

ON EUROPEAN NARRATIVES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THEIR POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR COPYRIGHT

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Abstract

‘The “idea” of Europe is very much with us now’, writes historian Anthony Pagden in the introduction to his edited volume of essays entitled *The Idea of Europe*, which came out in 2002. Pagden’s book is but one of many books published recently on Europe – on European culture, history and identity, and on the relationship of Europe towards other parts of the world. In his latest book, *Das kosmopolitische Europa* (Cosmopolitan Europe) from 2004, for example, German sociologist Ulrich Bech talks about the necessity to create a ‘European narrative’. This is a narrative that will emphasise a political vision for a multiethnic and cosmopolitan Europe.

It is this idea of a European narrative that I would like to develop further in my talk. My argument will be that such a narrative is intimately bound up with the topic of human rights – indeed, may be characterised as a human rights narrative. The problem is, however, that there is more than one human rights narrative at play here. I will take a look at these and also discuss some possible implications for copyright and for thinking about copyright that such human rights narratives may have.