

## PHD Theses – Thèses de doctorat – Doktorarbeiten

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**Florian GREINER**, *Wege nach Europa – Deutungen eines imaginierten Kontinents in deutschen, britischen und amerikanischen Printmedien (1914-1945)* [Paths to Europe – Narratives/Perceptions of an Imagined Continent in German, British and US American Print Media, 1914-45] – University of Potsdam

**Supervisor/Jury:** Frank BOESCH, Potsdam (supervisor); Willi OBERKROME, University of Freiburg; Thomas BRECHENMACHER, University of Potsdam; Thomas LINDENBERGER, Centre for Contemporary History, Potsdam; Stefanie STOCKHORST, University of Potsdam; Anja SCHWARZ, University of Potsdam

**Date of the exam:** 30.04.2013

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This doctoral thesis examines perceptions of Europe in German, British and American print media between 1914 and 1945. Drawing on a digital full-text analysis, the study evaluates several ten thousands of newspaper articles, thus describing public notions and constructions of Europe in a much clearer way than previous research has done. By taking into account the thematic variety of print media coverage, the thesis shows that European patterns of thought were not restricted to high politics, but articulated in various different social, economic and cultural fields. They often emerged in everyday contexts related, for example, to images of the non-European “Other” in transatlantic and colonial areas, or arising questions of modernity such as air travel, radio broadcasting, tourism, and international sports competitions. On the whole perceptions of Europe thus surprisingly surfaced independently from the political upheavals of the epoch.

The study provides significant alternative interpretations to the topoi that have dominated historical research on images of Europe in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until today. While perceptions of Europe in contemporary print media were also often

shaped by moments and reflections of crises, they were largely free from the rhetoric of demise that marked contemporary intellectual discourse. In contrast to the much-invoked Spenglerian “Decline of the West”, images of Europe that dominated public discourse were considerably more optimistic. They expressed manifold hopes of finding a mutual way out of the crisis, demonstrated a solid belief in the future of the continent, and emphasized Europe’s pioneering role in developing modernity. These findings thus offer a novel perspective on facets of “European thought” prior to 1945 that proved to be of foremost importance for the unification and integration of Europe after World War II.

**Mikhail LIPKIN, *The Soviet Union and Integration Processes in Europe: mid 1940s-mid 1960s*** – The Russian State University for Humanities, Moscow

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This thesis explores Soviet policy towards integration projects both in Western and Eastern Europe from the end of World War II until the end of Nikita Khrushchev’s era in the USSR. For the first time new evidence from eight Russian and foreign archives are combined together giving a complex picture of the Soviet Union’s role both as centre of Eastern Europe’s association (CMEA) and as an important external actor affecting the development of various competing western integration models. Unlike the traditional Cold War narrative which narrows the study to military and ideological factors, the logic of Soviet behaviour and policy-making is analyzed under the angle of economic factors. This allows to obtain a new perspective on the regional European (e.g. inter-European trade, credits, European cooperation) and global levels (e.g. “interregional cooperation”, multilateral bodies in the UN and etc.).

This leads to the conclusion that Soviet non-recognition of the ECSC, EEC and Euratom can be explained by pragmatic and not dogmatic reasons when taking into account the broad economic and political realities of the period. First, the blurred picture of these diverse supranational and intergovernmental integration projects (OEEC/OECD, European Atomic Agency, EFTA) led to internal discussions in the USSR arguing for cooperation with the latter ones. It gave the Soviet Union a variety of choice and on the one hand played into the hands of Moscow which often benefited from disagreements among the Western European partners. On the other hand it determined the Soviet attempts to join the OECD in 1960 and 1961. Secondly, it led to an internal struggle between various Soviet expert circles and ministerial bodies. Thirdly, documents from Western European archives show that in spite of fair intentions no one believed in such a Soviet U-turn. One can conclude that the historical memory of the uncompromising Soviet attitude towards the Marshall Plan seriously

limited chances for a rekindling of relations with Western Europe. Moreover, contradictory Soviet policies produced mutual suspicion and ended in the failure of a “united Europe”.

**Eugen PFISTER, *Europa im Bild. Imaginationen Europas in Wochenschauen in Deutschland, Frankreich, Großbritannien und Österreich 1948-1959*** – Università degli studi di Trento and Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main

**Supervisor/Jury:** Gustavo CORNI, University of Trento and Marie-Luise RECKER, University of Frankfurt am Main; Sara LORENZINI, University of Trento; Andreas FAHRMEIR, University of Frankfurt am Main

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This PhD thesis is an original study analysing newsreel reports on the process of European Integration in the 1950s. By comparing ‘Images of Europe’ from Austrian, British, French and (Western) German newsreels the author was able to extract a common catalogue of transnational visual arguments from 1948 to 1959. The study is based on extensive research in the private film archives of the newsreel companies as well as on material from the *Service de Presse et d’Information* of the European Coal and Steel Community. Cinema Newsreels provide a unique – and up until now neglected – opportunity to examine the beginning of the European integration process (1949–1958) in the media of the post-war period. Newsreels were important in shaping opinions, especially by creating powerful images. This thesis aims at analysing and classifying these images and concepts – proposed identities – of European integration in Austria, France, Germany and Great Britain of the 1950s, especially by comparing the specific methods of photography and filmmaking used to produce a certain perception in the audience.

These newsreel items are not only records from the beginning and consolidation of European integration but also political instruments. On the one hand, they informed a wider public about the new institutions, their purposes as well as their decision-making procedures; on the other hand, they intended to propagate a European identity. This audiovisual representation of Europe as an economical and political community, or, respectively ‘the idea of European integration’, was not only a result of a political discourse but also a continuation of a centuries-old iconographic tradition. An edition of the thesis will be published 2014 by V & R: Unipress.

Neue Reihe

# Europäische Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte



## Europäische Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte

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