



# Journal of European Periodical Studies

*an online journal by ESPRit, European Society for Periodical Research*

## The Matter of Europe: Introduction

Cillian Ó Fathaigh and Andrew Thacker

*Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 8.1 (Summer 2023)

ISSN 2506-6587

Content is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence

The *Journal of European Periodical Studies* is hosted by Ghent University

Website: [ojs.ugent.be/jeps](https://ojs.ugent.be/jeps)

---

To cite this article: Cillian Ó Fathaigh and Andrew Thacker, 'The Matter of Europe: Introduction', *Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 8.1 (Summer 2023), 1–8

---

# The Matter of Europe: Introduction

CILLIAN Ó FATHAIGH\* AND ANDREW THACKER^

\*Universidad Complutense de Madrid

^Nottingham Trent University

[andrew.thacker@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.thacker@ntu.ac.uk)

In 1954 a new monthly appeared in Britain: the *London Magazine* was launched with John Lehmann as editor and with the financial support of the newspaper magnate, Cecil Harmsworth King. Lehmann had been the successful editor of several significant British literary magazines from the 1930s onwards, such as *New Writing* (1936–39), *Penguin New Writing* (1940–50), and *New Writing and Daylight* (1942–46).<sup>1</sup> In these earlier publications Lehmann exhibited a keen interest in publishing work in translation for his mainly English readership, partly prompted by the period of time he spent living in Vienna in the 1930s; his aim in *New Writing*, he wrote later, had been to introduce ‘foreign writers, who had excited my interest during my travels, to an English audience’.<sup>2</sup> The magazine thus provided extensive work in translation from many European countries as well as from China and Russia. When, in 1953, Lehmann was invited by King to edit a new literary magazine, he insisted upon the same internationalist vision for the publication: ‘I intended above all to avoid being narrowly British. [...] There must be writers from the rest of Europe among the contributors, above all writers little known in our country.’<sup>3</sup> To this end Lehmann travelled to Paris in search of contributors, meeting Marguerite Duras as well as figures in the publishing houses of Plon and Gallimard.<sup>4</sup> When the first issue of the *London Magazine* appeared, in February 1954, Lehmann’s editorial once again emphasized its internationalism: the magazine would be,

mindful, however, of the fact that without some sense of its European perspective English literature and thought have always in the past tended to be sorely impoverished, and that today and in the future the world perspective is necessary beyond the European.<sup>5</sup>

This special issue of *JEPS* on ‘The Matter of Europe’ contains essays that, in diverse ways, explore how magazines in the immediate decades after the end of World War Two brought a European perspective to bear upon their material. This was a perspective that, as Lehmann draws attention to, raised questions about the cultural identities of individual countries after the war as well as an awareness that European identity was being shaped by a wider ‘world perspective’, whether that meant the incipient Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, or how European countries dealt with the decolonizing politics of its former territories in Africa, the Caribbean, and South Asia.

1 For a discussion of Lehmann as editor see Françoise Bort, ‘A New Prose: John Lehmann and New Writing (1936–40)’, in *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines: Vol. I Britain and Ireland 1880–1955*, ed. by Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 669–87.

2 John Lehmann, *The Whispering Gallery: Autobiography I* (London: Longmans, 1955), p. 232.

3 John Lehmann, *The Ample Proposition: Autobiography III* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1966), p. 244.

4 Lehmann, *Ample Proposition*, p. 252.

5 John Lehmann, ‘Foreword’, *London Magazine*, 1.1 (February 1954), 12.

This special issue emerges from the *Spaces of Translation: European Magazine Culture, 1945–65* project (SpaTrEM), which is funded jointly by the AHRC (UK) and DFG (Germany). This project has been studying a small constellation of important literary and cultural magazines from three countries (Britain, France, Germany), between c. 1945–65, in order to consider how, through translation, they explore and construct notions of European identity in the period following the end of World War Two. Using the notion of periodicals as ‘European spaces’, SpaTrEM has addressed how periodical culture in Britain, France, and Germany used translation to reconfigure a vision for Europe after the catastrophe of World War Two.<sup>6</sup> This special issue draws upon papers presented at the first online workshop organized by SpaTrEM in 2021 and devoted to the topic of ‘The Matter of Europe’.

The articles here all address, in differing ways, what mattered to European magazines in this period, the issues that preoccupied them as well as the material culture of post-war periodicals in Britain, Germany, and France. The papers explore topics such as: the visual look and coding of the magazines, including the use of images and advertisements; the intermedial nature of postwar periodicals; the role of magazine editors in developing new ideas about European identities; translation as a key material practice in the production of the magazines; and the materialization of new European identities in cultural, philosophical, and political debates in the periodicals. One French magazine is considered (*La Nouvelle équipe française – La NEF*), with one each from Germany (*Der Monat*) and Britain (*Encounter*), and a bi-lingual publication (*ADAM International Review*) based in London, edited by a Romanian exile, and which published work in both English and French. The choice of magazines is deliberately diverse: *Encounter* and *Der Monat* were monthlies addressed to the educated common reader and address a diverse range of topics, such as current affairs and history as well as literature and travel writing, while *ADAM: International* and *La NEF* combine the format of the literary review and the little magazine. This range of magazines enables us to track how the different material formats address the question of ‘European spaces’ in a comparative fashion. This introduction will thus sketch out some of the wider contexts in which these post-1945 periodicals operated.

The most immediate context was that of a crisis over the very notion of European identity, after two world wars in less than thirty years had brought turmoil and destruction to European soil. In response many intellectuals began imagining how to rebuild ‘civilization’ in a continent that frequently seemed willing to discard it in favour of barbarity. As the historian Paul Betts has noted in his survey of post-war Europe: ‘ideas of civilization fuelled new political visions of how Europe’s damaged cultural traditions could be revived and preserved.’<sup>7</sup> A discourse focused upon ‘civilization’, argues Betts, thus ‘emerged as a rallying cry for building a better Europe after the war’, both from left and right perspectives, producing a number of different ways ‘in which Europe was culturally imagined and reorganised, both on the continent and abroad’.<sup>8</sup> For example, the English author Stephen Spender was commissioned in 1945 to travel through Germany, recording the ruined cities and engaging with what remained of German intellectual life in a series of essays which appeared in the magazine *Horizon* in December 1945, and was later published in book form as *European Witness* in 1946.<sup>9</sup> During one meeting with the German author Ernst Jünger, Spender discussed

6 See Marjet Brolsma and Lies Wijnterp, “Just Read my Magazine!” Periodicals as European Spaces in the Twentieth Century’, *Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 3.2 (2018), 1–6.

7 Paul Betts, *Ruin and Renewal: Civilising Europe After the Second World War* (London: Profile Books, 2020), p. 5.

8 Ibid.

9 Stephen Spender, *European Witness* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1946).

Germany's relationship to Europe, and how it might be reintegrated into European civilization after the war. Spender's suggestion was the following:

I would like to see an International Review for Europe, on the very highest level, in which the best German writers were published side by side with English and French ones, and perhaps with Russian ones also. In this Review, the German questions which concerned the whole of Europe, such as German philosophy, German ideas about power, German history etc., together with other European questions might be discussed very seriously and with equal frankness by thinkers of all nations.[...] In this way the German writers would be more or less absorbed into the whole European movement.<sup>10</sup>

Jünger was enthusiastic and argued that 'such a Review should be trilingual — printed in all three languages. He said that a great opportunity now offered because Germany was in the mood to accept a lead from abroad.'<sup>11</sup> A magazine that moved across linguistic borders and was possibly multilingual was thus seen as an important strategy to repair bridges across war-torn national boundaries. One way, then, to understand Spender's role as British editor of the magazine, *Encounter*, discussed below by Jason Harding, was as a version of the idea of an 'International Review for Europe'. Equally, the magazines, *Der Monat*, considered below by Dana Steglich, and *ADAM: International Review*, discussed by Chris Mourant, can also be understood as versions of the same desire for a periodical space in which European civilization might be rebuilt.

Another key event in these ruminations upon European identity was the famous conference held in Geneva in 1946 devoted to 'l'esprit Européen'. () This event assembled important European intellectuals (all male, however) such as Karl Jaspers, Georg Lukács, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Spender. The presiding figure at the conference was Denis de Rougemont, a Swiss writer, whose political vision for a Federal Europe was later to influence the development of the European Union. The Geneva conference was thus part of an attempt to revive the 'spirit of Europe', and harked back to Paul Valéry's influential book on European identity, *La Crise de l'Esprit* (1919).<sup>12</sup> The congress was reported upon widely, with key extracts being published and translated in many European magazines. For example, the French monthly, *La Nef*, discussed below by Cillian Ó Fathaigh, published many of the papers from the conference in its issue for November 1946. (Fig. 2) Spender's contribution, 'The Intellectuals and the Future of Europe', was also published in the first issue of another bilingual (English/German) magazine, *The Gate/Das Tor* in 1947.<sup>13</sup> Here, Spender reported pessimistically upon the aims of the conference, at which the coming fault-lines of the Cold War appeared in the arguments between Lukács and Jaspers over the future relationship between the West and the East of Europe, and the role of America.<sup>14</sup> Of de Rougemont's call for a Federal Europe, Spender argued that such a political entity — which Spender approved

10 Ibid., p. 213.

11 Ibid., pp. 213–14.

12 Valéry's text was first published in 1919, as 'The Crisis of the Mind', in English, in the magazine, the *Athenaeum*, edited by John Middleton Murry; then later that year it appeared in the French magazine, *La Nouvelle Revue Française (NRF)* as 'La Crise de l'esprit'. For overviews of some of the debates on European identity see, inter alia, Shane Weller, *The Idea of Europe: A Critical History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021) and Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality* (London: Macmillan, 1995).

13 Stephen Spender, 'The Intellectuals and the Future of Europe', *The Gate/Das Tor*, 1.1 (January–March 1947), 2–9.

14 Commenting upon the speech delivered by Lukács, Spender noted presciently that one 'had the feeling that the struggle within the European soul takes places or will take place in Germany, which is the true meeting-place of East and West'. ('Intellectuals and the Future of Europe', p. 6).

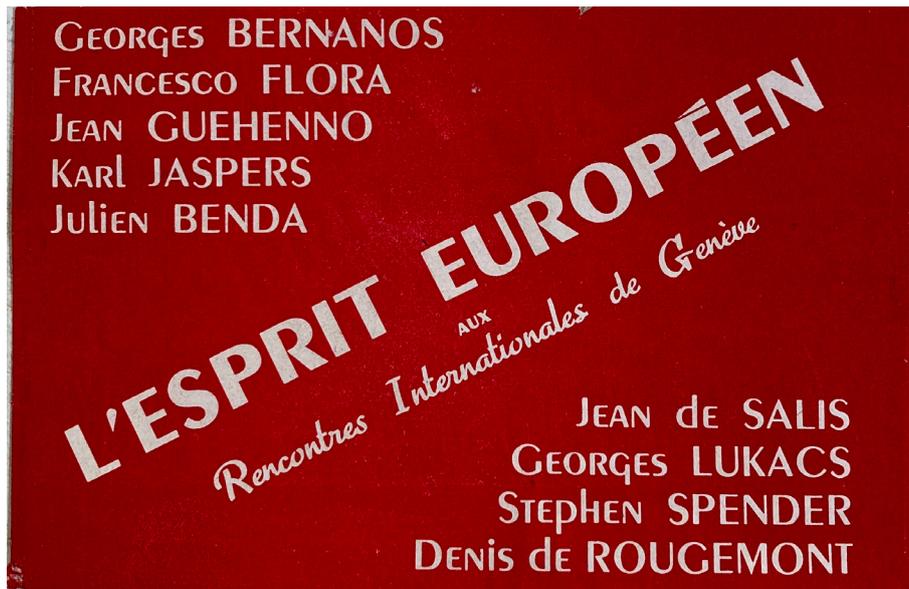


Fig. 1 Wraparound from *La NEF*, November 1946.  
Reproduced from a copy in Andrew Thacker's collection.

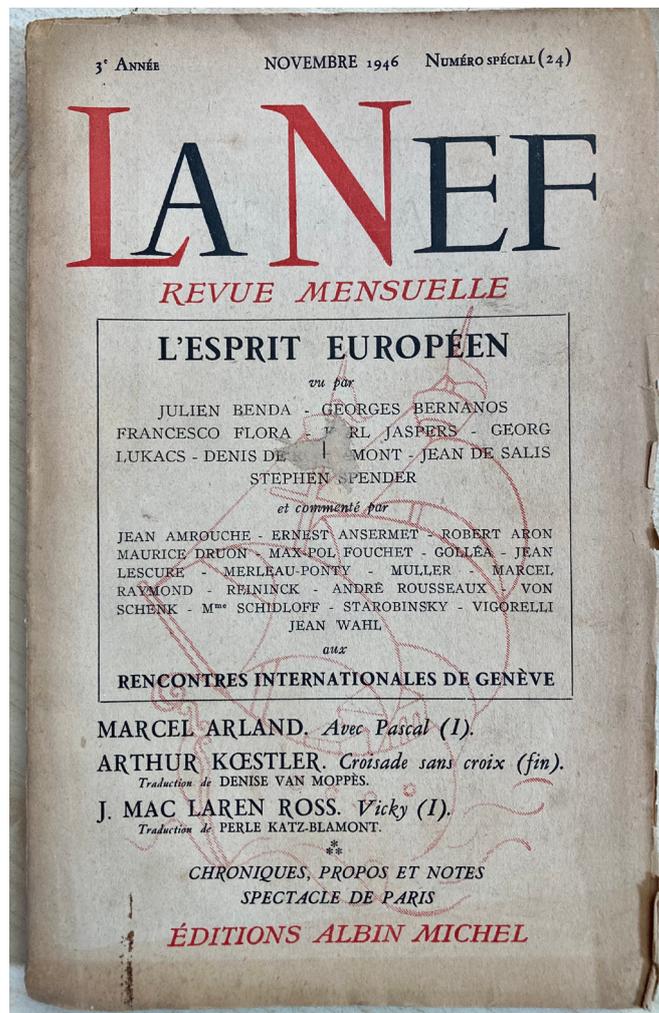


Fig. 2 Cover of *La NEF*, November 1946.  
Reproduced from a copy in Andrew Thacker's collection.

of — could only arise after ‘an enormous amount of “re-educating” had been carried out: any form of European Federation, he wrote, ‘will emerge from a situation in which Europe has rediscovered the unity of its interests’.<sup>15</sup>

Another attempt to articulate a ‘unity’ of European interests came from T. S. Eliot, in a series of articles on ‘The Unity of European Culture’. Originally broadcast on German radio and published in German in 1946 as ‘Die Einheit der Europäischen Kultur’ it then appeared as an Appendix to Eliot’s 1948 *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*.<sup>16</sup> However, it had already appeared in English in the bilingual *ADAM: International Review* (English/French) in 1946, the year of the German radio broadcasts.<sup>17</sup> In the articles Eliot argued for the commonality of European culture and, in the second piece, Eliot considered the idea that European unity might be enhanced by the development of a periodical culture that reached across national boundaries. Looking back to the interwar periodical he had founded in 1922, the *Criterion*, Eliot claimed that this magazine ‘had the aim of bringing together the best in new thinking and new writing in its time, from all the countries of Europe that had anything to contribute to the common good’.<sup>18</sup> All foreign work in the magazine, noted Eliot, had to appear in translation in the *Criterion*, but there ‘may be a function for reviews published in two or more languages, and in two or more countries simultaneously’.<sup>19</sup> ‘I am still of the opinion’, wrote Eliot in 1945, ‘that the existence of such a network of independent reviews, at least one in every capital of Europe, is necessary for the transmission of ideas — and to make possible the circulation of ideas while they are still fresh.’<sup>20</sup> This network of magazines would ‘continually stimulate that circulation of influence of thought and sensibility, between nation and nation in Europe, which fertilises and renovates from abroad the literature of each one of them’.<sup>21</sup> In many magazines after the war, we thus see Eliot’s vision for a shared ‘European space’ being enacted in publications in which prominence was granted to work in and from foreign languages in translation, magazines that were bilingual in format, as well as the developing of transnational periodical networks in which magazines might share contributions between them.<sup>22</sup> These were some of the significant ways in which periodicals helped shape wider cultural and political debates around the rebuilding of Europe after 1945.

Jason Harding’s article analyses attitudes towards ideas of community in Europe in the British magazine, *Encounter*, a magazine which was itself influenced by Eliot’s conception of culture, Europe, and the *Criterion*. Indeed, its 1962–63 symposium, ‘Going into Europe’, featured a contribution from Eliot. This symposium and a further issue, ‘Suicide of a Nation’, represent the focus of Jason Harding’s article. Harding traces the influence of *Encounter* on British debates around the matter of Europe, specifically joining the European community in the 1960s and 1970s. He argues that the journal had a significant impact on public debate, both through its influence on

15 Spender, ‘Intellectuals and the Future of Europe’, p. 4.

16 The broadcasts first appeared in a bilingual German/English edition as *Die Einheit der Europäischen Kultur: Drei Rundfunk-Vorträge*, trans. Leonie Hiller (Berlin: Carl Habel Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1946); then in English as an appendix to T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber, 1948). All quotes are from the English book edition.

17 See the issues of *ADAM: International Review* for May 1946, June–July 1946, and August 1946.

18 Eliot, p. 193. The best discussion of the *Criterion* is found in Jason Harding, *The Criterion: Cultural Politics and Periodical Networks in Interwar Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

19 Eliot, p. 193.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 This was particularly true, for example, for three of the magazines supported by the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), *Preuves*, *Encounter*, and *Der Monat*: frequently work by key figures in the CCF, such as Arthur Koestler, appears in one of these magazines, only to then rapidly appear in translation in the other two.

major intellectuals as well as prominent parts of the Labour party. With several timely echoes of British debates on Europe today, Harding brings out the critiques of British isolationism, from Arthur Koestler among others, but also demonstrates that *Encounter* never spoke with one voice. Indeed, while the majority of responses from intellectuals in 'Going into Europe' were favourable (at a ratio of 5:1), critical voices were certainly published, and this ratio narrowed significantly when the symposium was rerun in 1971, with only 3:1 in favour of Heath's negotiations to enter the EEC. While acknowledging the troubling aspects of the funding of *Encounter* by the CIA, Harding argues that critics should be careful to assume that undue influence was exerted on the journal. Indeed, his article demonstrates that the debates in *Encounter* surrounding Britain's entry into the European community were principled positions and open to alternative and dissenting views.

Dana Steglich continues Harding's focus on the influence of a journal on public debate, turning to the German journal, *Der Monat*. This is not the only overlap with *Encounter*, with Melvin Lasky serving as editor of both magazines, and with *Der Monat* also being financially supported by the American government. As its subtitle, 'An International Magazine', suggests, *Der Monat* shared a similar focus to *Encounter* on European unity, but as Steglich explains this was inflected by pressing political needs in post-1945 Germany. Steglich highlights how *Der Monat* sought to denazify the German population, particularly by emphasizing its links to other European nations, as well as to challenge the influence of the Soviet Union in Germany. Her article brings out the prominence of translation within the magazine, with the majority of articles in the first sixteen issues being translations, largely from Anglophone material, but also from a range of other European languages. We thus see the importance of translation in the formation of a 'European space'. Steglich shows us that a plurality of voices was critical to *Der Monat's* self-image, but she also traces the limits of this plurality. She underscores the exclusion of communist and conservative voices in Germany from the pages of the magazine; and, in analysing the fourth issue of the magazine, demonstrates the critical framing of voices which conflicted with *Der Monat's* Westernizing, liberal agenda. Steglich thus demonstrates the importance of Europe for *Der Monat*, the prominence of translation within this, as well as the conflict between *Der Monat's* claims for plurality and its editorial practices.

Editorial practices, and particularly the role of the editor, is something which Chris Maurant takes up in his article on *ADAM: International Review*. Miron Grindea, *ADAM's* editor from 1936 until 1995, played a major role in promoting an internationalist vision of culture through this bilingual journal, particularly in the 1940s and 1950s. Maurant brings out the importance of the magazine at this time, with Grindea even publishing Eliot's 'Reflections on the Unity of European Culture' in 1946. However, as the longest-running literary journal under a single editor in Europe, Maurant's article also examines the decline of *ADAM*, attributing this largely to the dominance of Grindea. Following his own idiosyncratic interests, and reflected in his digressive editorials, Grindea's control became increasingly harmful to the magazine, leading *ADAM* to overlook contemporary concerns and emerging interests. Struggling under the weight of Grindea's particular interests, *ADAM* became progressively more focused on consolation in the past, at odds with the present and the future. While it undoubtedly played a role as a key European venue in the immediate post-war period, therefore, Grindea's status and control as editor ultimately kept *ADAM* at the margins of wider literary culture. Maurant employs *ADAM* as a case study to raise larger questions about the impact of the role of editors on internationalist culture, and particularly how individual editors can come to limit the transnational communities they wish to create.

Transnational community represents a key issue in Cillian Ó Fathaigh's reading of *La NEF*, the French post-war periodical. Here, Ó Fathaigh considers one specific issue of the magazine, devoted to the radio. His article frames *La NEF* within a broader media ecology in post-war France. Post-1945 there was a flurry of new media institutions in France, with radio undergoing a particular transformation: shifting from a liberal, decentralized regime to a state monopoly. This established an implicit tension between a nationally focused radio and the transnational potential of radio broadcasting. Ó Fathaigh argues that *La NEF* brings this tension out, particularly around the issue of community. His article focuses on the conflict between quasi-promotional material for the new radio monopoly in *La NEF* and the contributions of three philosophers, all of whom represent the radio as having a privileged link to transnational community. Having outlined this tension, Ó Fathaigh then considers the role of the periodical within this post-war media ecology, arguing that *La NEF* presents the periodical as uniquely suited to reflect on new media structures and for the construction of a post-WWII European public sphere.

Across Britain, Germany and France, therefore, this special issue foregrounds the significant debates around the meaning, scope and potential of European community. At different levels — political, textual, or intermedial — these contributions underscore the potential of 'European spaces' for conceiving of periodicals in the twentieth century and how periodicals played a critical role in hosting and advancing debates around Europe in the post-WWII period.

**Cillian Ó Fathaigh** is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Logic and Theoretical Philosophy at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM), Spain. He is a specialist in twentieth-century European philosophy, with interests in institutions, community, the digital, and decolonization. Prior to joining Madrid, he was a Research Fellow at Nottingham Trent University, as part of the 'Spaces of Translation: European Magazine Culture, 1945–1965', funded by the AHRC-DFG, and a Gates Cambridge Scholar at the University of Cambridge. His work has been published in, among others, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, *Paragraph*, *The Journal of Medicine & Philosophy*, and *Derrida Today*.

**Andrew Thacker** is Professor of Twentieth Century Literature at Nottingham Trent University. He is the author or editor of several books on modernism, including the three volumes of *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines* (2009–13) and, most recently, *Modernism, Space and the City* (EUP, 2019). He was a founder member and first Chair of the British Association for Modernist Studies and is the UK PI for the Spaces of Translation project.

## Bibliography

- Betts, Paul, *Ruin and Renewal: Civilising Europe After the Second World War* (London: Profile Books, 2020)
- Brolsma, Marjet, and Lies Wijnterp, "Just Read my Magazine!" Periodicals as European Spaces in the Twentieth Century', *Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 3.2 (2018), 1–6
- Eliot, T. S., *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (London: Faber, 1948)
- Lehmann, John, 'Foreword', *London Magazine*, 1.1 (February 1954), 12
- , *The Whispering Gallery: Autobiography I* (London: Longmans, 1955)

THE MATTER OF EUROPE: INTRODUCTION

—, *The Ample Proposition: Autobiography III* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1966)

Spender, Stephen, *European Witness* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1946)

—, 'The Intellectuals and the Future of Europe', *The Gate/Das Tor*, 1.1 (January–March 1947), 2–9