

# Introduction

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This edition of JEIH is an open one and thus also an issue with mixed themes. Very different approaches and various subjects are characteristic of the European integration history research of today. The contributions to this edition begin with the Second World War and the Nazi period and end with the Slovak search for the building of a national identity within the context of the country's attempts at joining the European Union (1989-2004).

Christoph Kühberger focuses on the history, foundation, conception, and legitimization of a sort of European cooperation on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the *Europäischer Jugendverband* [European Youth Association], which was created in 1942 and directed as well as manipulated by the Nazis. The key figure was the *Reichsjugendführer* [Reich youth leader] Baldur von Schirach. Foreign minister Joachim Ribbentrop acted against that project and Propaganda minister Josef Goebbels also refused media support. The author argues that the subsequent defeats of the German Wehrmacht also caused the weak stance and development of that youth association. Hitler's opposition to that European approach played a role, too. Schirach agreed with Hitler that internationalism had to be interpreted as "Jewish". The mottos of the congress were surprisingly enough 'equality' and 'mutual recognition', but no democratic structures existed. Education was supposed to remain a national task, but the association was supposed to strengthen a 'European consciousness'. The dominance of national characteristics was supposed to contribute to Europe as a *Strahlenbündel nationaler Kräfte* [a bundle of rays of national forces]. Pan-European ideas (related to count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi) were objected to, as was the globally oriented British boy scout movement. Kühberger shows that due to the absence of a clear programme, the declarations and speeches at the founding offered a rich set of different Nazi concepts for Europe. Their attempts at legitimization covered the past, present, and future and in the end were supposed to serve the 'wahren Volksgemeinschaft in der Raumheit Europa' [the 'true community of peoples in the unit of space of Europe'].

Hungdah Su concentrates on the grand design for Europe of Jean Monnet, but also on the criticisms of it. Honoured as one of the first citizens of Europe, Monnet's thinking has to be seen as pragmatic. Su argues that Monnet was a man of practice and not of theory. Because of this clear orientation, his global thinking can be described as a world of blocs and camps. Within this structure, he saw a concert of powers composed of a united Europe in a partnership with the United States of America ("a relationship of two separate but equally powerful entities, each bearing its share of common responsibilities in the world"). He seemed to prefer European states adopting a low profile, supporting US strategies towards non-Western powers, and paying more attention to their own integration. A divided Europe would neither have equality with the US nor any weight within this tripartite world. It would be

forced to join the US leadership in world politics. The unification of Europe and the US therefore were preconditions in Monnet's grand design. Both should constitute a predominant holy alliance. Before Su critically analyses Monnet's motives for his project, he presents the latter's four main arguments for his design: solving the German Question, avoiding the national trap, reversing the decline of Europe, and liberating Europe from the East-West conflict. Within his tripartite design including US, European, and non-Western powers, Monnet viewed a European federation beginning with a pooling in the economic field because political quarrels threatened to disturb integration. Together with US-Europe, he expected a holy alliance for democracy and in the end a world concert of three powers. Su also covers the various objections against Monnet's approach: its being supranational elitist, pro-American, anti-democratic, and anti-intergovernmentalist. Su emphasizes that Monnet did not intend to develop a theory of European integration, but rather wished to persuade his contemporaries and particularly the elites to support the idea of European integration as a project devoted to democracy, peace, and stability.

Christian Lion deals with French insurance, the Saar question, and European integration from 1945 to the 1960s. With the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, insurance activities began to play a role because coal miners and steelworkers had to be protected during hard, dangerous work underground and in factories. The Saar region became a first test area for that new dimension of the process. It was a part of the French occupation zone since the end of the Second World War, and French insurance companies wanted to kick out their German competitors. After the inclusion of the French zone in the Anglo-American Bi-zone, the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany – weakened by its own internal contradictions and by growing local traditions, world market competition, and the ongoing Cold War – the aforementioned structure changed. The Franco-Saar insurance system went in the direction of transnational insurance management represented by German and French partners working together in Franco-German companies.

Wolfgang Mueller deals with reactions by the Soviet Union concerning the formative phase of Western European integration. Cold War motivations, geostrategic reasons, ideological convictions, and political principles all played a role in the Russian fight against the community projects of coal and steel, defence, and economy. Soviet propaganda heavily attacked the new European supranational institutions as serious threats that weakened its own satellite system. For Josef Stalin, Germany was the key factor for rebuilding Western European structures. His concept was to lead to a neutralized but also reunified Germany, which would not constitute as big of a threat as a clearly Western-oriented Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) that was closely allied with the USA. According to Mueller, Stalin's note of March 10, 1952 can be seen as a "most probably purely propagandistic offer" being part of the Soviet policy to hamper or obstruct West European integration. It consisted of preventing West German rearmament and the inclusion of its economic and military potential in the Western bloc (directed against the Soviet Union). Western refusal of his offers would place the responsibility for Germany's division squarely on the West. After these attempts to stop the FRG's integration with the West failed and after Stalin's

death, the Soviet Union made proposals for leading to an ‘all-European economic cooperation’ within the framework of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in Geneva, which was supposed to constitute an alternative scenario to the European Economic Community (EEC). Propagandistic exaggeration was followed by diplomatic pressure, open gestures, and friendly invitations. On the whole, Western European integration seemed to be a severe danger for Soviet security policy and its satellite system in Europe – propaganda or policy in any case. Moscow therefore began serious attempts at countermeasures against German rearmament, French participation in a European Army, and the pooling of Western European coal, steel, and the economy in general. Mueller points out Soviet overestimations of Western Europe’s integration, which was seen primarily as a basis for NATO to prepare a war against the USSR. This was not only pure propaganda, but also an argument in internal reports. Mueller is one of Austria’s best Soviet Union experts regularly working in Moscow archives. He had access to recently opened files of the former Soviet Foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov and provides us with new insights and perspectives for a better understanding of the Soviet Union’s Europe policy, which cannot be judged merely as pure propaganda, especially when differentiating the period of 1950-53 from that of 1956-58.

Lucia Coppolaro evaluates the beginnings and the development of the European Investment Bank (EIB), which was established by the Rome Treaties. This subject has not been thoroughly researched up to now and that fact in and of itself is remarkable, because the author states that the EIB developed as “a trustworthy actor on the international capital market” and was “the most supranational of the institutions created by the EEC”. The project was not new. Such an idea was discussed as early as 1949 while the Organization of European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) was being established. Coppolaro also makes it very clear that the main purpose of that new institution was the creation of the Common Market among the six EEC founding members, which had different economic structures. These differences were supposed to be reduced by the EIB channelling financial means to less developed regions. Due to the different economic preconditions, the members tried to develop various approaches concerning the functions and goals of that institution, which had to be provided with its own financial resources, legal personality, and majority voting. Two objectives were pursued by the EIB and constituted its double character: both independent from the EEC and linked to it, it acted effectively in international capital markets and contributed to the integration of the economic policies of the EC members. The EIB was a flexible, pragmatic, and strong institution with a board of governors and directors. It adapted its operations to new circumstances. In the 1960s and 1970s, regional development projects were one of its major responsibilities. In the 1980s, the EIB began cooperation with non-state actors while broadening its activities in the field of energy and environmental protection. Coppolaro has convincingly emphasized the importance of her subject.

Philip Bajon presents a thoughtful analysis concerning the ideas and actions of two major commissioners – Walter Hallstein of Germany and Robert Marjolin of France – during the “empty chair” crisis of 1965-66. When the Commission presented

its ambitious proposal package to the Council in March 1965 and maintained it, this provoked the famous crisis from July 1965 to January 1966. Bajon makes clear that EEC Commission president Hallstein pursued a very flexible and highly tactical line of negotiations. In his actions with regard to the Council, Hallstein did not want to provoke the member states, and thus he acted in a pragmatic way and was ready to compromise. According to Bajon and in contrast to the prevailing sentiment, Marjolin was also in favour of strengthening the European Parliament. He supported the political character of that initiative (just by abandoning his role as an opponent against Hallstein's project of the spring of 1965). The author shows that Marjolin's memoirs are misleading in that respect. Bajon also argues that the rational choice theory (which is often praised and overestimated) cannot by itself convincingly explain all of the decisive factors of ambitions, preferences, bargaining, and dealings by these two commissioners (especially with regard to Marjolin) in that crucial crisis. At the same time, additional approaches regarding historical and sociological institutionalist theory also contribute (and to a great degree, too) to a better understanding of these complex developments. With this thoroughly analysed case study, Bajon demonstrates that "rational choice thus failed to explain crucial aspects of the empty chair episode". His article proposes "a strictly pragmatic approach to rational, historical, and social institutionalist theory, utilising it as a heuristic device". The biographies, professions, and careers of both commissioners show that their decision making in 1965 was influenced by particular concepts, ideas, and notions. Both Hallstein (a close collaborator with Konrad Adenauer and a federalist with intensive contacts with national, transnational, and supranational-oriented Christian Democrats with the clear goal of a better institutional balance with existing European institutions) and Marjolin (a close collaborator of Monnet, critical towards Charles de Gaulle, and fully committed to the Common Market project) experienced their common formative period with Western European integration in the immediate post-war years with regard to the establishment of the Coal and Steel and the Economic Community. In the end, Bajon underscores the necessity of "an integrated historical view of the EU as a complex political system in the making".

As we all know, European integration has not been a pure success story. Christian Henrich-Franke focuses on one failed integration project: the EEC's attempt to formulate a Common Transport Policy (1958-67). In addition to the EEC, he also includes the discussions and resolutions of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), which competed with the Commission and tried to directly and indirectly influence EEC transport policy. As the author argues, this policy had a history of failed endeavours and several setbacks. According to the Treaties of Rome, transport was supposed to be a common policy goal, and it was seen as a duty to develop a common transport policy. Franke makes very clear that the European Communities were not able to implement this policy until the 1990s. He explains the reasons behind that failure. There were many different factors, and their combination produced a perfect mix of obstacles. Nation-state vetoes (especially by the Dutch), competing concepts of transport policy, different regulations, and the lack of interest and need in that policy area by the EEC founders produced errors, failures, and mis-

takes in transport policy by the Commission. It acted in an unrealistic way in 1963 when proposing regulations that were not feasible. Issues of capacity, tariffs, and competition were treated in an isolated manner rather than within a large-scale package deal. In 1965, a breakthrough seemed possible for transport becoming a top issue at the level of heads of state and governments. But due to the “Luxembourg compromise” in 1966, Franke argues, the maintenance of the *de facto* “veto right” remained of great importance. In the end, the author shows that the obstacles that were mentioned lost their special weight. European integration was a learning process, new generations of participants who were more open-minded came into positions of power, institutions were more and more accepted. Reservations by the nation-states against the Commission disappeared and competition between it and the ECMT diminished. It was possible to reduce some of the less important contrasts and opposition by the member states, but a productive cooperation between initiative and the decision-making bodies of the Communities could not be achieved in transportation policy.

In his article “The Apostles to the Slavs versus the Velvet Revolution” Simon Gruber presents different interpretations of history in the struggle for democracy in Slovakia during the 1990s. Due to various traditions of political understanding (i.e., the authoritarian and the liberal-democratic), different interpretations were decisive within the public discourse in that EU candidate state after the end of the Cold War in Europe. In that debate, portraying and using the past specific values were emphasized while others were downplayed. They were discussed or not discussed with regard to Slovak attempts to become a full member of the European Union. Gruber asks, “Did Slovak history reflect values such as sovereignty, unity, national culture or instead rule of law, cosmopolitan attitudes, and civil society”? He makes clear that fiction and the denial of traditions within the framework of parliamentary debates and public celebrations played a role in order to justify these perceptions of history and concepts of present-day policy. Their representatives tried to defend their legitimacy or to call into question the opposing interpretation. The political instrumentalization of, on one hand, Saints Cyril and Methodius and, on the other hand, the “Velvet Revolution” of 1989 are very good examples for the author’s approach. In the battle between the invocation of the “national patron saints” and the maintaining of the “values of 1989”, the outcome of the elections of 1998 showed a clear preference for the latter.

All of these articles demonstrate the growing importance, richness, and variety of European integration research fifteen years after the founding of our journal. It is not only diplomatic and political history, but also the history of ideas and institutions, that of the sectorial community and “low” policy approaches, and theoretical, reflected historiographies which serve as valuable contributions to profiling a still young discipline.

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