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Michael Gehler

**The Signing of the Rome
Treaties 65 Years Ago:
Origins, Provisions and
Effects**



Rheinische
Friedrich-Wilhelms-
Universität Bonn

Center for European
Integration Studies

Genscherallee 3
D-53113 Bonn
Germany

Tel.: +49-228-73-1810
Fax: +49-228-73-1818
<http://www.zei.de>

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Dr. Michael Gehler, born 1962 in Innsbruck, Associate Professor of Modern and Contemporary History, Institute for Contemporary History, Leopold-Franzens-University Innsbruck (1999-2006); Full Professor, University of Hildesheim, Institute for History, awarded a Jean-Monnet Chair for European History from the EU-Commission (since 2006); Director of the Institute of Modern and Contemporary Historical Research of the Austrian Academy of Science (ÖAW), Vienna (2013-17); for the fourth time Jean Monnet-Chair for the period 2020-2023, since 2021 also Professor at the Andrassy University Budapest. Research focus: History of Empires, Austrian, German and European Modern History, International Relations with special reference to Cold War, German Unification, European Integration, Transnational Party Cooperation of Christian Democrats and Conservatives in Europe, and the South Tyrol Question.

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The Signing of the Rome Treaties 65 Years Ago: Origins, Provisions and Effects

Preliminary Remarks

In one of his latest publications, Alan S. Milward called the common market the most successful project of the integration of post-war Europe – “the one that gives it genuine power and leverage in the world, which by its commercial power and attraction binds to the European Union (EU) most of the European states which are not members of it”. He named the Rome Treaties its “founding charter”.¹

Milward further raised the question, as to whether there was another region in the world where a group of nation-states decided to adjust the frontier of national sovereignty, in certain areas, for their own powerful advantage on common policies, together forming the most important trading bloc.² When taking the state of the art into account, Milward’s analysis and interpretations of the Rome Treaties are today still remarkable and valid.

On 25 March 1957, six states (Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands), members of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) that had been created five years before,

1 Alan S. Milward, *Politics and Economics in the History of the European Union*, London – New York 2005, 1; see also Idem, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-51*, London 1984, 421-461; Idem, *The European Rescue of the Nation State*, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1992; see also Michael Gehler, *In Past and Present Research Debates: Alan S. Milward, the Origins, Effects, and Significance of the Treaties of Rome*, in: *Zeitgeschichte* 41 (2014), 1, 39-61. The text of this discussion paper is based on a lecture given by the author at the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt/Main, 22 June 2017, which could be updated and expanded for this publication.

2 Alan S. Milward, *Conclusions: the value of history*, in: Idem/Frances M. B. Lynch/Federico Romero/Ruggero Ranieri/Vibeke Sørensen, *The Frontier of National Sovereignty. History and Theory 1945-1992*, London – New York 1993, 182-201, 199.

signed the Treaties of Rome, thus establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Community (EURATOM) at the Capitoline Hill (Capitolium) in the city on the Tiber.³ Looking at the ruins of the Forum Romanum, one of the fathers of the treaties, the Belgian Paul-Henri Spaak, said to his *chef de cabinet* Baron Robert Rothschild before signing the treaty, that a new empire had been established without a single shot being fired.⁴ Konrad Adenauer⁵ characterized the treaties eventually as the most important event in post-war history.⁶ In essence, the signatory states pursued a dual goal: self-assertion of Europe externally and securing prosperity internally. In fact, the Treaties of Rome formed the basis for decades of Western European unification.

This contribution runs along the following thesis: The success of 25 March 1957 was based on a compromise brokered by Belgium between France and the Federal Republic both on the question of building a nuclear community

3 Franz Knipping, Rom, 25. März 1957. Die Einigung Europas, München 2004, 9-13.

4 In 1954 Rothschild was appointed *chef de cabinet* of Paul-Henri Spaak at the Belgian foreign ministry. Together with Spaak and Jean Charles Snoy et d'Oppuers he worked on the Treaties of Rome. Shortly before the treaty was signed, Rothschild was standing beside Spaak gazing over the Forum Romanum in Rome, when Spaak said: „I think that we have re-established the Roman Empire without a single shot being fired“, https://isgp-studies.com/organisations/introduction/Robert_Rothschild_bio.htm (called up 27 October 2021).

5 Hanns Jürgen Küsters, Die Gründung der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, Baden-Baden 1983, 79-88, related to Adenauer: 39-42, 225-227, 319-325, 422-424; Idem, The origins of the EEC Treaty, in: Enrico Serra (Dir.), Il Rilancio dell'Europa e i trattati di Roma/La Relance Européenne et les Traités de Rome/The Relaunching of Europe and the Treaties of Rome, Actes du colloque de Rome 25-28 mars 1987 (Groupe de liaison des historiens auprès des communautés/European Community Liaison Committee of Historians 3), Bruxelles – Milano – Paris – Baden-Baden 1989, 211-238.

6 Quotation: „vielleicht wichtigste Ereignis der Nachkriegszeit“, Benjamin Stahl, Grundstein für Europa. 25. März 1957: Römische Verträge unterzeichnet, in: *Das Parlament*, 2012, Nr. 11-12, https://www.das-parlament.de/2012/11_12/Kehrseite/38159523-317790 (called up 28 October 2021); Hanns Jürgen Küsters, Adenauers Europapolitik in der Gründungsphase der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft, in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 31 (1983), 4, 646-673.

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and on the establishment of an economic community, but also on the basis of a cross-camp party political consensus. One of the decisive factors was the role of the United Kingdom, whose self-exclusion nullified a possible obstacle to the conclusion of the treaties. Compared to the ECSC, however, there was no decisive gain in supranationality in the EEC, so that a trend towards intergovernmentalism emerged, but this was probably one of the secrets of success under the sign of a first wave of renationalization in Western Europe in the second half of the 1950s and the 1960s. Therefore this discussion paper will analyze the Rome Treaties from its backgrounds and origins as well as the results and consequences based on the research literature,⁷ concluding with an outlook.

7 For research literature see: Ingo Walter, *The European Common Market. Growth and Patterns of Trade and Production*, New York 1967; Ludolf Herbst/Werner Bühner/Hanno Sowade (Eds.), *Vom Marshallplan zur EWG. Die Eingliederung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in die westliche Welt (Quellen und Darstellungen zur Zeitgeschichte 30)*, München 1990; Eric Bussière/Michel Dumoulin/Sylvain Schirman/Hartmut Kaelble/Luisa Passerini/Marie-Françoise Lévy/Marie-Noëlle Sicard/Robert Frank/Gérard Bossuat/Anne Deighton/José Cuesta/Antonio Varsori/Wilfried Loth/Marie-Thérèse Bitsch/Antoine Marès/Johnny Laursen/Antoine Fleury, *L'expérience européenne: 50 ans de construction de l'Europe 1957-2007/Experiencing Europe. 50 years of European construction*, Communauté européenne 2006 (CD Rom); Maria Grazia Melchionni/Roberto Ducci, *La genèse des traités de Rome*, Paris 2007; Michael Gehler (Ed., in collaboration with Andreas Pudlat), *Vom gemeinsamen Markt zur europäischen Unionsbildung. 50 Jahre Römische Verträge 1957-2007. From Common Market to European Union Building. 50 years of the Rome Treaties 1957-2007*, Vienna – Cologne – Weimar 2009; Idem, *Europa. Ideen – Institutionen – Vereinigung – Zusammenhalt*, Reinbek (expanded new edition) 2018, 242-264, 270-280; Wilfried Loth, 60 Years ago: The Foundation of EEC and EAEC as Crisis Management, in: *Journal of European Integration History (JEIH)* Vol. 23 (2017), 1, 9-28.

I. Historical Origins

1. The US as Key Player for the ECSC and Favoring EEC and EURATOM

The US and transatlantic relations were instrumental in establishing the ECSC.⁸ In the Schuman Plan negotiations,⁹ a large number of state and non-state actors were involved in the group of networks across the Atlantic. Key figures were Jean Monnet¹⁰ and the US High Commissioner for Germany John J. McCloy.¹¹ In the negotiations, US actors played a decisive role – unlike those of the EEC and EURATOM. Specific text proposals by US actors for the ECSC-Treaty were a clear indication of the direct impact of transatlantic policy networks.¹²

Research does not agree whether the EEC and EURATOM would have been possible without the US. In any case, it is clear that both the Truman and the

8 Ennio di Nolfo, *Gli Stati Uniti e le origini della Comunità Economica Europea*, in: Serra (Dir.), *Il Rilancio dell'Europa*, 339-349; Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe*, 362-420.

9 Klaus Schwabe, *Der Schuman-Plan – Wendepunkt in der Weltpolitik?*, in: Horst Kranz/Ludwig Falkenstein (Eds.), *Inquirens subtilia diversa. Dietrich Lohrmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, Aachen 2002, 537-550; Idem, „Ein Akt konstruktiver Staatskunst.“ *Die USA und die Anfänge des Schuman-Plans*, in: Idem (Ed.), *Die Anfänge des Schuman-Plans 1950/51*, 211-239; Matthias Kipping, *Zwischen Kartellen und Konkurrenz. Der Schuman-Plan und die Ursprünge der europäischen Einigung 1944-1952* (Schriften zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte 46), Berlin 1996, 165-257; Werner Abelshausen, *Europas Schicksal: Wirtschaft oder Politik? Die Montanunion als Lehrstück europäischer Integration* (Schriften der Stiftung Bibliothek des Ruhrgebiets 24), Bochum 2008.

10 Klaus Schwabe, *Jean Monnet. Frankreich, die Deutschen und die Einigung Europas* (Veröffentlichungen der Historiker-Verbindungsgruppe bei der Kommission der Europäischen Gemeinschaften 17), Baden-Baden 2016, 109-144, 147-200, 443-460.

11 Klaus Schwabe, *Fürsprecher Frankreichs? John McCloy und die Integration der Bundesrepublik*, in: Herbst/Bührer/Sowade (Eds.), *Vom Marshallplan zur EWG*, 517-533.

12 Brigitte Leucht, *Transatlantische Politiknetzwerke und europäische Integration 1950-1957*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 63-84, here 65-75.

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Eisenhower administration differed little in their positive and proactive attitude towards Western European integration. The period of the announcement and implementation of the Marshall Plan (1947)¹³ and the signing of the Treaties of Rome (1957) is seen by Klaus Larres as a “highlight of American enthusiasm and the active promotion of the European integration process.”¹⁴ It is also very clear that the Cold War as background¹⁵ and geopolitical motives were crucial for both of the administrations of Truman and Eisenhower.

2. Consensus about Preventing Germany's Neutralization in the West

The first European economic and intergovernmental Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and the following partially supranational ECSC were initially supported by the US, mainly because of their geostrategic relevance for security policy. Until the mid 1950s, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles feared that the Soviet Union would be able and ready to successfully establish a bloc-free and neutral(ized) Germany and thereby catapult the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) out of the Western integration process, whereas US President Dwight D. Eisenhower still in 1955 did not seem to dislike this idea and such considerations were also circulating in the US-State Department.¹⁶ In November 1952, however, much had already suggested that the Truman administration would agree to the creation of a united Europe only within the context of the North Atlantic

13 Ernst van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership. European Integration as a concern of American policy*, Amsterdam 1966; Greg Behrman, *The Noble Adventure. The Marshall Plan and the time when America helped save Europe*, New York – London – Toronto – Sydney – New York 2007, 207-228; 283-309.

14 Klaus Larres, *Die USA und die Römischen Verträge*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 599-616, here 603.

15 Gustav Schmidt, *Die Römischen Verträge und der Ost-West-Konflikt*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 85-109, here 105-109.

16 Detlef Felken, *Dulles und Deutschland. Die amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik 1953-1959*, Bonn 1993, 93-135, 136-162, 222-244, 245-277; Hanns Jürgen Küsters, *West Germany's Foreign Policy in Western Europe, 1949-58: The Art of the Possible*, in: Clemens Wurm (Ed.), *Western Europe and Germany: The Beginnings of European Integration, 1945-1960*, Oxford – Washington, D.C. 1995, 55-85; Michael Gehler, *Modellfall für Deutschland? Die Österreichlösung mit Staatsvertrag und Neutralität 1945-1955*, Innsbruck – Wien – Bozen 2015, 879-931.

Treaty Organization (NATO). The collapse of the “European Army” project in August 1954 allowed Washington to accept and better appreciate the supranational component of the Schuman Plan, whose primary objective was the gradual overcoming of European nationalism and the recovery of the French economy.

3. *Security as a High Priority*

Eisenhower was not impressed by the concerns of his administration against the accession of a potential economic and power-political opponent in the form of a ‘united Europe’. Ensuring a democratic, stable, and peaceful Western Europe, which was a safe bulwark against all the temptations from the communist East, prevailed against all those who opposed supporting the unity of Western Europe in order to prevent the United States from creating a potential competitor. It is worth noting that since the early 1950s, the US had had to live with barriers of trade and other restrictions of the ECSC countries, which they did not regard as unjustly discriminatory, which nonetheless led to repeated political tensions and political distortions. Ultimately, however, the political and, indirectly, the security-specific advantages outweighed the potential disadvantages for American trade policy.¹⁷

4. *Controversies on US Motives for EEC and EURATOM*

Klaus Larres, therefore, does not consider the thesis of Alan S. Milward and Federico Romero to be tenable, which in 1957-58 had already seen a great disillusion and disenchantment by the US with regard to European integration.¹⁸ Larres suggests this was only beginning in the 1960s as a result of increasing political, trade, and economic problems, a view which is shared

17 Klaus Schwabe, *Weltmacht und Weltordnung. Amerikanische Außenpolitik von 1898 bis zur Gegenwart. Eine Jahrhundertgeschichte*, Paderborn – München – Wien – Zürich 2006, 231-242; Dieter Krüger, *Sicherheit durch Integration? Die wirtschaftliche und politische Zusammenarbeit Westeuropas 1947 bis 1957/58*, München 2003.

18 Federico Romero, *Interdependence and Integration in American Eyes: From the Marshall Plan to Currency Convertibility*, in: Milward et al. (Eds.), *The Frontier of National Sovereignty*, 155-181; Milward, *Conclusions*, in: *ibid.*, 197-200; see also Federico Romero, *U.S. Attitudes towards Integration and Interdependence: The 1950s*, in: Francis H. Heller/John R. Gillingham (Eds.), *The United States and the Integration of Europe: Legacies of the Postwar Era*, London 1996, 103-121.

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also by Geir Lundestad. The development of a uniform and strong Western Europe was politically more important than the possible political and trade disadvantages for the US, especially in view of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (which was signed 1947 and came into effect in 1948).¹⁹ However, Larres also made clear that the agreement of Western Europe and the West left much to be desired from Washington's point of view. Every opportunity needed to be used to exclude the repetition of a separate European world policy, which was detached from the United States, as it had been during the Suez Crisis in 1956 by Great Britain and France.²⁰

5. *The EEC as Anti-Communist and Anti-Soviet Alliance*

For Eisenhower and his "Crusade in Europe"²¹ against communism and the USSR, geopolitical priorities were decisive. In addition to economic and nuclear policy considerations, the Rome Treaties served the purpose of helping the (Western) continent to regain its "political strength" against Soviet communism via economic integration. Without the persistent and active support of Western European integration since the days of the Marshall Plan by the Americans, Europeans, especially Germans and French, would not have succeeded in settling their national rivalries on their own.²²

19 Geir Lundestad, "Empire" by integration. *The United States and European Integration, 1945-1997*, Oxford – New York 1998, 86-89.

20 Larres, *Die USA und die Römischen Verträge*, 609-610.

21 See his book *Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe*, first edition New York 1948.

22 Larres, *Die USA und die Römischen Verträge*, 612-613; Peter Duignan/L. H. Gann, *The USA and the New Europe 1945-1993*, Oxford – Cambridge 1994, 34-60, 71-76; Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945. From "empire" by "invitation" to "transatlantic drift"*, Oxford 2003; Michael Gehler, *From accidental disagreement to structural antagonism. The US and Europe: old and new conflicts of interest, identities, and values, 1945-2005*, in: Barry Eichengreen/Michael Landesmann/Dieter Stiefel (Eds.), *The European Economy in an American Mirror*, Routledge Abingdon GB 2008, 458-499; for the prelude of cooperation 1955-1962 see Stephen A. Kocs, *Autonomy or Power? The Franco-German Relationship and Europe's Strategic Choices 1955-1995*, Westport Connecticut London 1995, 15-35.

6. *Lesser Importance of Transatlantic Networks and more European Socialization Potential*

In contrast to the ECSC, transatlantic political networks had no major stake in the immediate preparation of the Rome Treaties in 1956-57. It was confirmed by Pascaline Winand and Klaus Larres that the influence of the US was not as strong as at the time when coal and steel were being negotiated.²³ The thesis of the US acting as an “external federator” of the Rome Treaties therefore had to be weakened. The “Six” had negotiated on their own “reasons for action”.²⁴

Moreover, reference is made to a common generation and with mutual values of High Authority officials, such as Pierre Uri or Max Kohnstamm, who intensively committed themselves to the European integration process, by developing an appropriate *esprit de corps* and, thereby, personal ties. This led to a core European socialization potential that was ultimately also helpful in the establishment of the EEC. Taking into account developments after 1957/58, it becomes clear, and should be stressed once again, that on the basis of the Rome Treaties, the EEC Commission developed various individual policies and the European Court of Justice (ECJ) developed ECSC European Community Law, thus setting the switches for transatlantic political networks and the beginnings of Western European integration.²⁵

23 Pascaline Winand, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the United States of Europe*, New York 1993; Brigitte Leucht, *Expertise and the Creation of a Constitutional Order for Core Europe: Transatlantic Policy Networks in the Schuman Plan Negotiations*, in: Wolfram Kaiser/Brigitte Leucht/Michael Gehler (Eds.), *Transnational Networks in Regional Integration. Governing Europe 1945-83*, Basingstoke 2010, 18-37.

24 Lundestad, “Empire” by Integration, 127-131, 157.

25 Mathieu L. L. Segers, *Tussen verzoening en verval. De nationale standpuntbepaling van de Bondsrepubliek Duitsland gedurende de beraadslagingen en on der handelingen over de Verdragen van Rome*, PhD. Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen 2006; Idem, *De Europese dagboeken van Max Kohnstamm, Augustus 1953-september 1957*, Amsterdam 2008, 7-28; Idem, *Diep Spel. De Europese dagboeken van Max Kohnstamm, September 1957-Februari 1963*, Amsterdam 2011, 15-51; Anjo G. Harryvan/Jan van der Harst: *Max Kohnstamm. A European’s Life and Work* (Veröffentlichungen der Historiker-Verbindungsgruppe bei der Kommission der Europäischen Gemeinschaften bei der Kommission der Europäischen Gemeinschaften/Publications of the European Union Liaison Committee of Historians 13), Baden-Baden 2011.

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7. *Precarious Domestic Political Situation in France*

The history of the creation of the Rome Treaties also points to the precarious domestic situation in the France of the Fourth Republic with many political changes such as the overthrow of Robert Schuman²⁶ in 1952. It saw the removal of a Euro-politically ambitious politician, and caused the President of the ECSC High Authority, Jean Monnet, to resign on 10 June 1955 after the takeover of Pierre Mendès France. Not only the ambiguous situation in France but also the controversial integration policy in the FRG led to an uncertain constellation in 1954/55 (see also below).²⁷

8. *The Benelux Countries not at First*

Undoubtedly, it was the meeting of Heads of State and Government of the ECSC States, initiated by Paul-Henri Spaak (Belgium), Joseph Bech (Luxembourg), and Johan Willem Beyen (Netherlands) in April 1955, which initiated the Messina process,²⁸ which ended via the Venice Conference with the signing of the Rome Treaties. Especially the Dutch Banker, Diplomat and Foreign Minister (1952-1956) Beyen was of special importance.²⁹

For a long time, in historical research the view dominated that only on the part of the Benelux countries there was a clear and necessary understanding of the continuation of the process, from the partial integration of the mining sector into overall economic integration as a pioneer of a deepened political integration of the ECSC States. According to this, the French and German governments did not seem to have any clear ideas as to how the integration

26 Raymond Poidevin, Robert Schuman, homme d'État 1886-1963, Paris 1986; Sylvain Schirmann (Dir.), Robert Schuman et les Pères de l'Europe. Cultures politiques et années de formation. Actes du colloque du 10 au 12 octobre 2007 organisé par la Maison de Robert Schuman et le Réseau des Maisons des Pères de l'Europe, Bruxelles 2008.

27 Schwabe, Jean Monnet, 259-289.

28 Pierre Gerbet, La « relance » européenne jusqu'à la conférence de Messine, in: Serra (Dir.), Il Rilancio dell'Europa, 61-91.

29 Albert E. Kersten/Anjo G. Harryvan, The Netherlands, Benelux and the relance européenne 1954-1955, in: Serra (Dir.), Il Rilancio dell'Europa, 125-157, here 139-156; A. E. Kersten, Beijen, Johan Willem (1897-1976), in: *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland*. URL:<http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/bwn1880-2000/lemmata/bwn2/beijen> (called up 28 October 2021).

process should continue after the failure of the European Defense Community (EDC) project in 1954. But this paper is intended to show that the German Federal Government already had its own plans for the future of the integration prior to the Benelux initiative and that these jibed in large part with the ideas of the Benelux countries. Though the Benelux-Memorandum had three different strong origins with Johan Willem Beyen (Netherlands), Hans von der Groeben – Walter Hallstein – Carl Friedrich Ophüls – Pierre Uri – [Jean Monnet] (Germany-France) and Johan Willem Beyen – Paul-Henri Spaak – Jean Charles Baron de Snoy et d’Oppuers (Netherlands-Belgium).³⁰

Despite these ‘pre-workers’ Wilfried Loth argues that the governmental leaders, Guy Mollet in France and Konrad Adenauer³¹ in the FRG, were the true fathers of the Rome Treaties (“die eigentlichen Väter der Römischen Verträge”³²), because they avoided a second failure in times of lacking euphoria for Europe’s integration.³³ They saved the whole enterprise and made the final decisions to sign both of the arrangements.³⁴

30 Jürgen Elvert, Sektorale oder horizontale Integration? Die bundesdeutsche Diskussion zu Beginn der Relance Européenne 1954/55, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union*, here 141-143; Gérard Bossuat, Face à l’histoire. Les décideurs politiques français et la naissance des traités de Rome, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 147-168, here 149, 157; Wilfried Loth, Die Entstehung der Römischen Verträge, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 111-130, here 114-115.

31 Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen 1955-1959*, Stuttgart 1967, 253-255; Idem, *Briefe 1955-1957*, Berlin 1998, 139-141; concerning Guy Mollet see Christian Pineau, in: Serra (Ed.), *Il rilancio*, 281-286.

32 Wilfried Loth, Einführung, in: *JEIH* Vol. 23 (2017), 1, 5-8, here 5.

33 Loth, 60 Years ago, 20-28; see also Michel Dumoulin, La crise européenne de la Belgique à la signature des traités de Rome, in: *JEIH* Vol. 23 (2017), 1, 29-46.

34 Jean-Marie Palareyt, Les décideurs français et allemands face aux questions institutionnelles dans la négociation des traités de Rome, in: Marie-Thérèse Bitsch (Ed.), *Le couple France-Allemagne et les institutions européennes*, Brussels 2001, 105-150.

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9. *Political Integration Instead of Global Free Trade by the FRG*

These considerations were managed by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the leadership of Undersecretary of State (“Staatssekretär”) Walter Hallstein,³⁵ who was able to rely on the support of Konrad Adenauer in his considerations, and in the Federal Ministry of Economics largely on Hans von der Groeben.³⁶ Adenauer acted in a pragmatic and successful way in order to get access to other partners via irrevocably binding the member states to supranational institutions.³⁷

While for Hallstein “a committed European”³⁸ the law community and the political dimension of the integration process were of primary importance,³⁹ having von der Groeben on board was of the utmost importance for transforming the economically limited partial integration of coal and steel into a complete one. This, of course, was in sharp contrast to the Minister for Economic Affairs, Ludwig Erhard, who was in favour of competition, but a decisive opponent of supranational core-European integration and instead more involved in the economic performance of a global free-trade system organized by OEEC or GATT.⁴⁰ In the end Adenauer won the dispute due to his superordinate policy-competence (“Richtlinien-Kompetenz”) as chancellor.

35 Wilfried Loth, Walter Hallstein (1958-1967): the founding President, in: Jan van der Harst/Gerrit Voerman (Eds.), *An Impossible Job? The presidents of the European Commission 1958-2014*, London 2016, 29-50, here 31-34.

36 Hans von der Groeben, *Europäische Integration aus historischer Erfahrung. Ein Zeitzeugengespräch mit Michael Gehler (ZEI Discussion Paper C 108)*, Bonn 2002, http://www.zei.de/download/zei_dp/dp_c108_groeben.pdf (called up 28 October 2021); Hanns Jürgen Küsters, *The Federal Republic of Germany and the EEC-Treaty*, in: Serra (Dir.), *Il Rilancio dell'Europa*, 465-506; Jürgen Elvert, *Weichenstellungen für die Römischen Verträge – Akteure und Überlegungen der Bundesregierung 1955*, in: *integration* 30 (2007), 301-312; Mathieu L.L. Segers, *Deutschlands Ringen mit der Relance. Die Europapolitik der BRD während der Beratungen und Verhandlungen über die Römischen Verträge*, Frankfurt/Main et. al 2008.

37 Küsters, *Adenauers Europapolitik*, 646-673.

38 Wilfried Loth, Walter Hallstein, *a committed European*, in: *The European Commission, 1958-72. History and Memories*, Luxemburg 2007, 79-90.

39 Walter Hallstein, *Die Europäische Gemeinschaft*, 5th edition Düsseldorf 1979, 51-77, 121-292, 381-464.

40 Hanns Jürgen Küsters, *Der Streit um Kompetenzen und Konzeptionen deutscher Europapolitik 1949-1958*, in: Herbst/ Bühner/Sowade (Eds.), *Vom Marshallplan zur EWG*, 335-370, here 355-368; Horst Friedrich Wünsche, *Wirtschaftliche Interessen*

10. The Package Deal EEC-EURATOM – Leadership by Paul-Henri Spaak

It was also thanks to the well-coordinated and purposeful leadership of the Belgian socialist politician, Paul-Henri Spaak,⁴¹ who, within the framework of the Committee named after him, acted as an honest broker and showed the way from the Messina Conference in 1955 to the Venice Conference in 1956.⁴² Together with Pierre Uri and other collaborators, they led integration policy out of its crisis and paralysis in 1954, when the French National Assembly had withdrawn the EDC, the European Army project supported by the US, from its agenda.⁴³

Alan Milward argued that the intention behind the French EURATOM proposals was that cooperation with the FRG on nuclear energy would provide financial and technological support, while at the same time allowing the control of German civilian nuclear developments.⁴⁴

In the end a deal was made. Bonn got the EEC in order to create an economic community for mainly integration political reasons and Paris got the EUR-

und Prioritäten. Die Europavorstellungen von Ludwig Erhard, in: Rudolf Hrbek/Volker Schwarz (Eds.), 40 Jahre Römische Verträge: Der deutsche Beitrag. Dokumentation der Konferenz anlässlich des 90. Geburtstages von Dr. h.c. Hans von der Groeben, Baden-Baden 1998, 36-49; Wilfried Loth, Deutsche Europa-Konzeptionen in der Gründungsphase der EWG, in: *ibid.*, 24-35; Elvert, Sektorale oder horizontale Integration?, 131-145; see also Claus Eiselstein, Die Europäische Gemeinschaft in der Weltwirtschaftsordnung. Zu den allgemeinen Rechtsgrundsätzen, Standards und Charakteristika im Außenwirtschaftsrecht der Europäischen Gemeinschaft (Tübinger Schriften zum internationalen und europäischen Recht 15), Berlin 1987.

41 Paul-Henri Spaak, *Memoiren eines Europäers*, Hamburg 1969.

42 Michel Dumoulin, *Les travaux du Comité Spaak (juillet 1955-avril 1956)*, in: Serra (Dir.), *Il Rilancio dell'Europa, 195-210*; Loth, *60 Years ago*, 17-20.

43 E. Fursdon, *The European Defence Community, a History*, London 1980; Ronald W. Pruessen, *Cold War Threats and America's Commitment to the European Defense Community: One Corner of a Triangle*, in: *JEIH* Vol. 2 (1996), Nr. 1, 51-69.

44 Milward, *European Rescue*, 200; see also Peter Weilemann, *Die Anfänge der Europäischen Atomgemeinschaft. Zur Gründungsgeschichte von Euratom 1955-1957*, Baden-Baden 1983, 103-114, 129-132, 157-171.

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ATOM in order to finance the French atomic energy industry for civil ambitions as well as war purposes by the FRG.⁴⁵ It was also a compromise solution between French protectionist planification and the German ordo-liberal tradition with the concept of a social market economy.⁴⁶

Jean Monnet feared the Social Democrats in Germany opposing the EEC-Treaty. We should therefore not forget an important side effect of the implementation of the Rome Treaties (1958): They forced the German SPD to give up their fundamental opposition against Adenauer's policy of Western integration. On 6 July 1957 the German Bundestag ratified the Rome Treaties also with the votes of the SPD.⁴⁷

11. A German-French Trade Treaty, the Saar Solution and the Suez Crisis as Catalysts

In 1954 France and the FRG concluded a bilateral trade treaty, which led to an opening up of the French market for German industrial goods and vice versa to an opening up of the German market for French agricultural products. This put pressure on the other ECSC members. They had to react: The threat of growing trade bilateralism between Bonn and Paris helped stimulate

45 Wilfried Loth, Deutsche und französische Interessen auf dem Weg zu EWG und Euratom, in: Andreas Wilkens (Ed.), *Deutsch-französische Wirtschaftsbeziehungen 1945-1960*, Sigmaringen 1997, 171-187; Ginevra Andreini, Euratom: An instrument to achieve a nuclear deterrent? French Nuclear Independence and European Integration during the Mollet Government (1956), in: *JEIH* Vol. 6 (2000), 1, 109-128; see also Andrew S. Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe. Social Purpose & State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, New York 1998, London 1999, 148-149; See on that topic also: Pierre Guillen, La France et la négociation des Traités de Rome: L'Euratom, in: Serra (Ed.), *Il Rilancio dell' Europa e i Trattati di Roma*, 513-524; Peter Weilemann, Die deutsche Haltung während der Euratom-Verhandlungen, in: Serra (Dir.), *Il Rilancio dell'Europa*, 531-545.

46 Laurent Warlouzet, The EEC/EU as an Evolving Compromise between French Dirigism and German Ordoliberalism (1957-1995), in: *Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 57 (2019), 1, 77-93.

47 Jean Monnet, *Mémoires*, Paris 1976, 480-499; Gabriele D'Ottavio, The treaties of Rome: Continuity and Discontinuity in SPD's European Policy, in: *JEIH* Vol. 13 (2007), 2, 103-114; Loth, 60 Years ago, 26.

the idea of Western European trade multilateralism favored by the Benelux countries especially by Paul-Henri Spaak.⁴⁸

The breakthrough to the EEC should be seen not only against the backdrop of America's European policy, world politics, and the Suez Crisis but also in terms of the agreements that led to the accession of the Saar territory to the FRG after a successful plebiscite by an official referendum in 1955. After the solution of complex questions the signing of the Treaties of Luxemburg took place on 27 September 1956, which allowed the entry of the Saarland into the Federal Republic of Germany on 1 January 1957.⁴⁹

Doubtless, the termination of the Suez Canal Company on the night from 6 to 7 November 1956 in France strongly encouraged the feeling of a need for unification with West Germany and European integration. The escalation of the Suez Crisis and the impression of a debacle in the French policy of re-colonization helped to remove the last atmospheric obstacles to the finalization of the negotiations but they were not decisive for the basic decision of French policy, to opt for the atomic community along with the "Common Market" in addition to the core community. After the defeat at the Suez Canal with the failed re-colonization of Egypt in 1956, Paris was satisfied to have found a replacement with its leadership role in the EEC. But Milward had no doubt that the French decision to join the "Common Market" project was not caused by the Suez defeat. It had been made earlier.⁵⁰

12. Jean Monnet No Longer an Active Player and Unfortunate Author of the Rome Treaties

Jean Monnet, who had hoped for a much greater mobilization thrust from a European nuclear community, was no longer such an active player compared

48 Commentary by Guido Thiemeyer (University of Dusseldorf) at the MPI-Conference on the Rome Treaties in Frankfurt/Main on 22/23 June 2017.

49 Rainer Hudemann/Raymond Poidevin (unter Mitarbeit von Anette Maas) (Eds.), *Die Saar 1945 – 1955. Ein Problem der europäischen Geschichte. La Sarre 1945-1955. Un problème de l'histoire européenne*, München 1992, 2nd edition 1995; Ulrich Lappenküper, *Die deutsch-französischen Beziehungen 1949-1963. Von der „Erbfeindschaft“ zur „entente élémentaire“*, vol. 2, 1958-1963, München 2001, 1094-1138.

50 Alan S. Milward, *Conclusions: the value of history*, in: *Idem et al., Frontier*, 182-201, here 188.

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to the times of the ECSC creation, but his influence was not to be underestimated, especially as he urged Adenauer to prefer completion of the EURATOM Treaty to the treaty on the EEC. At first Adenauer agreed, but Franz Etzel and Walter Hallstein persuaded him to stick to the package deal for both concepts. In his analysis of the Rome Treaties, Wilfried Loth also refers to US European policy as well as France's failed re-colonization of Indochina and North Africa.⁵¹

Milward clearly stated that Monnet was not an active author of the Rome Treaties, not to speak of the EEC, but just attempted himself on sectoral integration (EURATOM) as Gérard Bossuat also demonstrates.⁵² In contrast to the Schuman Plan,⁵³ Monnet was “not the father,” but at best an “unfortunate author” of the Rome Treaties. It was the socialists, Prime Minister Guy Mollet and Foreign Minister Christian Pineau, who had recognized the necessity and plausibility of negotiations on a “Common Market” before the Suez Crisis. The Treaties of Rome provided a basis for further development, but a clear political decision was still needed. They also still contained the risk of slipping into the mere management of the crisis of Community formation.⁵⁴

13. *Leaving Open the Political End*

Protectionist considerations played a significant role, too. Wilfried Loth deliberately speaks of European middle-class agricultural protectionism combined with modernization programs that should still provide for a consider-

51 Loth, *Die Entstehung*, 126-130; René Girault, *La France entre l'Europe et l'Afrique*, in: Serra (Dir.), *Il Rilancio dell'Europa*, 351-378; Schwabe, *Jean Monnet*, 293-344.

52 Bossuat, *Face à l'histoire*, 149-155, 167-168; Laurent Warlouzet, *France and the Treaty of Rome. Negotiation and implementation (1956-1974)*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 541-555.

53 Frances Lynch, *The role of Jean Monnet in setting up the European Coal and Steel Community*, in: Klaus Schwabe (Ed.), *Die Anfänge des Schuman-Plans 1950/51. Beiträge des Kolloquiums in Aachen, 28.-30. Mai 1986, Baden-Baden 1988*, 117-129; Antonio Varsori, *Jean Monnet e il Comitato d'Azione per gli Stati Uniti d'Europa fra MEC ed Euratom (1955-1957)*, in: Sergio Pistone (Ed.), *I movimenti per l'unità europea 1954-1969*, Pavia 1996, 349-371.

54 Wilfried Loth, *Guy Mollet und die Entstehung der Römischen Verträge 1956/57*, in: *integration* 30 (2007), 3, 313-319.

able conflict. He speaks of an “unholy alliance” with regard to German aversion to dirigisme in Europe and the French obfuscation tactics against the supranational dimensions of the EEC institutions, so that the possibilities for action of the new community were severely restricted. Instead of binding decisions of the Council of Ministers to the Commission’s initiatives and by a majority, as the Dutch had proposed, a transitional period for a large number of decisions was linked to unanimous votes of the Council of Ministers. It was problematic according to Loth that the communication on the political end of the Community was left open, although it was clear that the economic and other functions of the EEC were far more political than economic.⁵⁵

14. France’s Decision faute de mieux – an Europeanized Social and Welfare State Model

The French *classe politique* wanted to avoid a new failure after the rejection of the EDC in 1954. Therefore one also took a tactical position. The French government chose the Rome Treaties because of its need to maintain its own political system, combined with a social and welfare state model, in a more europeanized and globalized competitive situation and this would be difficult. If France had not accepted the terms of the Treaties of Rome, it would have experienced the same fate as Great Britain, meaning trade and economic policy isolation from core Europe.⁵⁶

As Sigfrido Ramírez Pérez has concluded, the French willingness to sign the Rome Treaties was not so much the result of influence and pressure on the part of the economy, but rather an industrial policy strategy that was pursued by left-wing politicians and officials. The objectives of a nationally-oriented

55 Loth, *Die Entstehung*, 111-130; Idem, 60 years ago: The foundation of EEC and EAEC as Crisis Management, in: *JEIH* Vol. 23 (2017), 1, 9-28; Wilfried Loth, *Building Europe. A history of European unification*, Berlin – Boston 2015; Richard Griffiths/Wendy Asbeek Brusse, *The Dutch Cabinet and the Rome Treaties*, in: Serra (Dir.), *Il Rilancio dell’Europa*, 461-493.

56 Frances M. B. Lynch, *Restoring France: the road to integration*, in: Milward et al, *The Frontier of National Sovereignty*, 59-87, here 59; see also Gérard Bossuat, *L’Europe des français 1943-1959: la IV^e République aux sources de l’Europe communautaire*, Paris 1996; Frances M. B. Lynch, *France and the International Economy. From Vichy to the Treaty of Rome*, London 1997.

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organization policy and its implementation were more decisive than the support of companies. The treaties provided further opportunities for influence and design to France and its industrial associations through generous financial and social policy concessions.⁵⁷

15. UK's Self-Exclusion

The attitude of Great Britain to European integration after 1945 is one of the best explored topics of early Western European integration history. In self-exclusion, Britain was at the forefront and not consciously present at the time of the formation of the EEC, and even attempted to undermine the project through a large free trade zone, which was supposed to fail. The British governments were informed of the ECSC and EEC projects in detail. However, London continued to pursue its classic policy aimed at securing global trade policy interests.⁵⁸ This was at a time when half of the foreign trade with the Commonwealth was managed, and the existing preferential tariff system had great economic importance. In the middle of the 1950s, according to Wolfram Kaiser, a British interest in European customs unions had been avoided since this would have destroyed the system of “preferential tariffs”. He de-

57 Sigfrido M. Ramírez Pérez, *The French Automobile Industry and the Treaty of Rome. Between welfare state and multinational corporations 1955-1958*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 169-194, here 192-194.

58 Miriam Camps, *Britain and the European Community, 1955-63*, London 1964; Alan S. Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy 1945-1963*, London 2002, 246-264; John W. Young, „The Parting of the Ways“? Britain, the Messina Conference and the Spaak Committee, June-December 1955, in: Michael L. Dockrill/John W. Young, *British Foreign Policy 1945-56*, London 1989, 197-224; Simon Burgess/Geoffrey Edwards, *The Six plus one: British Policy-Making and the Question of European Economic Integration, 1955*, in: *International Affairs* Vol. 64 (Summer 1988), 3, 393-413; see also Christopher Lord, *Absent at the Creation: Britain and the Formation of the European Community 1950-1952*, Aldershot 1996; James Ellison, *Threatening Europe: Britain and the Creation of the European Community, 1955-58*, London 2000; for the road to association with the ECSC see Edmund Dell, *The Schuman Plan and the British Abdication of Leadership in Europe*, Oxford 1995, 254-282; see also the chapter from separation to application from May 1950 to July 1961: N. Piers Ludlow, *Dealing with Britain. The Six and the first UK Application to the EEC* (Cambridge Studies in International Relations 56), Cambridge University Press 1997, 12-42.

scribes the thesis of Alan S. Milward as untenable that British European policy was a rational “national strategy”. The reconstruction of bureaucratic opinion-making processes in the Treasury and Board of Trade Ministries would not adequately explain the real motives for foreign and domestic policy, especially “the socio-cultural embedding of decision-making by politicians.” Kaiser sees decision-making and its process in the British government as quite rationally organized. In his opinion, however, far more ideological models and normative assumptions about the value of the Commonwealth and Great Britain’s role in the world were decisive. In the face of unclear economic interests, it were geopolitical arguments within the government’s discussion in the tradition of the Foreign Office, according to Kaiser, that spoke against participation in supranational integration policy.⁵⁹

16. The British Free Trade Area Project

The long Free Trade Area (FTA) negotiations and their details were hardly known at the time because the public was excluded from them between 1956 and 1958. It went from the resolution of the OEEC Council of 19 July 1956 setting up a working committee, which included the possibility of the establishment of a Free Trade Area up to 14 November 1958, when the French information minister Jacques Soustelle declared that France could not agree. This integration concept was part of the negotiations, but these were not taken up again after their “adjournment”. Three sections, interrupted by three crises with turning points, can be distinguished in the negotiation process: first, a “preparatory phase” from the decision of the OEEC Council (July 1956) to the establishment of the Maudling-Committee in autumn 1957,

59 Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy*, 246-264; Wolfram Kaiser, *Using Europe, Abusing the Europeans. Britain and the European Integration, 1945-1963*, London – New York 1996, 28-60, 61-87; Idem, *Not present at the creation. Großbritannien und die Gründung der EWG*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 225-243, here 226-227, see also former studies Melissa Pine, *Harold Wilson and Europe. Pursuing Britain’s Membership of the European Community*, London 2007; Helen Parr, *Britain’s Policy towards the European Community: Harold Wilson and Britain’s World Role, 1964-1967*, London 2006; James Ellison, *Threatening Europe: Britain and the Creation of the European Community, 1955-58*, Basingstoke 2000; Jacqueline Tratt, *The Macmillan Government and Europe. A Study in the Process of Policy Development*, Basingstoke 1996.

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named by the British Minister without Portfolio Reginald Maudling; second, a “technical” phase from winter 1957 until spring 1958, when the Carli Plan and the secret French proposals appeared; third, a “political” phase from March 1958 to the end of the negotiations and the aftermath of December 1958.⁶⁰

17. FTA-Negotiations with Periods of Crises – a Pre-Brexit Lesson

Three crises should be mentioned: The first began with the submission of the reports of three working groups (“association”, “agriculture” and “developing countries”) after the Committee No. 17 had determined that a Free Trade Area was technically possible and desirable (January 1957). However, the three reports showed disagreement and lack of coordination. A joint statement by the EEC aspirants was not available, but the inviolability of the Treaties of Rome was emphasized. With the Maudling Committee, the crisis was supposed to be resolved and the activities of the expert committees coordinated, but this was not achieved. The second crisis was triggered by the “Carli Plan” (March 1958), named after the Italian economist and Trade Minister (1958-59) Guido Carli. What was supposed to be a compromise proposal failed, instead increasing antagonisms about the basic concept of the Free Trade Area. Here the “political phase” began, which caused the failure of the negotiations. The third crisis started with the submission of the “Ockrent Report” (20 May 1958), named after the Belgian diplomat Roger Ockrent, the long-awaited common position of the EEC countries. A proper discussion was thwarted by France, which demanded economic harmonization. This ran contrary to the “Ockrent Report” as well as the Free Trade Area definition itself, since France too, did not want to allow external tariff freedoms, although in July 1958 it had adopted an OEEC resolution on the

60 Karl Kaiser, *EWG und Freihandelszone, England und der Kontinent in der europäischen Integration*, Leiden 1963; Hanns Jürgen Küsters, *Zollunion oder Freihandelszone? Zur Kontroverse über die Handelspolitik Westeuropas in den fünfziger Jahren*, in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* (special issue 10), 1983, 295-308; Gabriele Brenke, *Europakonzeptionen im Widerstreit. Die Freihandelszonen-Verhandlungen 1956-1958*, in: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 42 (1994), 4, 595-633; Milward, *The Rise and Fall*, 265-309; Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy*, 265-309 (FTA Failure).

establishment of a Free Trade Area with national tariff autonomy. A consensus had been prevented by France, which handled a definite positioning of the EEC on the Free Trade Area in a dilatory manner and at the same time with the new demand of a “standstill” on external tariffs, so that these were unacceptable for its negotiation partners. With the French presence in the EEC, Charles de Gaulle wanted to secure the political pre-eminence of the “Grande Nation” as well as his leadership role on the Western continent. The UK saw only a loose economic structure in the Free Trade Area without political implications, while maintaining its global economic relations. France feared the economic competition of its OEEC partners, above all the Nordic States and the United Kingdom.⁶¹

18. The EEC’s Undermining Prevented by Charles de Gaulle

During the Free Trade Area negotiations, France had committed itself along with its OEEC partners in July 1958 upon the completion of the Ockrent Report to the framework of the Community principles of the “six” from which it withdrew in October when the French representative spoke out against the national tariff rigidity of the Free Trade Area. The national tariff classification against third countries was, however, the most important element of this self-understanding of free trade. The EEC states did not want to jeopardize their own new business, which had not been successful before 1957, via further OEEC negotiations. In addition, there were well-founded fears that London wanted to destroy the EEC with the Free Trade Area 1956-1957. This concern made it difficult to deal with the problems of the economy. The nearer the date of 1 January 1959 came, when the first tariff reduction within the EEC would discriminate against non-EEC countries, the more pressure non-EEC countries were under. This fear increased mutual mistrust. It was officially the UK that “postponed” the FTA-negotiations and this ended when Reginald Maudling did not reconvene his committee.⁶²

61 Michael Gehler, *Das Scheitern der Großen Freihandelszone 1958 und die Gründung der EFTA 1959/60*, in: Idem (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 243-282, here 253-255, 265-267.

62 Ibid.

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The British delegate, Sir David Eccles (President of the Board of Trade), was accused of a lack of diplomacy because he provoked a Franco-British battle of words at the OEEC Council meeting in December 1958. The main responsibility for the FTA's failure, however, was carried by France and thus by de Gaulle, supported by the United States, to which the EEC owes its subsequent founding.⁶³ It took fifteen years until the UK could join the EC but it remained a special case if not an awkward partner.⁶⁴

In summary, there also existed a link between the failure of the FTA-negotiations and the implementation of the EEC-Treaty. This went hand in hand with the convertibility of the Western European currencies in 1958 paving the way for the "Common Market" while the previous FTA-negotiations made a quick agreement on founding the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1960 easier.⁶⁵

19. *Fundamental Refusal by the Soviet Union*

The USSR sharply criticized the Rome Treaties as an agent of "dollar imperialism" and "cartel capitalism". In the first decade, Moscow had felt threatened by Western European unification and sought to hinder it by various means. Even Vladimir I. Lenin had predicted that a united Europe would be "either reactionary or not at all". But the persistent efforts to prevent integration did not only have ideological reasons: Josef W. Stalin also feared the creation of a strong bloc in Western Europe and the undermining of its own rule in the East. In response to the Marshall Plan, the Sovietization of Eastern

63 Ibid.; Oliver Bange, *Europe at Crossroads: Adenauer, de Gaulle, Macmillan and Kennedy*, London 1997; Jacqueline Tratt, *The Macmillan Government and Europe: A Study in the Process of Policy Development*, London 1996; Laurent Warloutzet, *De Gaulle as a Father of Europe: The Unpredictability of the FTA's Failure and the EEC's Success (1956-58)*, in: *Contemporary European History* 20 (2011), 4, 419-434.

64 Stephen George, *An Awkward Partner: Britain and the European Community*, Oxford 1990; Idem (Ed.), *Britain and the European Community: The Politics of Semi-Detachment*, Oxford 1992.

65 Sylvia Schwaag, *Die Wiederherstellung der Währungsconvertierbarkeit 1958 als Beginn einer neuen wirtschaftspolitischen Zielrichtung in Westeuropa*, in: *Zeitschichte* 24 (März/April 1997), 3/4, 85-102.

Europe was accelerated in 1948/49, and Soviet warnings about Western Europe intensified. The irony of the story shows once again that the integration of the latter was not slowed down as planned. While Western Europe was thus more closely united by fear of “danger from the East,” Moscow’s mistrust remained unchanged against the Western bloc formation.⁶⁶ The EEC was attacked as an “American colony”, an “economic arm of NATO”, and a conspiracy to revive the German war industry,⁶⁷ which indeed had started to boom due to the Korean War (1950-1953).

20. *The GDR on Soviet Terms and a Special Case as Part of the “Common Market”*

As the outermost outpost of the Soviet Union and for its legitimacy as a young state, it was in the vital interest of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) leaders in East Germany to characterize the Western states – especially the Federal Republic – as “antisocial”, “capital-oriented”, “imperialistic”, “aggressive”, and “militaristic” that stood in contrast to the “peace-loving” and socialist “Eastern Bloc”. The integration policy was thus steered as pandering to the US, strengthening the German division, jeopardizing European security and condemning it to failure. This is also reflected in *Neues Deutschland*, the “organ of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany”. The daily newspaper was one of the most important propaganda instruments for the rulers. Thus, the rejection of the Rome Treaties and the patterns of argument presented in them are not surprising. These can be explained as an ideologically guided interpretation as well as an instrumentalization of events for foreign and domestic political purposes. The Customs Union and EURATOM were, in this way, treaties of division with the spear point aimed against “the workers in all the countries involved”, the socialist states as such, and, moreover, they also had a colonial dimension in the sense

66 Wolfgang Mueller, The Soviet Union and Early West European Integration, 1947-1957: From the Brussels Treaty to the ECSC and the EEC, in: *JEIH* Vol. 15 (2009), Nr. 2, 67-85; also see Vladislav Zubok, The Soviet Union and European Integration from Stalin to Gorbachev, in: *JEIH* Vol. 2 (1996), 1, 85-98; and Marie-Pierre Rey, Le retour à l’Europe? Les décideurs soviétiques face à l’intégration ouest-européenne, 1957-1991, in: *JEIH* Vol. 11 (2005), 1, 7-27.

67 Wolfgang Mueller, Die UdSSR und die europäische Integration, in: Gehler (Ed.), From Common Market to European Union Building, 617-662, here 619-628.

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of “large-scale colonial exploitation”. They were conveyed as “betrayal of Germany and Europe” and an “aggression pact”.⁶⁸

In reality the GDR trade profited from the EEC. A special annex of the Rome Treaties guaranteed the inner-German trade (“Interzonen-Handel”) to be part of the “Common Market”. Through this, East Germany got access to the Customs Union created in 1968 and became a secret member of the EEC in terms of trade.⁶⁹

II. RESULTS

1. *The Treaties of Rome as a Quantum Leap and Foreign Trade as a Main Driver*

Hanns Jürgen Küsters⁷⁰ summed up the historical decision of 25 March 1957 in a number of points: The signing of the Treaties of Rome meant a quantum leap for the European unification process. The main drivers were the unresolved foreign trade problems. Trade barriers had to be reduced, free convertibility had to be established among European currencies, and balance of payment deficits had to be eliminated.⁷¹

68 Quotations in Andreas Pudlat, “Die Spaltungsverträge” – Das SED-Blatt Neues Deutschland und die Römischen Verträge, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 521-540, here 524-526, 526-534.

69 Ulrich Pfeil, *Die DDR und die europäische Integration (1949-1957): eine andere Variante der SED-Deutschlandpolitik*, in: Mareike König/Matthias Schulz (Eds.), *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die europäische Einigung 1949-2000. Politische Akteure, gesellschaftliche Kräfte und internationale Erfahrungen*, Wiesbaden – Stuttgart 2004, 471-493; Detlef Nakath, *Die DDR – ein „heimliches Mitglied“ der Europäischen Gemeinschaft? Zur Entwicklung des innerdeutschen Handels vor dem Hintergrund der westeuropäischen Integration*, in: Franz Knipping/Matthias Schönwald (Eds.), *Aufbruch zum Europa der zweiten Generation. Die europäische Einigung 1969-1984*, Trier 2004, 451-473.

70 Hanns Jürgen Küsters, *Die integrationspolitischen Wirkungen der Römischen Verträge. Eine Bilanz nach 50 Jahren*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 435-451, here 438-450.

71 *Ibid.*, 436, 438.

2. *The Change in the Integration Method from Additive Partial Integration to an Overall Integrative Approach*

With the EEC Treaty, the Member States made a change in the integration method. They started off from the concept of additive partial integration to the ECSC and now turned to an overall integration approach. It was a novelty to establish the “Common Market” with a customs union as a core, which was intended to incorporate all sectors of the economy where internal market-like conditions prevailed and which gave supranational institutions a political competency.⁷²

3. *Economic Objective and Political Intention*

The focus was on two considerations: The one predominantly economic objective was the institutional reduction of existing restrictions on international trade on the territory of the Member States, including the establishment of a common tariff, a common trade policy with third countries, and the establishment of a system that protected against competitive distortions. The other, principally political intention saw the EEC Treaty as a functional step, which would be followed by further constitutive acts. Thus the symbiosis was born for the community, a fate that continues to be valid: deepening and expanding as parallel tasks of progressive political integration.⁷³

4. *The Irrevocable Fixation of the Customs Union Concept by an End Date and the Trade Split in Western Europe*

The decision by the EEC Treaty for the Customs Union concept and its speedy realization, irrevocably contractually fixed by an end date within twelve years in three stages of four years each (Article 8) was the decisive driving force for all further integration efforts and implied the rejection of the concept of an industrial free trade area as proposed by Great Britain. The price was the political division of Western Europe with EEC and EFTA in terms of trade relations in the 1960s.⁷⁴

72 Ibid., 438-440; Loth, Walter Hallstein, 38-41.

73 Küsters, Die integrationspolitischen Wirkungen, 438.

74 Ibid., 440.

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5. *Competition and Trade Policy Led to Common Policies*

Liberalization effects within the Community and a consolidation of common interests with non-EEC members were mainly the result of the ‘four freedoms’. The treaty provisions on transport policy (Articles 74-84), competition rules (Articles 85-94) and trade policy (Articles 110-116) explicitly envisaged the establishment of common policies, which also constituted a kind of action plan to deepen integration.⁷⁵

6. *Non-Binding Commitments to the Coordination of Economic Policy*

The progressive development of the “Common Market” undoubtedly constituted strict competition rules and the broad coordination of the economic policies of the states involved, but it was illusory to conclude, following the failed EDC Treaty that such extensive Community intervention in the economic policies of the member states would come to fruition. The maximum to be achieved was non-binding commitments to the coordination of economic policy and closer cooperation to resolve disturbances in the equilibrium of their balance of payments.⁷⁶

7. *Customs Union First – Monetary Union Later*

In the face of divergences in national interest, it was foreseeable that it would become a herculean task to transform economic, monetary and social policies into common policies and to deepen integration in these areas. Before the Customs Union was set up, such an attempt appeared to have little chance of success. At the Hague Summit of 1-2 December 1969, the involved Heads of State and Government agreed to draw up a plan for the establishment of a monetary union and a single currency.⁷⁷ All in all, it became clear that the more sensitive the respective policy area, the more difficult the contractual

75 Ibid., 442-444.

76 Ibid., 443-444.

77 Jan van der Harst (Ed.), *Beyond the Customs Union: The European Community's Quest for Deepening, Widening and Completion, 1969-1975* (Groupe de Liaison des Historiens auprès de la Commission Européenne/European Liaison Committee of Historians), Bruxelles – Paris – Baden-Baden 2007; Idem, *The 1969 Hague Summit: a New Start for Europe?*, in: *JEIH* Vol. 9 (2003), 2, 5-9.

codification of common policies and the greater the need for integrative action was.

8. *Agricultural Protectionist Policy with High Financial Burdens*

Agriculture and trade in agricultural products (Article 38-47) for which the EEC Treaty also had a common agricultural policy (Article 39) were explicitly excluded from the strict competition provisions in the “Common Market”. In view of the state intervention policy in agricultural trade, which was practiced by all Member States over many decades, the real difficulty was to bring about the opening up of national agricultural markets within the Community and, at the same time, to reconcile some national protection of agriculture with other Member States and third countries. The dynamics of the unification process would not be hindered in the future. In the interests of all, the EEC Treaty laid down the instruments and named the objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) (Article 38), but the content remained open. On the basis of a proposal from the EEC Commission, the Common Agricultural Policy entered into force in 1962. By doing so, it enacted a free market for agricultural products within the EEC, recognized the farm structures and natural regional differences in agriculture in the Member States and sought a gradual adjustment of the situation. By allowing preferential treatment of EEC products and a preferential price guarantee against imported agricultural products from third countries, the Commission carried out a protectionist policy with a high financial burden, which guaranteed European farmers sufficient income, mitigated competition from non-member countries’ products, and met the interests of the Member States.⁷⁸

78 Küsters, Die integrationspolitischen Wirkungen, 444-446; Ulrich Kluge, Wege europäischer Agrarintervention 1950-1957, in: Herbst/ Bühner/Sowade (Eds.), Vom Marshallplan zur EWG, 301-311; Guido Thiemeyer, Vom »Pool Vert« zur Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft. Europäische Integration, Kalter Krieg und die Anfänge der Gemeinsamen Europäischen Agrarpolitik 1950-1957, München 1999; Kiran Klaus Patel (Ed.), Fertile Ground for Europe? The History of European Integration and the Common Agricultural Policy since 1945, Baden-Baden 2009.

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9. *Financial Sacrifice for Access to Oversea Markets by the FRG*

The financial sacrifice Konrad Adenauer made to Guy Mollet in February 1957, the German economy was given access to overseas markets, mainly in Africa. The sacrifice involved the question of the German contributions to the development fund for overseas countries and territories with a total of 200 million European Payments Union (EPU) calculation units over five years (Implementing Agreement annex A). Finally, this agreement justified the EEC's development policy commitment.⁷⁹

10. *The FRG as Largest Net Payer for Inner German Trade*

The concession of the Germans, who were the largest net contributors along with France, without directly benefiting from it, was met with the pledge of the other negotiators to accept the declaration that the inner German trade was not bound by the creation of the "Common Market" in the future and should not be regarded as external trade with the EEC. A principle document that determined the relationship between the GDR and the Community for the next 33 years proved to be an important framework for the integration of the GDR into the EC in the course of the negotiations on the restoration of German unity in 1990.⁸⁰

11. *The Dual System of Council and Commission in a Network of a Complicated Decision Making Processes*

The EEC Treaty produced a very differentiated system of decision-making among the Community's institutions (Article 137-139), which, in view of the high complexity and factual differentiation of the financial measures (Article 193-209) took care of Community objectives, and individual government interests. The dual system of Commission and Council cooperation in a network of complicated decision-making and reconciliation processes has, on

79 Küsters, Die integrationspolitischen Wirkungen, 446-447; René Girault, La France entre l'Europe et l'Afrique, in: Serra (Dir.), Il Rilancio dell'Europa, 351-378.

80 Ibid. (Küsters), 447; see also Michael Gehler, Von der Befürwortung zur Verzögerung und Verhinderung: Österreichs EG-Antragsgesuch, die Bundesrepublik und die Annäherungen der DDR an die Europäischen Gemeinschaften 1989-1990, in: Idem/Maximilian Graf (Eds.), Europa und die deutsche Einheit. Beobachtungen, Entscheidungen und Folgen, Göttingen 2017, 295-347.

the one hand, served the interests of governments to retain the ultimate decision-making and legislative powers, and, on the other hand, the need for the application of the treaty provisions by an independent body at a communitarian level, which represents community welfare. The EEC Treaty, therefore, contains intergovernmental and supranational rules which, without the will of all parties involved, do not permit a substantial further development of integration.⁸¹

12. Containing a Democracy Deficit and Integration Designed as a Governmental Process

From the outset the Treaties of Rome contained a democracy deficit. All participants had deliberately refrained from a direct democratic legitimation of the Common Assembly by European voters. Certainly, at the time, the possibility of the national legislatures being able to exercise decisive parliamentary control over Community policies was underestimated. Thus, the Common Assembly (from 1958 on called European Parliament) had by far the worst prerequisites of all its organs to expand its competences in the course of the progressive merger. Integration was first designed as a governmental process. The European Court of Justice (ECJ), created by the ECSC treaty with its seat in Luxembourg, maintained its position as guardian of the treaties of all three communities and became increasingly aware of its importance.⁸²

III. CONSEQUENCES

1. Constituting Moderate Supranational Communities

The EEC and EURATOM had created moderate supranational communities.⁸³ The Commission was depreciated against the High Authority. It was a correction of the Member States due to Monnet's overtaxing of the executive. Charles de Gaulle, who is often categorized as a French nationalist, an anti-integrationist, and a European skeptic, accepted the Treaties of Rome as

81 Küsters, Die integrationspolitischen Wirkungen, 447-448.

82 Ibid., 448.

83 Wolfgang Harbrecht, Die Europäische Gemeinschaft, Stuttgart – New York 1978.

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a trade treaty and the possibility of freeing and modernizing the French economy.⁸⁴ He tried, however, to undermine them in their political dimension and circumvent their supranationality. It was clearly understood by French politicians involved, that the “Common Market” was a necessity of crucial importance for France.

2. *Consolidation through Integration – Conscious Actors and Politicians*

This changing period of European integration history (1958-1968) is understood as a “consolidation and crisis phase” (Frank R. Pfetsch).⁸⁵ The crisis was caused by internal as well as by external factors. The consolidation of the communities took place especially through integration-conscious politicians and above all through the EEC Commission with President Walter Hallstein at its head.⁸⁶

Initially, however, the Commission had to be build up and developed and then be consolidated. This period is, therefore, rightly called “the years of building the European Community” (Franz Knipping).⁸⁷ This was, however, accompanied by internal resistance. Gerhard Brunn called this the “childhood” (better, defiance phase) of the EEC, the “early years in the shadow of de Gaulle” that were marked by “stop and go”.⁸⁸

84 For another view on de Gaulle see Laurent Warlouzet, De Gaulle as a Father of Europe: The Unpredictability of the FTA’s Failure and the EEC’s Success (1956-58), in: *Contemporary European History* 20 (2011), 4, 419-434; Idem, Die Ära de Gaulle als Ursprung heutiger Kontroversen (1958-1969): Die deutsch-französische Partnerschaft und die wirtschaftspolitische Steuerung Europas, in: *Frankreich Jahrbuch 2012* (Deutsch-französische Beziehungen: Entwicklungslinien und Funktionswandel), Wiesbaden 2013, S. 141-156.

85 Frank R. Pfetsch (unter Mitarbeit von Timm Beichelt), *Die Europäische Union. Geschichte, Institutionen, Prozesse*, München 2. Auflage 2001, 38-44.

86 Loth, *Walter Hallstein*, 34-38.

87 Knipping, Rom, 25. März 1957, 103-155.

88 Gerhard Brunn, *Die Europäische Einigung von 1945 bis heute*, Stuttgart 2002, 129-159, 160-178.

On 1 January 1958, the Treaties of Rome (the “Common Market”) entered into force. Unlike the hotly debated EDC, they did not have to face ratification difficulties in the six EEC founding states. By its already sealed political decision, horizontal integration had already been targeted.

3. *Short Term and Long Term Goals*

The Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, and the Benelux countries had set themselves short-term goals of economic growth, increasing the standard of living, and an ever-closer political union. Long-term goals constituted the abolition of internal customs duties, the creation of a customs union, free movement of goods and the elimination of quantitative restrictions. A common agricultural, transport and competition policy was also planned as was the approximate alignment of national legislation. The elimination of internal customs, border controls, and distortions of competition, such as the coordination of foreign trade, finance and monetary policy, which were supposed to help to reduce Europe’s productivity gap, to lead to a more active industrial policy and to allow for adaptation to social change.⁸⁹

4. *Deficits and Decision-Making Forced by the Decolonization Process*

Still, the EEC Treaty did not say anything about the general economic and monetary policy. Foreign policy remained a matter for the Member States. Regarding third countries, the Community’s competence was limited to a common commercial policy. Special commitments were made for former colonies in Africa and overseas, which were to be dissolved in several stages in competition to the “developing countries” by the way of association. The

89 Küsters, *Die integrationspolitischen Wirkungen*, 446; For Italy as pars pro toto: Federico Scarano, *Italien, die italienische Linke und die Römischen Verträge im historischen Rückblick*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 557-572; Antonio Segni und Deutschland, in: Michael Gehler/Maddalena Guiotto (Eds.), *Italien, Österreich und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Europa/Italy, Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany. Ein Dreiecksverhältnis in seinen wechselseitigen Beziehungen und Wahrnehmungen von 1945/49 bis zur Gegenwart/A Triangle Relationship: Mutual Relations and Perceptions from 1945/49 to the Present* (Arbeitskreis Europäische Integration, Historische Forschungen, Veröffentlichungen 8), Wien – Köln – Weimar 2011, 151-172.

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decolonization process and the independence striving, above all of the African countries, forced the EEC to make a decision.⁹⁰

5. *EURATOM Remaining in the Shadow of the EEC*

EURATOM provided for the joint development of nuclear research for peaceful purposes. Established in the hopes of providing Europe with energy, this community was confronted with considerable difficulties as members could not agree on a consistent stance. There were conflicts with France on the question of the integration of the FRG into a common European atomic policy. Paris denied Bonn production and possession of nuclear weapons. In EURATOM, Adenauer had to forgo equal status as a nuclear partner with France. De Gaulle also refused to allow the Germans to produce and dispose of nuclear weapons: EURATOM did not develop as spectacularly and strongly as the EEC. EURATOM always remained in the shadow of the EEC.⁹¹

Karl-Heinz Narjes, Cabinet Chief (1963-1967) of the President of the European Commission (1958-1967), Walter Hallstein, has pointed out some aspects that indicate the difficulties:

“One has to differentiate between hopes and obligations. The specificity of the EURATOM Treaty resulted from the technical requirements for the use of nuclear energy, which had not been concluded in the mid-1950s (The treaty was formulated in 1956). France was then interested in simultaneous development of both military and economic components of a European solution. In all of this, however, future relations with the United States had to be considered. These interconnections were made even more difficult by various nuclear control wishes with regard to Germany. Moreover, the question of political and financial cooperation was made difficult with concern to the French. A third issue was the definition of European safety standards and norms. In 1958, all these questions were given different answers in de Gaulle’s office. The real EURATOM problems, however, were exacerbated by the possibilities of political independence created by the formation of EURATOM as a separate supranational community. I think, for example, of the resignation of EURATOM Commission President, Étienne Hirsch, out of protest against the restrictions of the democratic developmental possibilities provided for in the EURATOM Treaty as well as in the EEC Treaty. In addition to this, the uncertainties about the economic and technical possibilities of nuclear energy were added. [...] There was the French view of

90 Küsters, *Die integrationspolitischen Wirkungen*, 446-448.

91 *Ibid.*, 448-450.

designing nuclear power as a [state] domain for economic use. For good reason, Germany insisted on a private-sector approach. “We wanted to compete for the best technical solutions [...]. The benefits of EURATOM for the development of European safety standards cannot be ignored. EURATOM has done basic work here [...].”⁹²

6. *The Commission Officials as Functional Elites Socialized as Integrationist Pioneers*

The higher officials of the EEC Commission were members of the functional committees and elites that helped shape integration and contributed to its success through administrative and conceptual work. They worked in this administration for about 25 years and generally left the Commission at pension age. Due to the long service, close ties and loyalty to the institution developed. Katja Seidel has named three factors for their socialization: (a) the collective biographical background and the individual experiences before the Commission activity; (b) work in the Commission, which contributed to the identification of officials with the Commission, and (c) special role models from the European policy, which had an influence on the officials, including commissars or top officials. The Commission recruited a young staff. The average age for Directorate-General VI was 35 to 37 years. A large proportion of the civil servants had been active in national administrations before their switch to Brussels and an Europeanization took place there.⁹³

Only a few officials were involved in the European Movement or European student organizations before joining the Commission. Different war memories were driving factors for being active in Europe. The common historical background included the class of 1925-1935, which had witnessed the Second World War and the beginning East-West conflict in the immediate post-

92 Karl-Heinz Narjes, *Europäische Integration aus historischer Erfahrung Ein Zeitzeugengespräch mit Michael Gehler*, Zentrum für europäische Integrationsforschung (ZEI Discussion Paper C 135), Bonn 2004, 11-13, https://www.zei.uni-bonn.de/dateien/discussion-paper/dp_c135_narjes.pdf (called up 28 October 2021); also Weilemann, *Die Anfänge der Europäischen Atomgemeinschaft*.

93 Katja Seidel, “So ein Mix von Menschen”. *Gruppenbiografische Studien zu Beamten in der EWG Kommission*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 393-417, here 397-406, 406-413; see also Michel Dumoulin (Leitung), *Die Europäische Kommission 1958-1972. Geschichte und Erinnerungen einer Institution*, Europäische Kommission, Amt für Veröffentlichung, [Brüssel] 2007.

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war period. Many saw a motivation in German-French understanding and reconciliation. Shortened notions of the “decent”, “clean” and “honest German soldier” in a whitewashing way, contributed to the community. The Second World War was regarded as a shared “generational experience”. Seidel sees this as a “main source of social identification” of the EEC Commission officials who have been investigated by her. The years of construction of the Commission dominated their memory. The cohesion and the impression of building up and creating something new together formed an *esprit de corps* that was closely linked to the loyalty of the institution and its goals and values. A similar break-up phase can also be seen in the Commission period of Jacques Delors (1985-1995).⁹⁴

IV. Outlook and Review

In many respects, the Rome Treaties of 1957 reflect parallels and differences with the present EU 65 years later, when presenting the following six points.

1. The Treaties of Rome a Success Story for the US

The willingness of the US to pursue active and expensive reconstruction policies, the remarkable economic advantages of establishing the ECSC as well as of the common agricultural policy, contributed all in all in no small measure to the progress of the integration of Western Europe. Washington itself expected to prevent the threatening ideological alienation of Western Europe

94 Katja Seidel, *The Process of Politics in Europe. The Rise of European Elites and Supranational Institutions*, Basingstoke 2010; see also Patricia Clavin/Kiran Klaus Patel, *The Role of International Organizations in Europeanization: The Case of the League of Nations and the European Economic Community*, in: Kiran Klaus Patel/Martin Conway (Eds.), *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century: Historical Approaches*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire 2010, 110-131; Wolfram Kaiser/Kiran Klaus Patel, *Multiple connections in European co-operation: international organizations, policy ideas, practices and transfers 1967-92*, in: *European Review of History* Vol. 24 (2017), 3, 337-357; for the United Europe Movement see: Walter Lipgens (Ed.), *45 Jahre Ringen um die Europäische Verfassung. Dokumente 1939-1984. Von den Schriften der Widerstandsbewegung bis zum Vertragsentwurf des Europäischen Parlaments*, Bonn 1986, 289-290, 319-328, 465-468, 579-582, 738-739; Sergio Pistone (Ed.), *I Movimenti per l'Unità Europea 1954-1969. Atti del Convegno internazionale Genova 5-6-7 novembre 1992*, Pavia 1996.

from the US in the long run by increasing the prosperity of Western Europe during the continuance of the Soviet communist threat. The US, therefore, supported the comprehensive horizontal form of European economic integration. If they continued to have greater sympathy with EURATOM, the EEC project was considered more important and more decisive in 1956/57. Existing American benevolence and the support of the Western Europeans for Rome can also be explained in light of the fact that Washington assumed, as a matter of course, that a future European world policy would be pursued under the all-encompassing protective shield of American pre-eminence in the world. The “unity of Europe” was the great-proclaimed goal but meant strengthening Western Europe, which was what the United States hoped to achieve, especially for geopolitical reasons. Skeptics within the US government, however, saw the Europeans as competitors and future potential rivals at an early stage. Whether Eisenhower actually intended to expand Europe into a third super power, as the historian Mark Trachtenberg argues, is however doubtful. The US president had only thought about the development of tactical nuclear power for the Europeans, and this only within the framework of NATO but not about the creation of a narrow and independent European Union, which could have hydrogen bombs and intercontinental missiles.⁹⁵ The signing of the Treaties of Rome therefore represented a success for US policy.

2. The USSR as External Opponent

One week before the signing of the Treaty of Rome, the Kremlin officially warned of the consequences and tried to play against the future Member States. Nikita S. Khrushchev equated the EEC with NATO and tried to torpedo the project by establishing bilateral trade relations with EC members – in vain. Although Khrushchev acknowledged certain successes in the EEC for the first time in 1962, against the backdrop of the Soviet economic crisis and the anticipated differences between the EEC and the USA, he pursued the goal of pushing a wedge between its members. Only the necessity of

95 Mark Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace. The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963*, Princeton 1999, 149; Larres, *Die USA und die Römischen Verträge*, 612-613.

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needing to obtain Western goods led to Leonid Brezhnev's de facto-recognition of the EEC (!) in 1971/72, while at the same time attempting to copy its success through the Eastern Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) complex program. In addition to the Soviet effort for relaxation of tensions and East-West trade, the EC integration success (Customs Union, the assumption of foreign trade competency), the imminent advance expansion, and, last but not least, the friendly attitude of China towards the EC were also responsible for the change in course. Brezhnev's breakthrough with the EEC was accompanied by a clear objectification of the EC's image in Soviet publications. However, an agreement between the EEC and CMEA failed until 1988. As a "partner" in the solution of international problems, the EC was only accepted under Mikhail S. Gorbachev's Soviet Union leadership (1985-1991).⁹⁶

3. *Exclusion and Substitute Object*

The Treaties of Rome were an exclusive European project. A number of states could not or would not join. They founded the EFTA based in Geneva, including the neutral countries such as Austria, Switzerland, and Sweden. This was also an expression of the trade-political separation of Western Europe,⁹⁷ from the division of the entire continent by NATO and the Warsaw Pact, on the one hand, and the EEC and the CMEA, on the other. Although Charles de Gaulle did not wish Paris to be the seat of a small free-trade zone, he could be considered an unconscious co-founder of the later EFTA. The plan for a FTA did not fail because of the insolvability of technical-economic problems. These were exaggerated and thus impacted the negotiation climate. Decisive was the lack of political will for a larger free trade zone in

96 Wolfgang Mueller, *Die UdSSR und die europäische Integration*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 617-662, here 659-662.

97 Wolfram Kaiser, *A Better Europe? EFTA, the EFTA Secretariat, and the European Identities of the »Outer Seven«*, 1958-72, in: Marie-Thérèse Bitsch/Wilfried Loth/Raymond Poidevin (Eds.), *Bibliographie zur Geschichte Europas und zur europäischen Integration. Les institutions européennes et l'identités européennes (Organisation Internationale et Relations Internationales 41)*, Bruxelles 1998, 165-184.

Western Europe. The expert committees had worked out proposals for solutions that were suitable for all questions, but these were not accepted because of the lack of political consensus.⁹⁸

4. *Progress and Setbacks*

On the basis of the Treaties of Rome, the EEC Commission was able to develop individual policies and the ECJ developed Community law. The treaty formed a solid foundation on which the EU was built and still stands today. It enabled leaving the sector-related ECSC behind and the breakthrough to comprehensive horizontal integration. The sore point was agricultural policy, which was associated with enormous budgetary burdens due to high subsidy requirements. Still, competition policy was successful. However, the merger of the Community institutions in 1967 did not abolish the democratic deficit and national sovereignty levies remained limited. The Customs Union was achieved in 1968, one and a half years before the intended date, but it was not yet a question of a “Common Market” let alone talking about an economic union that does not exist yet. In the 1970s the competency for trade policy was transferred to the Community. However, the abolition of customs duties and import regulations was not equivalent to the abolition of border controls on goods and services. Free movement of goods and freedom of establishment did not result in the full mobility of labor and capital, since national tax systems, healthcare, consumer protection and occupational health and safety regulations were too diverse. To complete the EC internal market, which was more or less achieved much later (1993), was a challenging task in view of the repeatedly expanding communities.⁹⁹

5. *Mixed Results*

Aspirations and reality often diverged. In addition to material prosperity, European societies demanded higher social security as well as better health care

98 Michael Gehler, Das Scheitern der Großen Freihandelszone 1958 und die Gründung der EFTA 1959/60, in: Idem (Ed.), From Common Market to European Union Building, 243-282, here 270-277.

99 Gerold Ambrosius, Die Zollunion von 1968 und das Binnenmarktprojekt von 1993, in: Michael Gehler (Ed.), From Common Market to European Union Building, 419-433, here 422-432.

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and education. The young and still weak EEC could scarcely meet all of these expectations at once. Each country in the Community also had its own social system, which symbolized both tradition and progress and needed to be defended from 'national interests'. The EEC was functionalized in practice in order to preserve and strengthen national economic and social regulations. Moreover, the members of the EEC were too unequal in terms of their competitiveness and standard of living, as well as their structural and regional conditions, and, thus, also the economic, social and societal 'costs' incurred by the individual EEC countries that resulted from the opening of their 'national economies' and which stood in opposition to a common policy.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the results were mixed.

6. *Partial Successes in Stages*

The 'years ending in seven' remained important for the history of integration. In 1967, the Community institutions merged with the EC, and Charles de Gaulle rejected the accession, which was again desired by London, for the second time after 1963. In 1977, the EFTA States, headed by Bruno Kreisky, met in Vienna and redefined their relationship with the EC.¹⁰¹ In 1987, the Single European Act (EEA) entered into force, paving the way for the single market with the "four freedoms" (persons, services, goods and capital). In 1997, the Treaty of Amsterdam was signed, which incorporated the Schengen system into Community law in 1999. This involved the abolition of internal border control and the establishment of external border control, which, however, remained inadequate. In 2007, the previously failed "Constitutional Treaty" (2005) was rescued under the German EU Council Presidency and reworded as the Lisbon Treaty (entering into force 2009). In 2017, the elections in France and Germany were about the future of the EU; however, in light of its history, the "Fateful Year for Europe", which has already been cited, could have been viewed rather calmly.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 429-430, 432-433.

¹⁰¹ Michael Gehler, Bruno Kreisky, European Integration, the German Issue and Transnational Socialist Party Cooperation, in: Johnny Laursen (Ed.), *The Institutions and Dynamics of the European Community, 1973-83* (Veröffentlichungen des European Union Liaison Committee of Historians Vol. 14), Baden-Baden 2014, 243-273, here 261-264.

Was the integration project really created for the unification and unity of Europe? From the beginning it was less a purpose in itself and more of a means to the end of controlling and using the German potential. This aim has met its limits since the unification of a Germany (1990) that has become ever stronger. One of the basic foundations has thus been called into question. In addition, the EEC was also created as a reanimation, reconstruction and modernization machine for the countries of Western Europe, which were severely affected by the consequences of the Second World War. The British historian Alan S. Milward probably illustrated the point the most concisely: Integration served primarily to save the nation-state through Europe – “The European Rescue of the Nation State”.¹⁰² Can’t we have anything more to add in regard to the second half of the 1950s?

V. Conclusion

When writing about the Treaties of Rome, historians tend to be much more focused on the “Common Market” project, rather than on atomic energy. Indeed, the EEC was of central importance and EURATOM became a minor issue in the history of European integration. Historical research has drawn differentiated pictures of the EEC origins, negotiations and outcomes. The Rome Treaties were viewed by historians (overwhelmingly) positive and their effects judged as very significant to further Western European Integration. There were no deep controversial debates on them.¹⁰³

To sum up: The concrete beginnings of the Rome Treaties lay in the early 1950s and in the years 1955-56. Milward again criticized the federalist myth and European idealistic motives pretending a ‘relaunching of Europe’ by the ‘saints’. According to him, this did not in fact happen because the plans concerning a customs union were already there. Milward therefore came to the conclusion that it was not the Belgian Paul-Henri Spaak, who often was quoted as the “founding father” of the Rome Treaties, but rather the Dutch

102 Milward, *European Rescue*.

103 Mark Gilbert, *Surpassing Realism. The Politics of European Integration since 1945*, Lanham – Boulder – New York – Oxford 2003, 49-83, Idem, *The Treaties of Rome in Narratives of European Integration*, in: Gehler (Ed.), *From Common Market to European Union Building*, 721-729.

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Johan Willem Beyen. It is also arguable, that the influence of the US in 1955-1957 was not as strong as at the time when coal and steel were being negotiated in 1950-51. The Suez Crisis was not directly decisive for the immediate creation of the EEC. The decision-making process took place before, but it was strengthened in the end. If Suez really brought a decisive change, then it was a change of French public opinion. When thinking about the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian Uprising in October and November 1956 the question of a kind of negative sponsor played by the USSR has also been taken into account.

The intra-German trade agreement including a special annex of the Rome Treaties provided a good basis for the German Monetary, Economic and Social Union (“Währungs-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialunion”) on 1 July 1990, which served as precondition of Germany’s political unification.¹⁰⁴ Competition policy was one of the core issues of the Rome Treaties and is one of its greatest success stories.¹⁰⁵ The commissioner responsible for competition, Hans von der Groeben,¹⁰⁶ cannot be mentioned without praising him for the job he did. He did it so well that a German never got this position within the future Commissions up to now.

104 Dieter Grosser, *Das Wagnis der Währungs-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialunion. Politische Zwänge im Konflikt mit ökonomischen Regeln*, Stuttgart 1998.

105 Laurent Warloutet, *La France et la mise en place de la politique de la concurrence communautaire, 1957-1964*, in: Éric Bussière/Michel Dumoulin/Sylvain Schirmann (Dir.), *Europe organisée, Europe du libre échange?*, Brussels 2006, 175-202; Idem, *La France, la construction européenne et les limites de la conversion à la libre concurrence (1945-1992)*, in: *Parlement[s]. Revue d’histoire politique* (2007), special issue no. 3, 25-37; see also Frank Pitzer, *Interessen im Wettbewerb. Grundlagen und frühe Entwicklung der europäischen Wettbewerbspolitik 1955-66 (VSWG-Beihefte 195)*, Stuttgart 2009; Tobias Witschke, *Gefahr für den Wettbewerb? Die Fusionskontrolle der Europäischen Gemeinschaft für Kohle und Stahl und die „Rekonzentration“ der Ruhrstahlindustrie 1950-1963 (Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Beihefte 10)*, Berlin 2009; Sibylle Hambloch, *Europäische Integration und Wettbewerbspolitik. Die Frühphase der EWG (Institut für Europäische Regionalforschungen 11)*, Baden-Baden 2009.

106 See Peter R. Weilemann (Ed.), *Hans von der Groeben. Die Europäische Gemeinschaft und die Herausforderungen unserer Zeit. Aufsätze und Reden 1967-1987*, Baden-Baden 1987; von der Groeben, *Europäische Integration aus historischer Erfahrung*, 38-41.

What is still lacking is a systematic comparative study on the effects of the Rome Treaties not only including the Member States but also the “outer Europe” (EFTA, COMECON) and the outside world (GATT), incorporating and reflecting studies done by pioneers of integration history, also with respect to their schools and belonging to different integration theories.

The theses formulated at the beginning of this paper can be further elaborated in an expanded form with this contribution: The Treaties of Rome formed the foundation law for a thirty-year history of Western European unification up to the Single European Act (SEA, 1987) and continued to be a supporting pillar of the EU treaty system. Their success was based on a historic compromise brokered by Paul-Henri Spaak between Paris and Bonn on the question of EURATOM and the EEC, but also because of a cross-campaign consensus reached by Christian democrat (Adenauer, Hallstein) and socialist (Mollet and Spaak) heads of state and government who showed willingness and ability to strike a balance. With the inclusion of the overseas territories in the Common Market, France, with considerable West German support, safeguarded its global and post-colonial ambitions. One of the decisive factors for the success of the conclusion of the Treaties of Rome was the deliberate self-exclusion of the United Kingdom, which thus dropped out as a potential disruptive factor at the beginning of Western European integration and left the EEC with every opportunity to develop. After the ECSC, however, a decisive breakthrough towards supranationality could not be ascertained in the EEC, so that in the sign of a looming shadow of Gaullism in France, a trend towards intergovernmentalism emerged at the integration level, without supranational ambitions having to be completely abandoned in the medium and long term. Compared to the theoretical supranationality of the ECSC, however, the EEC Commission, unlike the High Authority of the ECSC, had to accept a reduction in influence and was thus a weaker body. Nevertheless, at that time on 25 March 1957, it was already a question of sovereignty of (Western)Europe: The Treaties of Rome were namely also a response to Europe’s disempowerment in World War I and a reaction to Europe’s self-destruction in World War II. More than coal and steel, the Rome Treaties were now also a demonstration of inner-European self-determination vis-à-vis communist-dominated Central and Eastern Europe by means

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of securing prosperity in the West and (Western) European self-assertion with respect to the rest of the world through inclusion of overseas territories.

Let us conclude again with Alan S. Milward. He presented a thesis with a most powerful effect explaining Western European integration: “The European Rescue of the Nation State”.¹⁰⁷ This heretical thesis is still valid for the 1950s and the following decades. But following this period, especially after 1989 but also since the enforcement of the Lisbon Treaty 2009, Milward’s thesis deserves an extension and modification. In the meantime, EU countries are more europeanized member states trying to survive in a globalized world. In my opinion, it is now about “The European preservation of the Nation State in a more solidified EU in times of globalization.”¹⁰⁸

107 Milward, *European Rescue*.

108 Gehler, *Europa*, 890.

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