d'outre-mer' (*Confederation of European Overseas Despoiled)* highlights. In particular, the author shows how settlers were able to think of themselves and to move in a transnational space. Pes's chapter investigates how the 1949 Economic Congress of the European Movement represented a significant moment for defining the role of Europe in relations with Africa. Starting from a brief reminder of the origin of the concept of Eurafrica, the chapter analyses the 1949 Economic Congress as a momentum in which the emerging idea of a European community tackled the need to rethink and reshape European relations with Africa.

The three chapters in the third part of the book deal with refugees and asylum seekers, providing an overview of the ways in which these concepts have been used, shaped and re-shaped in post-1945 Europe. In particular, Gerli retraces how European policies have created a tripartition between migration categories 'made on a strong ideological basis, rooted in capitalistic (free movement), anti-communistic (forced migration) and colonialistic (voluntary/economic migration) beliefs'. In a sense, Carotenuto's chapter continues on a similar path, focusing on people exiled from Latin America who came to Europe during the 1970s. In his analysis of their experience in Europe, Carotenuto highlights how, for ideological reasons too, exiles found it difficult to be recognised and to be entitled to stay in Europe; revolutionarily they had to be depicted not as avant-gardists, but as victims. At the end of the section, Vitiello investigates the impact of the so-called refugee crisis on the Common European Asylum System, showing how the existing European system is designed to create a complex spectrum of categories and a hierarchy of beneficiaries of international protection.

As mentioned, the last section comes back to migration intended as a macro category, retracing the policies adopted towards the people who enter European countries over time. In particular, Part IV provides a focus on the French and British cases. On the one hand, Spire investigates decolonisation as a critical step in restructuring immigration politics in post-war France. Focusing on administrators during colonialism and then turning to the immigration administration, he provides an interpretation of the continuities between the two policies, even if he argues that in order to understand the provisions toward migrants after the 1970s other elements must be taken into consideration. On the other hand, Garau looks at an increasingly harsh British migration policy, putting it in relation to the rise of identity politics and increasingly exclusionary interpretations of the idea of 'Britishness'. In conclusion, Colucci presents

a summary of the policies adopted by the countries of Western Europe and by the European Community to govern the mobility of the population from 1945 to now.

Colucci provides a general overview of some of the issues that came to light in previous chapters. Firstly, his chapter summarises the different types of migrants and migrations to Europe since the end of the Second World War. Secondly, the chapter stresses the link between mobility and work that was at the base of the first European policy for free movement within the borders of the Community, but that is also one of the reasons for the more inclusive migration policies approved after the war by several Western countries in respect of postcolonial migrants. Thirdly, it looks at the impact of postcolonial migrations in challenging the sense of identity of European countries that, along with the changing needs of the labour market in the 1960s and 1970s, caused a shift in national policies towards migrations from outside the Community. In conclusion, it looks at the emergence of a more relevant Community effort aimed at limiting growing migration flows from the late 1970s at a European level. As Vitiello has already pointed out, it meant that the progressive breaking down of national borders was concomitant with the progressive externalisation of the European Union's southern border, with the aim of restricting migrations from Africa and the Middle East.

The idea of mobility that, although not immune to ideological and political conditioning as the 'geographical reserve' shows, in the first 15 years after the end of the war was theoretically managed as a value on a European scale and as a possibility on a national scale, is progressively encumbered with negative characteristics until it becomes 'a central element of the centrifugal thrust of the integration process' (Laschi). In our opinion, the historicisation offered by the chapters in this book makes it possible to focus on some of the reasons and key moments of this transformation, disempowering the interpretation that the different perceptions of mobility are the result of an 'indiscriminate increase' in migratory flows, but instead highlighting how migratory policies and the perception of mobility change in relation to changing economic, political-identity and relationship needs between the national and Community levels.

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