

PHD Theses – Thèses de doctorat – Doktorarbeiten

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Giulia BENTIVOGLIO, *The Heath Government and the Anglo-American special relationship (1970-74)*, University of Salento – Lecce

supervisor: Antonio Varsori, University of Padua

jury: Donatella Bolech, University of Pavia; Alessandro Duce, University of Parma; Francesco Lefebvre D'Ovidio, University of Rome

date of the exam: 9/07/2009

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Transatlantic relations have usually been epitomized by the “special” link between London and Washington; on this premise, the years of the government led by Edward Heath should have represented the nadir in the relationship with the American ally. One only needs to think of the “annus horribilis” 1973 and the deep rift it marked between the two shores of the Atlantic, with the disaster of the Year of Europe and the strains caused by the Yom Kippur war and the oil crisis.

The Heath government was conscious that the United Kingdom was no longer a key actor in the international scene and that its position had to be downsized to the role of a medium power. The Conservative cabinet had therefore two primary goals: through successful negotiations for the entry in the Community, Britain hoped to obtain both a political role and the basis for economic prosperity. Moreover, it pursued the defence of national security while sustaining cohesion inside NATO. This meant that, although Heath’s strong European vocation is undeniable, the Atlantic dimension was still very important to the Conservative leader, in particular considering British concern about détente. This apprehension about the new scenario was strictly linked to the sense of uncertainty about US position in the international system: the Watergate scandal without doubt influenced British perceptions of the American

power and its international role, opening a debate about the likely decay of the “imperial presidency”.

This work aims to prove that in London there was the widespread belief that the role of special partner was replaced by the one of special whipping boy: the heritage of a more intimate relationship with Washington was rather a burden than a privilege in comparison with the other European allies. The Heath government had therefore replaced the idea of “special relationship” with the United States, which actually required only special requirements and expectations from the American side, with the idea of a “necessary relationship”, a link less exclusive but not less fundamental for the United Kingdom and its defence, economy and entry in the European Community.

Michael J. GEARY, *Enlargement and the European Commission: An Assessment of the British and Irish Applications for Membership of the European Economic Community, 1958-73*, European University Institute, Florence, Italy.

supervisor: Pascaline Winand, EUI/European and EU Centre, Monash University, Melbourne

jury: N. Piers Ludlow, London School of Economics and Political Science; Jan van der Harst, University of Groningen; Kiran Klaus Patel, European University Institute

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The thesis is a significant study of the history of the early years of the EEC and of one of the issues that defined the period, namely, the enlargement question. First, it focuses on the institutional framework of the Community and, in particular, the European Commission as an economic and political actor in the debate on the first enlargement. Given the rapid expansion of the Community with subsequent enlargements during the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, the dissertation can serve as a useful starting point in any comparative analysis on the role adopted by the Commission in each set of enlargements. This is one area where the thesis can make an important contribution in the future.

The study sheds new light on the Commission’s relations with non-EEC countries. The analysis of Ireland’s and Britain’s relations with the Commission during the enlargement negotiations of 1961-63 and 1970-72 revealed the latter’s desire not only to protect the emerging *acquis* but also shape the outcome of these talks.

The dissertation is among the first to link the Community’s Common Fisheries Policy with the enlargement negotiations. To date, very little has been written on this policy, how it originated, the internal Community discussions that took place and the impact that it had on the 1970-72 accession talks, not just between the Norwegians and the Community but also with the other applicants.

The examination of the enlargement question has also proved important from an Anglo-Irish relations perspective. Economic historians have assessed these relations through a trade lens. But the thesis has explored these relations through a broader European lens for the first time, positioning it in Europe and not through the Northern Ireland question. And throughout the thesis, there is an awareness presented that new actors such as the Commission are playing an increasingly important role in the domestic affairs of the two applicants, especially Ireland's, prior to membership of the Community.

Carine GERMOND, *Partenaires de raison? Le couple France-Allemagne et l'unification de l'Europe (1963-1969)*, Université de Strasbourg

supervisor: Marie-Thérèse Bitsch, Université de Strasbourg

jury: Jean-Paul Cahn, Paris IV-Sorbonne; Wilfried Loth, Universität Duisburg-Essen; Sylvain Schirmann, Institut d'Etudes Politiques; Andreas Wilkens, Université Paul-Verlaine

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The Ph.D. thesis makes a significant contribution to the historiography of Franco-German relations and of European integration history due to a combined study of the action and influence of the Franco-German couple on integration processes within the European Economic Community and on the détente of international relations in the 1960s. It sheds new light on the ways in which France and Germany interacted and highlights how the progressive institutionalization of bilateral relations within the consultation framework of the Elysée treaty of 1963 sanctioned the strategic role of Franco-German cooperation in Europe. The study is based on extensive and multi-archival research in France and in Germany.

The first section consists of a thorough analysis of the main political and diplomatic actors who have influenced relations between Paris and Bonn and of a comprehensive study of the institutional framework that has shaped them. The next two sections are chronologically organized and examine Franco-German interactions and dynamics in Europe during Ludwig Erhard's chancellorship (1963-1966) and the grand coalition (1966-1969). They each explore their influence on the economic, political and institutional development of the EEC as well as on the discussions on East-West rapprochement and on German reunification.

The Ph.D. thesis first demonstrates the double function of the Franco-German privileged entente that can act both as an engine and a break depending on whether it works well or not. Yet, it also brings to light the limit of bilateral cooperation, which can be a driving force behind European integration only if both countries manage to rally their smaller partners behind the compromise they have forged. Secondly, the study outlines why the repeated crises that strained bilateral cooperation from 1963 to 1969 did not end up in a divorce. Thirdly, it shows that the Franco-German insti-

tutionalized bilateralism is not the mere juxtaposition of the French and German national politics but the result of a complex and often difficult process of compromising fostered by the (personal and institutional) ties woven between actors on both sides of the Rhine. Fourthly, the study discloses the different approach of France and Germany to European diplomacy and their differing conceptions of how their leadership can be exerted in Europe. Finally, it reveals the gradual redistribution of power within the Franco-German couple, even though historical constraints still considerably limited the Federal Republic's international leeway.

Jan-Henrik MEYER, *Tracing the European public sphere. A comparative analysis of British, French and German newspaper coverage of European Summits (1969-1991)*, Free University Berlin

supervisors: Jürgen Kocka, Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung; Hartmut Kaelble, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

jury: Etienne François, TU Berlin; Hans-Peter Müller, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin; Nenad Stefanov, Berliner Kolleg für Vergleichende Geschichte Europas

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The traumatic failure of the European constitution seems to underpin doubts about a European public sphere that effectively interacts with the European Union and holds it to account. Is a European public sphere truly impossible? Has it been emerging as many social scientists have claimed – however only on the basis of more recent observations? This dissertation provides the first long-term historical analysis of a political European public sphere and its development over time. Starting out from a thorough consideration of the theoretical, conceptual and methodological innovations provided by social scientists in recent years, the study focuses on how British, French and German quality newspapers covered major European Council summits from The Hague in 1969 to Maastricht in 1991.

Findings suggest that major events of European integration have long been accompanied by a vivid debate in the media. Moreover, the European public sphere underwent a notable structural transformation. The growth of a more developed European political system since the 1970s has led to a more politicized, more differentiated, more inclusive – and hence potentially more democratic – European public sphere in terms of participation in the debate and the range of issues covered. There was a notable increase in transnational communication. A discourse analysis of the commentary demonstrates changes in European identification – from a rather uniform association of Europe with progress to overcome the nation state towards a greater pluralism in European self-understanding, including Euro-skepticism, but also a sense of greater European responsibility in the post-Cold War world. The study suggests that an emerging European public sphere was much more responsive to the development of European integration than has previously been assumed.

A revised version of this thesis is to appear as: Jan-Henrik Meyer, *The European public sphere. Media and transnational communication in European integration 1969-1991*, Studies on the History of European Integration, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 2010.

Katrin RUECKER-GITELMACHER, *Le triangle Paris-Bonn-Londres et le processus d'adhésion britannique au marché commun, 1969-1973. Quel rôle pour le trilatéral au sein du multilatéral?*, IEP de Paris, Universität Marburg

supervisors: Maurice Vaïsse, IEP de Paris; Wolfgang Krieger, Universität Marburg

jury: Eric Bussière, Université Paris Sorbonne-Paris IV; Reiner Marcowitz, Université Paul Verlaine – Metz; Robert Tombs, University of Cambridge

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The thesis covers the period from the Soames affair in 1969, the European summit of the Hague of 1969, the official reopening of the EEC enlargement negotiations on June 30th, 1970, to the accession of Great Britain to the EEC on January 1st, 1973.

It is based on sources from German, British, French and European Community archives. In European Integration History, this multi-archival approach is still the exception.

The first part of the thesis analyses the road of the triangle Paris-Bonn-London towards the widening of the EEC during the 1960s. In the triangle, West-Germany had a mediating function between two hostile protagonists, France and Great Britain. Two myths need to be reconsidered: the existence of a homogeneous group of “Friendly Five” and Charles de Gaulle’s “anti-enlargement” attitude.

The second part focuses on the British diplomacy during the negotiations. The lack of confidentiality in Brussels meant that multilateral negotiations were less effective and strategies of bi- or trilateral negotiations were adopted, which favoured discretion. There were even spies within the EEC handing over top secret papers to British diplomats.

In the third part, the thesis deals with the puzzle of the minimal preparations of the negotiations by Bonn and Paris. During the period between 1970 and 1972, the Franco-German couple seemed in crisis and their strategies of negotiation were not clearly defined.

The fourth part argues that the successful outcome of the negotiations was due to the Franco-British entente, in particular during the Pompidou-Heath summit of May 1971. A strategy of secret diplomacy and of centralization of the bilateral contacts, by by-passing the French Foreign Office, seems to have been decisive. But this Franco-British entente was short-lived, because the renegotiation of the British membership treaties was already prepared under the Heath government.

The thesis shows that the triangle certainly participates in the success of the negotiations because there were no alternatives.