

## Introduction

An ‘open volume’ within the framework of the Journal of European Integration History (JEIH) holds both advantages and disadvantages. It releases the coordinator who is also responsible for the introduction from obligations that are too conceptual and from turgid methodical considerations, because in view of a colourful checkerboard of individual articles, a stringent systematology is only barely possible. On one hand, the different formulations of questions regarding content cannot be squeezed into the Procrustean bed of a theory. On the other hand, they reflect the variety of the thematic approaches and the wealth of the current historical research into Europe and integration.

After a decision by the editors, this volume of the JEIH also features a new section with debating articles and reports on research, including the round table directed by Federico Romero of the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence. This will provide a great deal of new material on the methods and trends of recent international research on the history of European integration during the ‘long 1970s’. But this introduction is to be dedicated to the individual articles.

Guido Thiemeyer and Isabel Tölle have taken on the relationship between supranationality and the integration of Europe in the nineteenth century through the example of the ‘Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine’. It was Thiemeyer himself who had at first confirmed the usual opinion of the literature by having designated supranationality – understood as the delegating of parts of national sovereignty to a new institution standing over the nation-states – for the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) as a *Novum* [‘something new’], according to which this realized the supranational principle for the first time.<sup>1</sup> In his article with Tölle, though, Thiemeyer then goes on to show that comparable considerations and implementations already existed in the nineteenth century. The ‘Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine’, which was brought to life in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna, and its predecessor, the *Octroi* Treaty between France and the Holy Roman Empire, already had supranational competencies in clearly delimited areas and under precisely defined conditions which, however, did not range as far as those of the ECSC of the 1950s. The article by Thiemeyer and Tölle makes clear the historical dimension and international law dimension of supranationality. Historical documents lead to the conclusion that economic and technical reasons were decisive for that kind of supranationality. The two authors argue that there are continuities between the economic and technical integration of the early nineteenth century and supranational organisations of the post-World War II period. Systematic notion-related research about ‘supranationality’ still remains to be carried out.

The history of ideas and intellectuals can no longer be neglected, especially with regard to Europe’s integration dynamics after 1945. Documentation and research on

1. G. THIEMEYER, *Supranationalität als Novum in der Geschichte der internationalen Politik der fünfziger Jahre*, in: *JEIH*, 2(1998), pp.5-21.

the history of ideas began in the 1960s with, for example, Hellmut Foerster, Heinz Gollwitzer, Walter Lipgens, and John Pinder.<sup>2</sup> It lost ground in the 1980s and 1990s, but it survived and demonstrated its importance during the last decade. Jieskje Hollander focuses on the Dutch intellectual debates on Europe's integration from the times of the Hague Congress of 1948 up to the present. Concepts, ideas, and thoughts of intellectuals became more and more relevant because of growing disputes and controversies about the content and goals of integration, such as the deepening and widening or present limitations and future perspectives, comprising the entire political agenda connected with Europe's unification and its deeper significance. Hollander describes the intellectual background behind the integration policy decisions by the Netherlands – a study which has hitherto not been carried out, and one which should also be done for other EU countries. Her article fills a gap in Dutch and European historiography and shows that from a historical point of view, there was an ongoing intellectual debate with everlasting pro and cons. Hollander's analysis also demonstrates that since the origins of these debates, there already existed a gap between political decision makers and elites on one hand and the broader public and the man in the street on the other. This dilemma came up very clearly during the Dutch referendum on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005 concerning the so called "Constitutional Treaty", when a majority of voters in this founding member state voted against that important document. Hollander shows how important the historical perspective of intellectual and political debates can be. Politicians could not ignore them. They also had to convince intellectuals as an important part of the society. Intellectual and political communication went hand in hand. Both were necessary in order to be politically legitimized.

Andrea Benvenuti analyses Australia's attitude toward early Western European integration. The author examines the perceptions and reactions of Australia's government during the setting up of the ECSC (1952), the defeat of the European Army project (1954), and the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC – 1958). Australia's government officially welcomed the formation of institutionalized co-operation in Western Europe in principle, but behind the scenes it took an ambivalent stance vis-à-vis that new kind of integration process. Canberra realized the growing relevance of political cohesion for creating a working economy with growing prosperity in the western part of the continent. But this new regionalism forced Australian foreign policy decision makers to think about their own perspectives more than before. On one hand, the Liberal-Country Party coalition government headed by Robert Menzies recognized the new dimensions of supranational structures in Western Europe, but on the other hand, it also had to think about the negative consequences for Australia's economic and security interests. There were doubts as to whether this new Western European regionalism could be compatible with Aus-

2. R.H. FOERSTER, *Die Idee Europa 1300-1946. Quellen zur Geschichte der politischen Einigung*, DTV, Munich, 1963; H. GOLLWITZER, *Europabild und Europagedanke. Beiträge zur deutschen Geistesgeschichte des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, C.H. Beck, Munich, 1964; W. LIPGENS (ed.), *Europa-Föderationspläne der Widerstandsbewegungen 1940-1945*, Oldenbourg, Munich, 1968; J. PINDER, *Europe against De Gaulle*, Pall Mall Press, London/Dunmow, 1963; idem, *European Community. The building of a union*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York, 1991.

tralian policy goals. One key question was raised: namely, whether the United Kingdom would stay outside or join the EEC. The challenge of European integration became more serious and even dangerous for Australia when the British government of Harold Macmillan applied for full EEC membership in August 1961. A possible entry would have seemed to undermine the UK's historical, economic, and political ties not only with Australia, but with the entire Commonwealth. Benvenuti clearly demonstrates that perception history and the role of the 'outside perspective' of the European communities still has its value for historical integration research.

When looking at the very beginnings of Western European market integration, the issue of competition policy was one of the functioning common policies of the early EEC. This was closely connected with the first commissioner of that field, Hans von der Groeben, one of the forgotten German Europeans of the 1950s in the first EEC commission also headed by a German, the former Undersecretary of the German Foreign Ministry and EEC Commission President Walter Hallstein (term in office: 1958-67). Sibylle Hambloch analyses the conditions for this success story. Common European laws such as directives and regulations contributed to this supranational competition policy. The author presents two examples which resulted in common legislation. In that way, she also indicates the limitations of that new common policy. On one hand, EEC Regulation 17/62 paved the way for a European cartel law, while on the other hand a European company law failed. With her article, Hambloch demonstrates very convincingly that far more case studies in different fields of integration policy have to be done in order to properly judge the progress and stagnation of historical developments in integration.

Philip Bajon is one of the top experts on the empty chair crisis of 1965-66. In his article, he argues that the French President Charles de Gaulle met his match in German Foreign Minister Gerhard Schröder. Bajon's article throws new light on the interactions between these two key players of Western European policy in the middle of the 1960s. The author makes clear why French-German cooperation – which seems to be the better word than 'conciliation' – did not work, why France at first could not be stopped from provoking one of the most serious political crises of the Communities, and why, ultimately, Schröder managed to hold Germany's line in maintaining the monopoly of that country's definition of European policy. Bajon emphasizes the tug of war between these two statesmen. Schröder was able to hold on and demonstrated Germany's role as the new leader of the group of France's partners within the EEC. His policy was courageous and risky when forcing de Gaulle back to the Minister's Council. Thanks to Bajon, we now know that West Germany still played a central role in the mid-1960s in solving one of the most severe constitutional crises of the EEC.

Cross-border cooperation became more and more important in the Europe of the 1980s and 1990s. Marijn Molema presents us the construction of the 'Ems-Dollart Region', connecting the Northern Netherlands with northern parts of West Germany. The author makes it clear that the process of cross-border institutionalization was the result of social practices and discourses involving four types of actors: politicians at

the regional and sub-national level playing only a modest role, and regional actors in civil society pushing the concept of cross-border cooperation. Policy makers from state ministries of economic affairs more or less agreed with these initiatives. What is remarkable is the fact that the European Commission's attempts at creating a European regional policy encouraged the aforementioned players. Molema elaborates and tells us that they constituted a multi-layered development, although this case study shows that cross-border cooperation from the middle of the 1960s to the end of the 1970s had its roots in different players from several societal backgrounds acting in a dynamic multilevel system.<sup>3</sup>

The article written by Valentina Vardabasso has an impressive metaphoric title. She calls the EC Court of Auditors and the question of the democratization of European institutions in the first half of the 1970s the 'Cinderella of History'. It was the decision of April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1970 on the Community's own resources which marked the starting point of long-lasting negotiations between EC member states and representatives of the European Parliament, supported by the German Christian Democrat Heinrich Aigner and also involving the French socialist Georges Spénale and the French diplomat Raymond Offroy. A great deal of effort was put into strengthening the Parliament's financial competences and setting up a monitoring system through the creation of the Court of Auditors. The intention behind that initiative was to combine the direct elections of the European Parliament's members with real competences for that newly elected body. But French President Georges Pompidou was against this procedure. He wanted to limit the EC's financial autonomy to only administrative purposes. The conflict was to be overcome by giving the European Parliament the right of veto over the Community's budget and by offering the member states the choice of their own Court of Auditors members who then had to formulate the basis of the common budget. The different attempts at democratizing the European Communities still remain one of the major tasks of historical research into integration.

Andreas Pudlat is one of the rare experts focusing on the historical process of the Schengen system. Protection of borders with strict controls and measures of mediation had different functions: defence against external threats, income as a result of customs duties, environmental protection, and last but not least the fight against crime and the control of immigration within the context of the so-called 'Eastern Enlargement' of the European Union. Dealing with border issues in Europe was and still is an indicator of the strength of the sovereignty of the states. Before 1945, border issues often led to conflicts and wars. Therefore, the European movement after the Second World War propagated negative images of borders. Today, borders still exist within and outside the European Union. Thus it took a substantial amount of time to create a Europe without border controls. With the Schengen regulations becoming part of the *acquis communautaire* since the entering into force of the Amsterdam Treaty (1999), border controls had been systematically removed between more and more

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3. In this regard, also see M. GEHLER, *Zeitgeschichte im dynamischen Mehrebenensystem. Zwischen Regionalisierung, Nationalstaat, Europäisierung, internationaler Arena und Globalisierung*, Dieter Winkler, Bochum, 2001.

participating members. Pudlat describes the long and rocky road to the new Schengen region of Europe. Four decisive steps had to be taken to reach this goal. Despite of some recent backslashes – the Danish government decided in 2011 to reinstitute the old border controls – the author relates to us a success story of one of the most important developments in Europe after the end of the Cold War: free movement between different countries without passport controls. This is one of the strongest feelings of the united Europe of today.

*Michael Gehler  
Hildesheim, Germany, October 2011*

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Von Edmund Brandt

4. Auflage 2012, 134 S., brosch., ca. 9,90 €

ISBN 978-3-8329-7078-9

Erscheint ca. Januar 2012



**Nomos**

<https://doi.org/10.5771/0947-9511-2011-2-171>

Generiert durch IP '18.221.147.119', am 23.08.2024, 16:24:35.

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