Introduction

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The present issue of the *Journal of European Integration History* appears to mirror some relevant current trends in the history of the European construction. Although it is an open number, most articles, though from different viewpoints, deal with the 1970s. This is not only the consequence of the opening of the archives for this decade, but also of a radical change in the interpretation of both the integration process and the meaning of the 1970s in European and world history.

It is now a widely accepted evaluation that, although in Cold War dynamics the period between the late 1960s and the late 1970s had been characterised by an apparent bi-polar balance or the apex of US-Soviet "détente", this "long decade", in a wider perspective, marked the end of the "post-war" era and was at the origins of a new period whose main patterns still influence the international system.[1] The European integration was not an exception in this complex and sometimes contrasting scenario. So it is not surprising that in an early stage most opinion-makers and some historians labelled the 1970s as a period of "euro-sclerosis", which would sharply contrasts with the previous creation and consolidation of the "Europe of the Six" and with the following achievements of the second half of the 1980s. Actually during the 1970s the Western world was confronted with dramatic changes which were usually perceived as a systemic crisis: from the end of traditional values and way of life to a series of economic shocks that appeared to put an end to the so-called "golden age", to the apparent decline of the US super-power, to the growing contrast between the "industrialised North" and the "global South". Such problems, however, led the political and economic leaderships of the European Community to find out new responses. Some projects were doomed to failure, other plans appeared to become blind-alleys; some solutions revealed their effectiveness only on a long-term perspective. Nevertheless there was no "sclerosis" at all, at least as far as the European construction was concerned.[2] The articles dealing with this decade are ample evidence of this new interpretation.

The contribution by Quentin Jouan demonstrates that by the 1970s the European – and Europeanist – élites were aware of the need to clarify which were the main characters and goals of the European integration. It was obvious that during the early stages of the integration process, that is the 1950s and the 1960s – such a dynamic had been mainly shaped by tiny technocratic élites and, although a clear success, the

1. See for example N. FERGUSON et al (eds), *The Shock of the Global: the 1970s in perspective*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge/London, 2010; P. CHASSAIGNE, *Les années 1970. Fin d'un monde et origins de notre modernité*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2008; E. BARONCELI, M. DEL PERO, E. FIORI, A. PALLOTTI (eds), *Crisi, trasformazioni, continuità. Il sistema internazionale negli anni Settanta*, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli, 2012.
2. A. VARSORI, G. MIGANI (eds), *Europe in the International Arena during the 1970s. Entering a Different World*, Peter Lang, Brussels/Bern, 2011.

EC had implemented only two relevant policies – the customs union and the Common Agricultural Policy -, but, owing to the process started with the Hague summit conference, the Community had aimed at enlarging its competences, at diversifying its policies and, in general its impact on the everyday life of its citizens was by far more relevant. Such a transformation, however, would involve a deeper consciousness of the real meaning of the integration process. It is of some relevance that some members of the European élites, which were the target of Étienne Davignon's inquiry had a conservative opinion of the European construction: some of them thought that the integration was just an economic phenomenon with no social and political implications, others opined that the integration would develop in contrasting ways and at different times, so it would be very difficult to create a coherent and fully effective European actor. Nevertheless some members of the European élites had a more optimistic outlook and they believed in the creation of a real political entity, that would be able to exert its influence in the international system and to become a sort of model on a world scale. However such a perspective was closely tied to the transformation of the European integration from a technocratic and elitist process into a democratic dynamic which would involve the European citizens in its decision-making. In those years such an aspiration meant a strong support to the project for the direct election of the European Parliament and to the strengthening of its role and competences.[3] Although at the end the 1970s the first of those goals was achieved, the issue of the "democratic deficit" is still an open question.

A completely new challenge that Western Europe was compelled to face during the 1970s was international terrorism. Since the post-war period terrorist activities had involved several countries, who were members of the EC, but they usually had been mainly internal motivations, though sometimes they enjoyed some degree of external support or complicity, such as the OAS in France or the South Tyrolese separatists in Italy. But by the early 1970s Western Europe became the target of international terrorist groups, especially tied to Palestinian organisations; such a threat was mainly revealed by the tragic episode of the Munich Olympic Games in 1972. Following this event the governments of the "Nine" decided to co-ordinate their efforts in order to contrast the terrorist phenomenon, which involved also European terrorist groups. The starting point was a meeting held at the margins of the 1975 Rome European Council. Such an episode led to the creation of a network of officials from the Interior and Justice ministries of the "Nine", the so-called Trevi group. Their main goals were the exchange of information and the coordination of counter-terrorism initiatives. The Trevi group was active outside the scheme of the European Community and it was mainly an inter-governmental initiative. In her article Eva Oberslorkamp has analysed the roots and the early activities developed by the Trevi group. In the author's interpretation the intergovernmental approach favoured the secret character of the Trevi network, as well as the ample room for manoeuvre which was

3. On the European elections see D. PASQUINUCCI, *Uniti dal voto? Storia delle elezioni europee*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2013; on the issue of the consensus to the European integration see D. PREDA, D. PASQUINUCCI (eds), *Consensus and European Integration: An Historical Perspective*, Peter Lang, Brussels, 2012.

left to police and secret service officials. That leaves some doubt about the Trevi group accountability vis-à-vis the European public opinion. Although those remarks have some foundation; on numerous occasions during the 1970s the governments of the "Nine" regarded the EC as an opportunity to develop forms of intergovernmental cooperation in order to deal with topics which were not envisaged in the Rome treaties or posed some serious difficulties if dealt with the Community context. Moreover it has to be pointed out that on the basis of inter-governmental experience and practices, later on these issues became part of the Community structures.

An example of the difficulties in developing new effective European policies is offered by the EC reaction to the 1973 oil shock.[4] In this connection it is well known that, despite the efforts for the creation of a common European policy in the field of energy, the member states usually implemented national policies which aimed at creating bi-lateral agreements with single oil-producing nations. In this context the article by Henning Türk offers a different interpretation. On the basis of interesting new archival evidence, he argues that the Western Europeans were able to develop a seminal debate in the OECD and their initiatives led to the setting-up of the International Energy Agency. Moreover the author points out how the energy issue was closely linked to the North-South contrast rather than to the Cold War debate.

The Cold War is on the contrary at the core of Benedetto Zaccaria's article on the relationship between the EC and Yugoslavia during the 1970s. Numerous recent studies have dealt with the political crises which characterised Southern Europe during this decade. The fall of authoritarian regimes in Portugal, Greece and Spain were perceived by both the US and the major Western European powers as an element of strong instability and a power vacuum, that could be filled by radical left-wing governments. Such a development would threaten the balance in the area, as well as weaken the Western position – both NATO and the EC – in an already unstable scenario, which would include Italy and Turkey.[5] The author points out that since the early 1970s US and Western European decision-makers were much worried about the fate of non-aligned Yugoslavia: separatist tendencies were emerging and Tito's ageing leadership was approaching its obvious end. The EC, especially through the setting-up of close economic ties between Brussels and Belgrade, was perceived by both Western European diplomats and Community officials as an effective way to strengthen the Yugoslav federation vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Although the negotiations were characterised on both parts by strong cautiousness, they led to some results which implied important economic aid to the Balkan state and, indirectly, to its policy of "non-alignment".

As it has been stated, during the 1970s Italy was regarded both in the Western European capitals and in Brussels as the weak link in the Community chain, not only for its political uncertainties, but also as a consequence of its economic problems and

4. On this issue see A.E. GFELLER, *Building a European Identity. France, the United States and the Oil Shock 1973-1974*, Berghahn Books, Oxford, 2012. See also F. PETRINI, *Imperi del profitto. Multinazionali petrolifere e governi nel XX secolo*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 2016.
5. See the thematic issue of the *Journal of European Integration History*, 1(2009).

its social turmoil. In 1978, in the aftermath of the Aldo Moro case – that is the kidnapping and assassination of the Christian Democrat leader by the Red Brigades – the Italian government, led by Giulio Andreotti, was confronted with a very difficult choice related to Italy's position towards the emerging EMS. In her article Giulia Bentivoglio deals with an aspect of Italy's decision to join the EMS which till now was less known. During the negotiations the Italian authorities were convinced that they could rely on a powerful ally, Britain. In an early stage the British Labour government, led by James Callaghan, appeared determined to enter the European Monetary System, but, as the UK was plighted by a serious economic crisis, London seemed to share Italy's interest in extracting important conditions from the more powerful European partners, especially West Germany. As the author demonstrates, such an Anglo-Italian "alliance" had very feeble foundations and in November 1978 Prime Minister Callaghan informed his Italian colleague that Britain would not join the EMS, so leaving Italy alone to face the other European partners. In spite of that, Andreotti would confirm Italy's loyalty to the European integration and, also with some concessions, Italy entered the EMS, so creating an early example of the so-called "external bond", a well-known character of Italy's European policy.

The other three contributions deal with different topics, although, as it has already been stated, they reveal close links with issues on which the most recent historiography has focused its attention. On the one hand scholars' interest has focused on forms of cooperation which were not directly tied to the European Community, as the EC/EU was not the only case through which the European construction was achieved. In 1948 one of the early examples of political and military cooperation was the Brussels Pact, signed by the UK, France and the three Benelux countries; a few months later several European movements held at The Hague the so-called "Conference of Europe", the first attempt by the Europeanist forces to launch the project for a European political body. The Hague programme was proposed to the attention of the governments of the Brussels Pact, which started a negotiations. In early 1949 other five Western European nations joined the negotiations, that in May 1949 led to the signature of the London Treaty and to the creation of the Council of Europe. It usually stated that very early the Council of Europe revealed all its limits and shortcomings and in a short while it was superseded by the Monnet functionalist approach and the creation of the Coal and Steel Community.[6] Actually the Council of Europe was able to survive; its membership steadily increased and this organisation tried to find out a specific "mission". Both Peter Svik and Teemu Häkkinen deal with the Council of Europe, although in different periods and with different perspectives.

Peter Svik has argued that historians of the European integration have underrated the relevance of the negotiations which were at the origins of the London Treaty and they paid too much attention to the apparently sceptical attitude by the British Foreign Office to the early plans for a European assembly put forward by the French and Belgian governments. In his opinion, on the contrary, in early 1949 the possibility to

6. In general on the Council of Europe see M.T. BITSCH (ed.), *Jalons pour une histoire du Conseil de l'Europe*, Bern, Peter Lang, 1997.

create a European political organisation was regarded with much interest by Western European decision-makers and the structure of the Council of Europe was the outcome of serious negotiations, to which especially Britain was strongly committed. Only the launching of the Schuman Plan and a change in London's foreign policy led to a crisis in the Council of Europe and to the success of the "functionalist" approach advocated by Jean Monnet.

On the other hand Teemu Häkkinen's article deals with Finland's application to the Council Of Europe. It is of much significance that especially since the late 1960s this European organisation has focused its attention on the human rights issue; in this period for example Greece, ruled by an authoritarian military regime, was compelled to leave the Council of Europe and was re-admitted only in 1975 when the democratic system was restored. So the European organisation became a sort of "guardian" of the compliance by its members with the respect of democracy, human rights, etc. With the crisis and fall of the Communist regimes in East-central Europe the accession to the Council of Europe became a sort of first recognition of the restoration of democratic liberties and an early step towards the adhesion to the European Union. Finland was a peculiar case. Nobody in the West had doubts about the democratic characters of its political system, but, especially in the field of foreign affairs, Finland had been compelled to comply with Soviet positions and will. With the new foreign policy of "Perestroika" and "Glasnost" pursued by Moscow Finland saw the chance for a widening to its room for diplomatic manoeuvre and it was now possible to start a cautious "rapprochement" to Western Europe. In spite of that, in Häkkinen's interpretation, Finland's position was still very prudent and its accession to the Council of Europe was influenced by some ambiguity related to the link with Moscow.[7]

The last article by Michael Gehler has a methodological character and it deals with a complex topic. The term "Europeanization" often appears in political scientists' contributions;[8] also historians in the last few years have made use of such a concept, which is sometimes a bit too vague. In his contribution Michael Gehler has tried at first to find out a definition – it would better to say definitions – of the word "Europeanization". Later on he has posed the question of the relationship between the history of the European integration and such a concept, trying to single out the relevance of the "Europeanization" in order to understand the integration process. The results of the author's analysis are complex and it is not easy to sum up Gehler's arguments, although his contribution is an important stimulus to a debate which is far to be considered as definitely closed.

7. At any rate on Finland's accesion to the EU see for example M. JACOBSON, *Finland in the New Europe*, Prager, Westport (Conn.), 1998.
8. See for example M. CAIANI, D. DELLA PORTA, *Quale Europa? Europeizzazione, identità e conflitti*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2007 and L. MORLINO, *Democrazie tra consolidamento e crisi.partiti, gruppi e cittadini nel Sud Europa*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2008.

Fragen nach den Hintergründen einer europäischen Identität

Europa als Idee

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Europa als Idee – Der Sammelband vereint einige Beiträge einer Vortragsreihe der Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy Graduate School of Law an der Universität Hamburg aus den Jahren 2014 und 2015. Die Aktualität des Gegenstands, der durch die Finanzkrise eine neue Dimension bekommen hat, hat sich seither durch die Flüchtlingskrise noch bedeutend verschärft. Umso wichtiger ist es, nach den Hintergründen einer europäischen Identität zu fragen.