Did european construction contribute to peace?

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**Abstract**

Supporters of European integration have always argued that it has brought peace. Yet no scientific study has ever developed a critical approach to such a claim. To remedy this surprising deficiency, the author builds a typology that will help to distinguish the two main opposing approaches to this question: that of the Europeanists and that of the Eurosceptics. The dialectical confrontation between these two approaches is the red thread of the book. Taken up in each of the chapters, it provides a synthetic point of view aimed at overcoming this opposition. The author shows that the contribution of the European construction to peace lies in the nuances, thus distinguishing itself from the irenical slogans of the Europeanists while dismantling the arguments of the Eurosceptics. He concludes that the EU will never be able to prevent extremist and belligerent tendencies among the European states and/or peoples. It can, however, limit the damage those tendencies could cause through the rules and institutions which the Member States have committed to respecting.

**Reference**


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1. A Well-Known but Never Explored Topic

The question of peace has always been present in the discourse on the construction of Europe. Thus, the 1950 Schuman Declaration – founding text of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and of the process leading up to the creation of the European Union (EU) – refers abundantly to this topic.

In this Declaration, peace is presented, on the one hand, as the primary motivation for the launch of the European integration project, and on the other, as the main outcome of the process initiated by the development of an integrated market for steel and coal.

Following the publication of this fundamental text a series of proclamations were issued by national and European officials and supporters of the European cause, all of whom insisted on a dialectical link between European construction and peace.

Although this theme is omnipresent, we have found no study, in English, French, German, Spanish or Italian, that offers a critical reflection on the correlation between "Peace" and "European Construction." Of course, many publications have titles that contain the terms "Peace" (or "Absence of war," "Security") on the one hand, and "European construction" (or "European integration" "European Union," "European Community") on the other. But in fact, most studies only marginally discuss the causal links between these notions.

To remedy this surprising deficiency, we have chosen here to build a typology that will help to distinguish the two main opposing approaches to this question: that of the "Europeanists" and that of the "Euro sceptics." It must be emphasised that both approaches are understood as a flexible analytical framework, "ideal-types" in the Weberian sense.

Let there be no misunderstanding here. Our aim is not, in any way, to classify academics, politicians, government officials or intellectuals into rigid categories.

In other words, some of the scholars or politicians whom we have identified as Europeanists can, depending on the themes considered, be
found to be in line with the Eurosceptic viewpoint. Conversely, people we have placed in the category of Eurosceptics because of their perspectives on certain topics could legitimately challenge this categorisation.

The purpose of this construction of ideal-types is, therefore, above all didactic: to shed light on what comes into play when forming an opinion and, thereby, to help us to reflect on our conscious or unconscious visions of the world.

**The Europeanist approach**

The people we call “Europeanists” in this text are those who see correlations between the ideas of “European Construction” and “Peace.” Some are federalists, some are not; they may be in favour of, or against more European integration.

The overall argument used by the advocates of this approach is the following. First, they consider that the shock produced by the two world wars, particularly WWII, was the primary catalyst for the project of European unification. According to Europeanists, the desire to build lasting peace by turning the page on this painful past was the main driving force behind the European construction. Thus, the quest for peace (in other words the refusal to let new wars break out) is presented as the main variable (independent variable) explaining the advent of European integration (dependent variable).

Secondly, the supporters of this thesis attribute the absence of war in Europe to the very existence of the EU. Here, the Union becomes the primary explanatory variable, while peace is the explained variable. In their view, the EU’s specificities are what contributes the most to the absence of conflict on the Member States’ territories.

Among the qualities of the EU that have made it possible to overcome the temptation to resort to war, the Europeanists cite the following as the most important: the communization of coal and steel production, the Franco-German reconciliation, the creation of a supranational legal system, economic interdependencies, the rejection of protectionism, social and regional solidarity, the socialisation of the elite, and permanent consultation between government officials and politicians.

To these factors, Europeanists add the active role of the EU in pacifying regions in its neighbourhood. Thus, the successive enlargements of the
Union, because they have been motivated by a desire for stability and security, are considered the main success of the EU’s peace policy.

Europeanists also stress the central stabilising role played by the EU – following the wars that led to the break-up of Yugoslavia – through the civil-military operations it has conducted since the early 1990s and, in particular, through the implementation of a European Neighbourhood Policy aimed at forging constructive relations with the southern Mediterranean nations and former Soviet-bloc countries.

On a conceptual level, this school of thought has developed an ad hoc terminology to characterise the EU’s original contribution to peace, defining the Union as “a civilian power,” “a normative power,” or even a “soft power.” In 2012, this Europeanist approach received symbolic support when the EU was awarded the eminent Nobel Peace Prize.

The Eurosceptic approach

On the contrary, the school of thought we refer to as Eurosceptic regards as misconceived the argument according to which there are cause and effect relationships between the notions of “European Construction” and “Peace”. But let us stress again that this does not, in any way, mean that the people we place in this category are inevitably hostile to European integration or that they wish their country to withdraw from the European Union.

The notion of Euroscepticism can also be confusing in that the term “Eurosceptic” was originally coined to describe those among the representatives of the British Conservative Party who stood against too much European integration.

As for the term “Europhobe”, it will also be used, but only to describe analysts who consider the EU to have a harmful influence. This concept is close in meaning to that of hard scepticism, which is sometimes used in scientific literature.

Unlike Europeanists, those we refer to as Eurosceptics consider that the shock of the Second World War was not a direct factor in the start of the European integration process.

Some of them place more emphasis on the role played by the Cold War, the communist threat and the American military presence as factors explaining peace in Europe (just like the exponents of the realist theory of international relations).

Others attribute the origins of European integration to other motives, such as economic interests and the decisive part played by some states such as France.

Some Eurosceptics also highlight factors such as the recognition by many in Germany of their country’s responsibility for the crimes committed during WWII and their desire for redemption (the German *aggiornamento*), the diffusion of democracy, the decline of protectionism and the development of the welfare state to explain the absence of war in Europe since 1945. The combination of all these elements has, in their view, had a far greater effect than the existence of the EU.

According to this school of thought, the successive enlargements of the EU have been motivated by a desire for economic gain much more than by political, security and even ethical considerations. It holds that the absence of conflict in the countries of the Mediterranean, central or eastern Europe that have become members, owes nothing to the EU. Pacification in these countries and/or their economic success is due to their own merits or their integration into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Finally, the Eurosceptics underline the EU’s inability to effectively prevent and then stop the wars that devastated the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Regarding the current period, they argue that the Union has not taken an active enough role in resolving conflicts raging in its neighbourhood, whether in the Middle East or post-Soviet countries. Some Eurosceptics, who this time round can be called Europhobes, go as far as considering the behaviour of the EU as being a source of conflict, using the case of the Ukrainian crisis as a basis for their view.

Thus, the proponents of this approach reacted with some incredulity and a tinge of irony to the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the EU.

The guiding thread throughout this book will be the comparison of these two different approaches. We will present and compare both theses and will then propose a synthesis that goes beyond this opposition. We shall provide a counter analysis of the relation between
European integration and the rejection of war (chapters 2 and 3), and will then assess how, and to what extent, the successive enlargements of the EU have contributed to peace in Europe (Chapter 4). We will then examine the extent to which the actions undertaken by the Union in neighbouring regions have also contributed to peace (Chapter 5). Let us note, regarding this last chapter, that a plethora of studies on EU's international security policy have been conducted, but that our objective here is limited to examining what impact, if any, the extension of the European integration process to countries outside the EU has had on peace outside the Union.
2. Has the Rejection of War Been a Key Factor in the Launch of the European Project?

To what extent can the rejection of war and its corollary – the reinforcement of peace – be considered as the primary explanatory variables (independent variables) behind European integration (explained or dependent variable)?

From the Europeanist point of view, there is no doubt that the desire to avoid being subjected to new wars, such as the Second World War, was the primary motivation behind the European construction project. It was, in fact, the first factor mentioned in explaining the advent of the EU. Thus, on the official website of the European Union, the statement is direct: “The European Union is set up with the aim of ending the frequent and bloody wars between neighbours, which culminated in the Second World War”.

According to this school of thought, the motives behind the European project were above all ethical, although social, economic, and geo-strategic reasons also played a part.

Many Eurosceptic political leaders and scholars, who dispute the link between “rejection of war-desire for peace and European construction”, contest this line of thought. Challenging the thesis according to which the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Economic Community (EEC) were founded in response to the shock of the Second World War, they contend that the creation of these institutions was first and foremost motivated by purely economic considerations. Some Eurosceptics also consider that they were created much more as a result of the Cold War than of the Second World War or of any desire to contribute to peace.

The Second World War at the Origin of the EU

It was for the sake of the “never again”² promise that the European project was initiated: that is the belief of Europeanists. Convinced that nationalism and protectionism are the seedbed of Nazism, they argue that it is essential to prevent such situations from ever reoccurring. It was important to rebuild Europe on the basis of new ethical and social values. To join forces was also a way for European countries to win back, on the international scene, the diplomatic ground that they had lost to the United States and the Soviet Union. In the case of Germany, traumatised by the extent of the devastation caused by the war as much as by its overwhelming responsibility in the conflict, the European project was the only possible path towards redemption.

The essential role of ethical considerations

- The argument of the Europeanists is as follows: World War II was the worst conflict in history. It claimed 40 to 60 million lives and was the backdrop of the largest genocide in history (some six million Jews and 800,000 Romani). Tens of millions of people were affected (forced displacement, ethnic cleansing), not to mention the extent of material destruction.

- It was therefore logical that the post-war European leaders should wish to rebuild the “old continent” on new foundations to ward off the risks of another conflagration. Many politicians and researchers in favour of the European project have consistently reiterated that the impact of world wars, and especially WWII, was the main catalyst of the European integration project.

According to this analysis, the key determinant behind the European integration process is therefore idealistic in nature. It is related to an honest and sincere desire on the part of the Founding Fathers of the EU to ensure solid and sustainable peace.

² Romano Prodi, Europe, the Dream and the Choices, Amsterdam, Club of Amsterdam, 2003, p. 6. Romano Prodi was President of the Italian Council of Ministers and President of the European Commission (1999–2004).
THE CONCEPT OF PEACE

The term “peace” can be understood in various ways:

- According to the realist theory and security studies, peace is an illusion. It corresponds, at best, to an absence of war or violence between nations. This approach holds that the international system is structurally “anarchic” and without any monopoly on the legitimate use of force. It is, therefore, a myth to believe that peace agreements can be sustainable and efficient, that international law can be respected and that the United Nations can impose its resolutions. The realists advocate mechanisms that make war materially impossible rather than a peace rhetoric that is potentially dangerous in that it causes the actors to lower their guard against the risks of conflict. Consequently, the “best peace” is that which is based on deterrence used by the stronger party towards the weaker, on a system of military alliances, or on the hegemony of a well-armed and determined leading power.

- In contrast, the pacifist approach of peace studies considers that peace is not merely the absence of war, nor even the opposite of war. To define peace as the absence of war is to reduce it to a passive, hollow and incomplete conception. The field of peace is much vaster, because the field of violence is much vaster than that of war. Nor is peace the absence of violence; it is in fact the opposite of violence. Indeed, a conflict can be avoided by actors who resort to violence themselves, when a dictatorship is imposed on a country for example. Such situations present no apparent conflict, but cannot, however, be defined as situations of peace. This irenic vision draws a distinction between, for example, “negative peace” and “positive peace,” the latter being characterised by the development of factors of cooperation and integration between groups or nations to promote solid and lasting peace. The “construction of peace” involves much more than a mere political construction and requires that economic and social dimensions be considered.

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3 Harry Anastasiou pointed out that the European Union’s historical significance in terms of peace had very rarely attracted the attention of intellectual circles in the United States. He stressed that the most disconcerting is the attitude of academics specialized in the field of peace studies and conflict resolution.

The stance of the EU, as an institution, is overall closer to the second approach and, is in fact often criticised in this respect by Eurosceptics, who for their part, support the realistic theory of international relations. However, things are complex, as some Member States – starting with France and the UK – have a realistic approach to peace. This is because both these countries have greater military capabilities than other states, possess unconventional weapons, hold permanent seats on the Security Council and are former great powers. Thus, they do not hesitate to intervene militarily abroad.

Be that as it may, the EU’s vision of “positive peace” is less radical than that put forward by the theory of peace studies. It is rather close to the liberal conception (political and economic) and to that of the theory of democratic peace, which holds that democratic countries do not go to war with one another.

Historians or political scientists on the Europeanist side draw attention to the fact that those who were to become the Founding Fathers of European integration – Robert Schuman⁴, Alcide de Gasperi⁵, Konrad Adenauer⁶, etc. – personally suffered from the war. Some of them were “men of the frontier” whose identity was significantly affected by the strife and war between countries; those people were convinced of the historical necessity to preserve peace in Europe⁷. For example, Robert Schuman was a Luxembourg – born German national. He had been engaged in politics in Germany, and a soldier of the Reich during the First World War. He only became a French citizen in 1918, after the Lorraine region was reincorporated into France. Similarly, the President of the Italian Council, Alcide de Gasperi, was a citizen of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and only became an Italian citizen in 1919, when his region of origin, the Trentino, became part of Italy.

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The Political scientist, Chiara Bottici, studied how eight quality newspapers from Germany, France, England, and Italy found a correlation between World War and European integration. During the period 2000–2006, she analysed newspaper articles by cross-referencing the keywords “EU or European Union or European Community or Europe” with “World War II, WWII or Holocaust or Shoah”8. By doing so, she was able to show that the references to the Second World War were a key element in the argumentation used by the advocates of the European construction.

The denunciation of nationalism

The importance of the nationalism “factor” must be emphasised. Indeed, at the end of the Second World War, the Europeanists considered nationalism – or at least its extremist version – as the primary ideological factor in the imperialist, expansionist and warmongering insanity that characterised Nazism9. Awareness of the racist dimension of Nazi nationalism only developed later, from the 1960s onwards, when the world gained knowledge of the full extent of the Holocaust10.

Europeanists often think of nationalism as a kind of contagious “disease”; a disease which had already caused the First World War and many other conflicts11. The context was therefore favourable for the introduction of the idea that a supranational project was necessary. If nationalism was a bad thing, a partly supranational union could indeed serve as an antidote to this scourge.

As Winston Churchill suggested, the remedy was the creation of a sort of United States of Europe, around a partnership between France and Germany [but without the United Kingdom]12.

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10 In this regard, read Eberhard Jäckel’s influential book,Hitlers Weltanschauung, Tübingen, Wunderlich, 1969.
12 “I wish to speak to you today about the tragedy of Europe. [...] Yet all the while there is a remedy which, (...) is to recreate the European Family, or as much of it as we can, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety,
Did European Construction Contribute to Peace?

To denounce nationalism is to be prepared to challenge the sanctity of the principle of absolute sovereignty of the nation-state and to be open to the idea of supra-nationality. As French President François Mitterrand put it in his last speech to the European Parliament: “Nationalism is war”\(^\text{13}\).

To illustrate the effect of the Second World War on the construction of Europe, researchers have also highlighted the different ways in which the war affected the various states. Thus, they observed that the founding states of the EU were those that had suffered the most severe consequences of the war, in terms of casualty numbers, material damage, destruction of their economies, etc. All the western European countries that were to develop the ECSC had either been defeated (Germany, Italy) or occupied (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg). On the other hand, for the states which had not been occupied, or were less severely affected and counted themselves as victors, the necessity to question their nationalism and to develop a European supranational cooperation was much less pressing. This was the case of the United Kingdom, Sweden, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and Switzerland.

**SWITZERLAND: NOT TRAUMATISED ENOUGH BY THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

The Swiss case illustrates well the impact of World War II on the European construction project as a vehicle for peace because it serves as a kind of “control variable.” Since Switzerland was not severely affected by the war, nothing prompted it to radically change its European policy by following the model laid out by the founding states of the ECSC\(^\text{14}\).

Although Switzerland was located in the geographical heart of Europe and surrounded by the Axis powers, it was spared from the conflict.

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and in freedom. We must build a kind of United States of Europe. (...) The first step in the recreation of the European Family must be a partnership between France and Germany.”


http://www.cwcc.eu/obj/address_given_by_winston_churchill_zurich_19_september_1946-en-7dc5a4cc-4453-4c2a-b130-b534b7d76ebd.html.


Moreover, the country’s cohesion had been reinforced thanks to improving relationships between the different linguistic communities, the election to the Federal Council of representatives of the Socialist opposition party, and to the Social Partnership between employer and trade unions; all this occurred in an economic context that was incomparably better than in the rest of Europe.

In light of all these elements, most Swiss citizens considered that their way of doing things was the best way and that nothing should be changed. It was unimaginable to reconsider, even in part, the principle of national sovereignty by accepting to be a member of a supranational European system. Similarly, entering any form of military alliance with any other country was out of the question. Let us recall that the European Defence Community (EDC) project was launched concomitantly with that of the ECSC, (see below).

Promotion of a market economy with a social dimension

Europeanists believed that the destruction caused by the Second World War had a positive impact on European solidarity. Indeed, this conflict had resulted in the destruction of large segments of the economy, trade, and infrastructure. Those circumstances were favourable to a concerted and coordinated reconstruction at European level. The United States also agreed with this position. They were prepared to help European countries to recover, provided they worked closely together. Their motives were threefold. First, they wanted to prevent new wars in Europe that would force them to intervene. Secondly, supporting their western European allies in their economic recovery and reorganisation would help prevent the USSR from further spreading its influence. Thirdly, the plan was designed to build up new export markets for the US, which at the time, had virtually no foreign trading partners.

Thus, the Marshall Plan (1947), which was then the largest economic and financial aid programme ever undertaken, was conditional, among other things, on European countries developing closer economic ties with one another.15 Furthermore, the United States provided decisive impetus for the creation of the first international economic organisations of the

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post-war period: The Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC, 1948) and the European Payments Union (1950).

According to Europeanists, World War II also had a profound influence on the type of regional integration the Founding Fathers aimed to achieve; indeed, the latter placed strong emphasis not only on free-trade but also on wealth redistribution. This orientation, which may seem paradoxical at first sight – promoting economic liberalism while focusing on the social dimension of the economy –, was specific to post-war Western Europe. This orientation differentiates the European regional integration process from those implemented in America and Asia, which were aimed at establishing free-trade zones, but involved almost no instrument of income redistribution towards impoverished social categories such as farmers or fishermen, or towards less developed countries and regions.

The lessons learned, after the Second World War, in relation to the causes that led to the rise of extremist forces in Europe in the 1930s, explain the choice of direction chosen by Western Europe. Thus, post-war European leaders were convinced that the protectionist policies implemented after the 1929 stock market crash had greatly aggravated their economic and social difficulties, instead of mitigating them. They argued that the consequences of the recession would have been less dramatic if the European governments of the interwar period had not attempted to “barricade” themselves behind trade barriers and measures restricting international trade. Thus, in the aftermath of the Second World War, they strived to avoid making the same mistakes and attempted to implement a system to combat protectionism and to promote free trade.

These same leaders also became convinced of the necessity to establish social safety nets that would be ambitious enough to minimise social hardship, which was a potential seedbed of left- or right-wing extremism. Centre-left (socialist) and centre-right political forces (Christian Democrats, Liberals) agreed that the reconstruction of Western Europe should include a strong social dimension, both in terms of healthcare, education, health insurance, unemployment, retirement, etc. This policy was implemented in each of the Member States, but also at the European level with the allocation of a substantial budget – if

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compared to any other international organisation – primarily intended to finance the Common Agricultural Policy and aid projects in the poorest regions (Structural and Cohesion Funds).

The main political forces in Western Europe considered that ensuring peace in Europe required the neutralisation of extremist parties. To this end, it was necessary to implement economic mechanisms, both at a national and European level, which would ensure growth and prosperity, while establishing regulation and social transfer policies based on supranational and impartial legal principles.

This policy for free trade and income redistribution is sometimes called the social market economy. In fact, the Lisbon Treaty (2009) refers to the “social market economy” as one of the main objectives of the EU (Article 3 paragraph 3)\(^ {17}\). One should, however, bear in mind that this phrase is open to different interpretations and should not be confused with a strict definition of the *Sozialmarktwirtschaft*\(^ {18}\).

In the Anglo-Saxon world, the concept of “embedded liberalism” coined by John Ruggie in 1982 is sometimes used\(^ {19}\). According to this American researcher, the main goal of politicians at the end of the Second World War was to develop an economic system that would prevent a recession similar to that of the 1930s. A compromise between capital and labour had to be constructed. The basic forms of Capitalism and Communism having failed, the only solution was to build a society in which a balance of powers between the state, the market and democratic institutions would guarantee peace and the well-being of all.

**The European countries’ loss of influence in the world: an incentive to cooperate**

The Europeanist school of thought has strived to demonstrate how the Second World War caused some “major” European powers to lose much of their international influence and how this ultimately encouraged some

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\(^ {19}\) Fritz Scharpf, *The Asymmetry of European Integration or why the EU cannot be a “Social Market Economy”*, Berlin, KFG Working Paper No. 6, September 2009, p. 27.
countries to initiate the process of European integration. Beginning in 1945, the United States and the Soviet Union became the main world powers. While central and eastern Europe fell under Moscow's control, the western part of the European continent found itself under American political, economic, and cultural influence.

The Second World War also accelerated a process of decolonisation, which, admittedly, would have taken place sooner or later but was sped up for at least three reasons: first, the colonised territories of Africa and Asia, cut off from their respective parent states during the conflict, had in fact begun to enjoy a degree of autonomy.

Secondly, the colonised peoples had been able to see the limitations of the French, the Belgians, and the Dutch, who had been humiliated militarily and no longer seemed invincible to them.

Thirdly, the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan) had, through their nationalist propaganda, skilfully manipulated anti-colonial sentiments in North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, and had contributed to reinforcing them.

Consequently, two or three decades after the Second World War, virtually all the territories colonised by France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, and the United Kingdom had become independent states. The process was completed fifteen years later for the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, following the fall of Franco's and Salazar's dictatorships (in the 1970s).

Losing their influence so quickly caused a psychological shock for Europeans²⁰, but the Europeanists among them believe that this had a positive effect on European integration. Indeed, this shock led to the realisation that European countries had lost much of their international prestige, which in turn inspired them to cooperate more closely to regain some influence on the world stage. Whereas, before 1939, the European states had not felt it necessary to cooperate with one another to exert power internationally, the loss of their colonies is believed to have acted as a wakeup call for "proud Europe."

The consequences of the war: a factor behind Germany’s decision to promote European integration and peace

The Europeanist school of thought has shown how the tremendous losses sustained by Germany at the end of WWII, on the one hand, and the gradual realisation of the monstrosity of its crimes, on the other, had the effect of making the German question a factor of peace. First, the trauma resulting from the 1939–1945 conflict was much deeper for the Germans than that caused by the First World War. At the end of the war, Germany was faced with a disastrous state of affairs: a death toll of 6 to 8 million, almost ten times more wounded; the country was occupied by foreign troops; almost a quarter of its territory was transferred to Poland and the Soviet Union, the eastern part of the country was under communist domination (and would subsequently become the German Democratic Republic), the so-called western part of Berlin becoming an enclave within foreign territory; most of its large cities had been destroyed, the German economy was in tatters; people from minority groups of German origin were expelled from eastern Europe and millions of prisoners were still in the hands of the Soviets. The realisation of the ravages of war could hardly have been more brutal.

From a geopolitical point of view, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), officially created in 1949, found itself in a very difficult position. First, France was still trying to annex Saarland and take control of the raw materials of the Ruhr. Secondly, this dire situation was further aggravated by the presence, on the eastern borders, of Soviet troops perceived as a threat, especially since Germany no longer had an army to defend itself. The Bundeswehr was not founded until 1955. Furthermore, the FRG was still, in the early 1950s, ostracised from the community of nations and, was not a Member State of the United Nations (which it only joined in 1973).

To compensate for these handicaps, it was imperative for post-war German leaders to ensure the broadest possible support from the United States and western European countries. Success in this regard was first and foremost dependent on reconciliation with France. All these elements played a significant part in the political engagement of the German leaders the European integration process.

One last (but important) factor also played a major role: the gradual realisation by many German political leaders of their country’s responsibility for the innumerable crimes committed by the Nazis
and the Wehrmacht with the explicit or tacit support of part of the population. It is difficult to date precisely when and to what extent this willingness to admit responsibility for the dark chapters of their history came about. This willingness might not have been widespread in the early 1950s – when the ECSC and the EEC were founded. However, the fact is that, over time, an increasing number of German people\textsuperscript{21} chose to assume their share of responsibility for the horrors of the Second World War. Significant symbolic gestures contributed to demonstrating this willingness. On December 7\textsuperscript{th}, 1970, for example, Chancellor Willy Brandt knelt in front of the monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (although he was criticised by many of his countrymen for doing so).

They engaged in a nation-wide process of introspection and self-criticism which helped them to understand the fears their country caused among its European neighbours, and to develop a policy that reassured them.

Thus, many Germans considered it their responsibility to build a new Europe, based not only on German financial solidarity but also on “straitjacket” measures that could prevent the country from becoming hegemonic again or from being perceived as such. The previously mentioned process of introspection prompted many Germans – whose memories of the horrors of the war were still fresh – to see the European construction process as cathartic\textsuperscript{22}.


\textsuperscript{22} Some of our remarks concerning Germany are also valid for Italy, albeit to a much lesser degree. But this country, which, let us not forget, was an ally of Germany during the Second World War, also needed, particularly in the 1950s, to find a new place on the international scene and free itself from any suspicion of fascism. Aline Sierp, History, Memory, and Trans-European Identity: Unifying Divisions, London, Routledge, 2014, pp. 32–69.
INTRODUCTION SPEECH BY THE NOBEL COMMITTEE
AT THE CEREMONY DURING WHICH THE EUROPEAN UNION WAS AWARDED THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE –
DECEMBER 10th, 2012 (EXTRACTS)23

[...] At a time when Europe is undergoing great difficulties, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has sought to call to mind what the European Union means for peace in Europe. After the two world wars in the last century, the world had to turn away from nationalism and move in the direction of international cooperation. [...] For Europe, where both world wars had broken out, the new internationalism had to be a binding commitment. It had to build on human rights, democracy, and enforceable principles of the rule of law. And on economic cooperation aimed at making the countries equal partners in the European marketplace. By these means, the countries would be bound together to make new wars impossible.
The Coal and Steel Community of 1951 marked the start of a process of reconciliation which has continued right to the present day. Beginning in western Europe, the process continued across the East-West divide when the Berlin Wall fell, and has currently reached the Balkans, where there were bloody wars less than 15 to 20 years ago.
The EU has constantly been a central driving force throughout these processes of reconciliation.
The EU has, in fact, helped to bring about both the “fraternity between nations” and the “promotion of peace congresses” of which Alfred Nobel wrote in his will.
The Nobel Peace Prize is therefore both deserved and necessary. We offer our congratulations.
In the light of the financial crisis that is affecting so many innocent people, we can see that the political framework in which the Union is rooted is more important now than ever. We must stand together. We have collective responsibility. Without this European cooperation, the result might easily have been new protectionism, new nationalism, with the risk that the ground gained would be lost.

We know from the inter-war years that this is what can happen when ordinary people pay the bills for a financial crisis triggered by others. But the solution now as then is not for the countries to act on their own at the expense of others. Nor for vulnerable minorities to be given the blame. […]

In the first years after 1945, it was very tempting to continue along the same track, emphasising revenge, and conflict. Then, on May 9th, 1950, the French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman presented the plans for a Coal and Steel Community.

The governments in Paris and Bonn decided to set history on a completely different course by placing the production of coal and steel under a joint authority. The principal elements of armaments production were to form the beams of a structure for peace. Economic cooperation would from then on prevent new wars and conflicts in Europe, as Schuman put it in his speech, on May 9th: "The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible".

The reconciliation between Germany and France is probably the most dramatic example in history to show that war and conflict can be turned so rapidly into peace and cooperation.

[…..] Greece joined in 1981, and Spain and Portugal in 1986. Membership of the EEC and EU was the right of all European countries "whose system of government is founded on the principles of democracy" and who accept the conditions for membership. Membership reinforced democracy in these countries, not least through the generous support schemes from which Greece, Portugal, and Spain benefited.

The next step forward came when the Berlin Wall fell in the course of a miraculous half year in 1989. Opportunities opened up for the neutral countries Sweden, Finland, and Austria to become members.
But the new democracies, too, wished to become part of the West, militarily, economically, and culturally. In that connection membership of the EU was a self-evident objective. And a means, enabling the transition to democracy to be made as painlessly as possible. If they were left to themselves, nobody could be certain how things would turn out.

The difference is very marked between what happened after the fall of the Berlin […] In that connection membership of the EU was a self-evident objective. And a means, enabling the transition to democracy to be made as painlessly as possible. If they were left to themselves, nobody could be certain how things would turn out.

The difference is very marked between what happened after the fall of the Berlin Wall and what is now happening in the countries of the Arab world. The eastern European countries were quickly able to participate in a European community of values, join in a large market, and benefit from economic support. The new democracies in the vicinity of Europe have no such safe haven to make for […] Now, at last, it is the EU’s turn. Events during the months and years following the fall of the Berlin Wall may have amounted to the greatest act of solidarity ever on the European continent. […] Not everything was settled yet, however. With the fall of communism, an old problem returned: the Balkans. […] Five wars were in fact fought in the space of a few years. We will never forget Srebrenica, where 8,000 Muslims were massacred in a single day.

Now, however, the EU is seeking to lay the foundations for peace also in the Balkans. Slovenia joined the EU in 2004. Croatia will become a member in 2013. Montenegro has opened membership negotiations, and Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have been given candidate status.

The Balkans were and are a complicated region. Unresolved conflicts remain […] The paramount solution is to extend the process of integration that has applied in the rest of Europe. Borders become less absolute; which population group one belongs to no longer determines one’s security.

The EU must accordingly play the main part here, too, to bring about not only an armistice but real peace. […]
We are not gathered here today in the belief that the EU is perfect. We are gathered in the belief that here in Europe we must solve our problems together. For that purpose, we need institutions that can enter into the necessary compromises. We need institutions to ensure that both nation-states and individuals exercise self-control and moderation. In a world of so many dangers, compromise, self-control, and moderation are the principal needs of the 21st century.

Together we must ensure that we do not lose what we have built on the ruins of the two world wars.

What this continent has achieved is truly fantastic, from being a continent of war to becoming a continent of peace. In this process, the European Union has figured most prominently. It, therefore, deserves the Nobel Peace Prize.

**An Analysis Contradicted by the Eurosceptic Thesis**

Contradicting theses which, in their view, are idealistic and overly iredic, Eurosceptics consider that the motivations behind the creation of the ECSC and the failed EDC project were mostly economic and even aggressive. They raise doubts as to the validity of the thesis according to which the Second World War played a decisive part in the initiation of the European construction project and argue that the references to wars occurring in the pro-European discourse are forms of instrumentalisation in which noble and idealistic principles (such as “never again”) conceal less glorious goals.

They believe that the European countries’ priority, in the 1950s, was to promote their economic interests and prepare for a seemingly imminent confrontation with the Soviet Union, rather than to concern themselves with pacifism.

**The trauma of the Second World War: no direct impact on the European integration project**

Eurosceptics point out, for instance, that despite the Europeanists’ claim that the primary objective of European construction was to ensure peace, the fundamental texts governing the integration process – starting
with the various treaties — did not explicitly mention the Second World War. These treaties hardly ever mention the need to avoid wars and to protect peace (the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community; the Single European Act).

It was not until 1992, with the Treaty establishing the European Union (Maastricht, 1992) that the theme of peace was explicitly mentioned, albeit succinctly and without any reference to the Second World War.

**The ECSC and the EEC: the results of economic considerations alone**

For many Eurosceptic scholars, European integration was an economic project much more than a political one.

Economic interests, and particularly the “self-serving” preferences of states like France lie behind the European venture and have embedded it in a financial and nationalist frame. This interpretation differs significantly from that of Europeanists, who consider that the founding states initiated the European construction project for idealistic reasons and to defy nationalism.

Following Alan Milward\(^ {24} \) and Tony Judt\(^ {25} \), some historians have also argued that the construction of Europe was a project aimed primarily at rebuilding the disaster-stricken economies of European countries and at strengthening them.

According to this utilitarian approach, the creation of an economic union and a common market of six countries was the [pre-] condition for recovery. The creation of the EEC was not driven by any federalist ambition. It was a project of economic construction operating on the basis of intergovernmental agreements. Admittedly, the preamble to the Treaty of Rome refers to an “ever closer union,” but it is to be understood in its economic sense.


\(^{25}\) Philippe Marlèire, “L'Europe de la paix, cette grande illusion”, *Mediapart*, October 22\(^ {nd} \), 2012.

In fact, the project of European construction emanated from the realisation—first by France—that the only way to rise out of poverty without resorting to the protectionism of the inter-war period was to develop some form of international cooperation. Thus, this desire for cooperation was never driven by any pacifist idealism or by the wish for reconciliation between the French and the Germans. It was motivated above all by considerations of national interest.

Radical left-wing forces have always opposed this “centrist” notion of a social market economy and have criticised the Union for not being protectionist, statist, and interventionist enough. The ultra-liberal right has also denounced it for not merely promoting free trade, but also for developing forms of governance, regulations, legislation, and social redistribution policies that it deems excessive.

**East-West confrontation: the main determinant of the European dynamic**

Another school of thought considers the confrontation between East and West as the main explanatory factor for peace in Europe. In the field of International Relations Studies, this approach is derived from the realist theory. This doctrine is defined primarily as opposed to what it calls the idealistic illusion of an international system based on the denial of force and the absolute value given to an idea or a law (that is, international law). Realism rejects idealism for two reasons: it accuses it of not corresponding to reality but also considers that idealism, because of its naïveté and absolutism, can lead to fanaticism and therefore to the most violent war.

In this rationalist approach, the memory of wars, idealistic considerations or the quest for peace can never, therefore, constitute factors of explanation; the only factors that matter are considerations of a material, rational and geo-strategic order.

One variation on realism, the so-called neo-realism considers the East-West confrontation as the structuring divide in the post-war world.

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Neorealism was founded by Kennett Waltz with his book *Theory of International Politics*. Other authors such as Robert Gilpin, Joseph Grieco, Robert Jervis, Jack Snyder, Stephen Walt, and John Mearsheimer can also be considered as belonging to this movement.

Rejecting some postulates of classical realism (Hans Morgenthau, E.H. Carr), according to which the nature of the states, on the one hand, and the "self-serving motivations of" actors, on the other, explain everything, the neo-realists argue that the anarchy of the international system results from the very structure of the international order and its lack of sovereign authority over states. Thus, whereas the classical realists see the pursuit of power as the primary concern of the states, neorealism considers that their first concern is their security. This can be achieved in two ways: an increase in military capabilities and the formation of alliances.

Thus, according to this neorealism theory, it was the bipolarisation of the cold war era that led to a more peaceful international system than it has been since the fall of the Berlin Wall. The advocates of this approach are consequently deeply sceptical about the "theory of democratic peace" according to which peace and democracy are linked.

Regarding the European construction process, neo-realists claim that its main factor was the rivalry between the USSR and its satellite countries, on the one hand, and the United States and their allies on the other. This conception had logically led John Mearsheimer to predict that Europe would go "back to the future" in a cycle of balance because the key determinants of war and peace lie within the structure of the international system itself rather than in the nature of the individual states.

Some politicians and intellectuals, though considered to be pro-Europeanists, support similar views to that of Mearsheimer. Jean-Louis Bourlanges, for example, stresses that one must not confuse cause and consequence: "It is not the European Union that caused peace but peace that caused the European Union." Yet, this statement was made by a former leader of the French European Movement (pro-European and federalist

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lobby group)\(^{29}\), a former member of the European Parliament and since 2017 member of the French Assembly for the party of Emmanuel Macron. Contradicting the “pro-European myth,” Jean-Louis Bourlanges considers that it is the *Pax Americana*\(^{30}\) — and the security and serenity that it provided for the Germans, the French, the Italians and the *Beluxians* — that allowed them to engage without fear on the path to closer relations and integration. He stresses the fact that Robert Schuman presented his famous declaration during a brief lull in the Cold War, i.e. after the signing in 1949 of the North Atlantic Treaty — which was to protect western Europe — and before Stalin triggered the Korean War in June 1950\(^{31}\).

In the same vein, former French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine claims: “Europe is not the mother of peace but her daughter.” For this influential politician and intellectual, it is not “Europe” that has protected us from war, but the Atlantic Alliance and nuclear deterrence.

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**Hubert Védrine “Europe is not the mother of peace but her daughter”\(^{32}\)**

Example of a vain argument: “Europe is peace.” If this means that peace was achieved thanks to Europe, then the statement is incorrect. Europe was the battlefield. It was the USSR, and then the United States and their allies, who defeated Hitler and imposed peace. Furthermore, it was the United States, with the Marshall Plan, which provided the matrix for new cooperation between post-war Europeans.

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\(^{29}\) Jean-Louis Bourlanges is also a professor at the Paris Institute of Political Studies, was a member of the European Parliament and since 2017 has been a Member of the French Assembly for Emmanuel Macron’s pro-European party, *La République en Marche.*


\(^{32}\) Hubert Védrine, “Un plan pour sauver l’Europe des Européistes”, *L’OBS/Rue 89*, June 6\(^{th}\), 2014.


First founding fathers: Stalin and Truman!
The claim that “Europe” has prevented a new war is not convincing either. There has never been, since the post-war, the slightest risk of conflict between western Europeans, who have been members of the same military alliance since 1949 and have all been cured of nationalism and concerned with economic reconstruction.
The risk of war in Europe was due to the confrontation between the United States and the USSR, and it was not “Europe” that protected us from it but the Atlantic Alliance and nuclear deterrence.
Europe is not the mother of peace but her daughter. At most, one can say that the European construction has transformed an American peace – which could have remained a cold one – into a union. This is not negligible. But what does “Europe is peace” mean in 2014? Does it mean that should there be any tension and serious disagreement between members of the Union, or a bad election outcome, we would be at risk of war? This kind of argument does nothing for the Europeanist cause.

In other words, western European states wanted to give themselves the means to dissuade the Soviet Union from attacking them and even to win the war should a conflict break out. To this end, it was essential – in particular for the two main states of continental Europe, Germany, and France – to stay united and to strengthen the civil and economic pillar of the Atlantic Alliance. Divided, NATO would be ineffective in the event of a conflict.

In this context, the proponents of the realist approach often place emphasis on the European Defence Community (EDC) project. Before presenting their views on this project, let us explain what it consisted in. A treaty was signed in May 1952 for the establishment of a common European army between the six founding countries of the ECSC but was rejected by the French National Assembly in August 1954. The armed forces of these six states – excluding the French “overseas” troops – would have been united within a European military force. The plan involved a

collective defence mechanism whereby, in the event of an attack on one of the Member States, the others would automatically come to its aid.\(^{34}\)

The EDC project was developed in reaction to the pressure exerted in 1949–1950 by the Americans and the British who wished to rearm West Germany and incorporate it in NATO to better resist a Soviet invasion should the USSR and its allies declare war, which seemed inevitable.\(^{35}\) At the time, though, France feared that the reconstitution of a German army would fuel "the traditional imperialist appetite" of its German neighbours. The ingenious plan developed by Frenchman Jean Monnet, then president of the High Authority of the ECSC, and formally proposed by René Pleven (then President of the French Council of Ministers), was to create a supranational European army composed of military units from the Member States, including West Germany, and governed by a supranational authority. The German units would be placed under international control and could be used in defence of western countries, without representing a threat to France.

\[
\text{A STEP BACK}
\]

\[\text{THE FAILURE OF THE EUROPEAN DEFENCE COMMUNITY (CED)}\]

The EDC plan was submitted to the French National Assembly in 1954 but collapsed after the Chamber of Deputies refused to discuss the matter, thus putting an end to the ratification process. Until then, the treaty establishing the EDC had been signed by the six founding Member States of the ECSC. It had even been ratified by Germany, as well as by the three Benelux countries. Ratification by the French National Assembly was rejected by only a few dozen votes (319 against and 264 for), a result which can be attributed to several factors:

- Gaullist sovereignists won a large majority in the 1951 parliamentary election and the communists, opposed to the EDC, won a few seats;

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The death of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in March 1953, which, by diminishing the fears of an international conflagration, weakened the arguments used by the EDC supporters according to which communism posed a real threat;

The then Prime Minister Pierre Mendes France was discredited after being accused in turn of having sold off the French Empire in Tunisia and Morocco, of angering French winegrowers and of not being patriotic enough (some implying that his lack of patriotism was due to his Jewish origins).

Contrary to a widely held view, the EDC was not intended by its founding fathers to be a competitor to NATO or to act as some third force between the United States and the USSR. Its advocates were all pro-American. The United States had clearly supported this project. Furthermore, they, as well as the British, had committed, on the basis of a protocol, to automatically provide military assistance to this community of defence should it come under attack.

According to Eurosceptics, although the war factor did play a role in the birth of the European project, it was not, as Europeanists claimed, to avoid it, but, on the contrary, to better prepare for it by integrating the West German military force. Thus, the realists hold that the EDC plan formulated in October 1950 – barely five months after the creation of the ECSC by the same founders – indicates that the main factor or motivation behind the European integration project was never the trauma caused the Second World War or a desire to avert the risks of war. They argue that when one creates an army with the aim of preparing for a war against a clearly identified enemy (in this case the Soviet Union), one cannot claim to be driven by idealistic and pacifist considerations.
A TEXT EMBLEMATIC OF EUROSCPTICISM
THE EUROSCPTIC BRUGES GROUP
THE MYTHOLOGY OF THE EU – COUNTERED:
THE EU HAS KEPT PEACE IN EUROPE

This myth has its variations. One that we shall hear more of in the next few months goes something like this: the EU has kept peace in Europe for almost sixty years, and if it did not exist, there would undoubtedly be war between the various protagonists.

Last week Europe celebrated or, at least, remembered the end of the Second World War in Europe, with VE-Day in the West and Victory Day on the 9th in Russia and some of the former Soviet republics. There is no point in calling Europe Day or Schuman Day or anything of that kind. It is Victory Day, and the tanks roll through Red Square as they have always done.

It is, however, an appropriate time to examine the particularly silly but insidious myth of “Europe” keeping the peace in Europe. There is an unresolvable paradox at the heart of the European project. Its aim is supposedly to preserve European values and ideals from... the Europeans, since the main reason for the formation of the European Union, according to numerous preambles to treaties, is the bad behaviour of the people of Europe in the past. Unfortunately, the values and ideals were also created by those badly-behaved Europeans in conditions that the European Union is now desperate to abolish, that is small and medium-sized, competing political entities.

Thus, you get the odd notion that “Europe” will keep the peace against the Europeans. The truth of it all is that by the time Monnet, Schuman and the others got going on the “European project” in all seriousness the political situation in the world had changed irrevocably. As early as the Schuman declaration of the need for European integration (written by Monnet) in 1950 it was too late. The problem for which Schuman was putting forward a solution no longer existed.

The ideas of European integration were first mooted between the wars but became particularly powerful after 1945 when Europe awoke to find itself devastated. Even so, the number of people who thought integration was the answer was very small; far more believed that economic reconstruction and the development of democracy would be the answer. That is why so much of the early part of the project had to be conducted in secrecy.

The early founding fathers’ aim was European integration because that is what they believed in. But the notion had to be sold and the idea of peace was a powerful one after 1945. There was another paradox, though, a less important one here, in that the idea of peace and need to control aggression was propounded by historically the most aggressive state in Europe: France. The French having been defeated in three successive wars by the Germans, were, therefore, the victims and could point to the Germans as the eternal aggressors who had to be controlled.

In fact, with the development of nuclear weapons and the growth of the two superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union, the question of possible Franco-German wars became a non-issue. The enemy of the West was further east, just as the enemy of the West now is in the South and the East. European integration became an unimportant side-issue. Not the EEC, not the EC, not even the EU could protect anyone from the Soviet Union without a great deal of American help; they could not fight communism world-wide, and they cannot fight terrorism now. The EU can ensure that Denmark does not invade the Netherlands and that’s about it.

It is not political structures that create political reality but the other way around. The reality was that the West, and within not too many years West Germany became part of the West, was not going to indulge in internecine warfare; the reality was that France and Germany neither could nor would fight each other again. The structure of European integration grew out of that and is now looking distinctly rickety.

It is easy to go through the facts and point to the truth about peace.

**Fact number one:** peace was kept only in a small part of Europe, which happened to be under NATO protection and the nuclear umbrella.

**Fact number two:** this part of Europe also had American troops stationed in it and was amply provided with American military hardware. Like it or not, and many in western Europe, notably France do not like it, but a great deal of American foreign policy in the fifty years after the World War II was taken up with the problem of protecting western Europe.
Fact number three: the countries that contributed most to the protection of western Europe and keeping the peace in it were not always those involved in the European project. Apart from the UK, the main contributions came from Turkey and Norway.

Fact number four: the main crises of the post-war period happened outside the whole European project even if they happened in Europe. Where were the peace-keeping qualities of “Europe” when the Berlin blockade was defied, when eastern Europe rose in revolt, when the Berlin wall went up? Discussing the Common Agricultural Policy, that’s where. There is no need even to mention problems outside Europe, like the Cuban crisis, the Vietnam war, the wars in Africa and Latin America.

Fact number five: the actual creation of a European Union in the Treaty of Maastricht coincided with the break-up of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. While the EU’s influence on events in the former USSR was strictly limited, in the former Yugoslavia it played a baneful part: by trying to construct a common foreign policy through encouraging Serbia under Milošević to keep the “country” together at whatever cost and by imposing an arms ban on all the other participants, the EU helped to prolong the war and increase the number of victims. Fierce hostilities and massacres were taking place on European soil once again as the European Union was entering what was perceived to be the final stage of integration and, as expected, it was NATO, led by the Americans that imposed some kind of a temporary solution.

Fact number six: The EU is now systematically undermining the one successful alliance that did keep the peace in western Europe: NATO, without putting very much by way of protection in its place. And all for what? To give itself a notional and structural foreign and security policy.

So, let us forget the EU’s outdated attitudes towards politics, war, and peace; it is unlikely to do us any good and unlikely to keep or create peace where it matters.

The relativism of constructivists

Scholars with a critical constructivist view express differently their scepticism about the impact of the Second World War on the construction of Europe as a vehicle for peace. Contrary to the aforementioned rationalistic analyses, they are not concerned about whether the causal
Rejection of War, a Key Factor in the Launch of the European Project?

relationship exists or not. They approach the question from a different angle and seek to show how the peace narrative was constructed. They highlight how Europeanists have overestimated the ability of the European construction project to shift Europe away from its tragic and war-ridden past towards a peaceful and prosperous future. They draw attention to how Europe moved from a state of war and suffering to one of peace thanks to the moral choices made by the founding fathers to prevent war from ever happening again. The overall “moral” agenda expressed through the narrative significantly connotes the meaning of the central event it describes. To function within the “never again” paradigm, European integration, as an event, must have a moral connotation itself. Constructivists are consequently suspected of tending to separate the economic and instrumental dimension of European integration from its essence, which is supposed to be based on moral values.

Constructivists, therefore, argue that the embellished narrative presenting the EU as a peace project must first be understood as one of the many narratives that were constructed to give sense to the European project (the stories that people tell to make sense of their reality).

But they consider that this peace narrative was relevant in the old Europe but is now outdated. First, it is a story that tells of the reconstruction of Europe after the Second World War. It is a narrative constructed by the old elites with whom many EU citizens no longer identify. The promoters of this peace narrative were a generation that is now retired or has passed away. In any case, this narrative was that of western Europe – especially the six founding Member States. With the end of the Cold War and the conflict in Yugoslavia, this narrative of peace has lost all credibility. Finally, some constructivists suspect that those who defend the European construction as a means of avoiding war seek to conceal the real motivations behind the European project, which are far more economic than moral.

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In this regard, these constructivists have reacted scornfully to the fact that the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the European Union, which they have interpreted as a somewhat pathetic attempt to re-legitimize an essentially neoliberal economic project facing a crisis. Let us recall that in 2012, Europe was in the midst of an economic crisis and the Nobel Committee itself partly justified the attribution of the Prize to the EU as a way to compensate for the harsh criticisms made to the EU for its inability to redress the economy and the dangers for the Eurozone, the end of which was announced by many as imminent.

**European Construction: the Product of an Extra-ordinary Context**

Between those various interpretations which, translated into political terms, turn into biases, an intermediate position exists. Indeed, without presenting the desire for peace as the sole motivation for launching the European project, it is possible to acknowledge the importance it held at the time, in a context which, in all respects, was unique. It is necessary to develop a cross-analysis of the relations between the moralist views of the world and pragmatic approaches, between interests and ideals. Moreover, it is important to consider the role of the new East-West division of the continent and the need to restore Germany’s place in the concert of European nations, both in the framework of the ECSC and in that of the aborted EDC project.

**The synthesis of two opposed conceptions**

First, it is important to take some distance when considering the somewhat embellished presentation proposed by some Europeanists. It is an exaggeration to claim that the integration project was only intended as a response to the trauma caused by the Second World War and to underestimate the importance of the historical context generated by the Cold War. The position according to which the European integration project was solely motivated by the rejection of war is sometimes likened


to borderline religious propaganda. The celebration, on May 9th, each year, of the Schuman Declaration has taken the form of a commemorative ritual. So much so that the Catholic Church had even considered beatifying Robert Schuman. Indeed, some in the Catholic Church saw this practicing Catholic as the primary contributor to putting an end to the bloody wars that had ravaged Europe and “the construction of European unity as the most important contribution to peace in modern times.”

Thus, it is important to distance oneself from such claims. The post-war European leaders were neither utopians nor pacifists. There were certainly many idealists in intellectual circles and non-governmental organisations who promoted the idea of a United Europe at the time. In general, these personalities were more active than politicians in advocating the idea of a federal Europe, founded on a Constitution and with a strong cultural dimension. But they had a limited impact on the political action of the founding fathers of the European Community (Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi, Joseph Bech and Paul-Henri Spaak).

For their part, Eurosceptics are also guilty of exaggeration why they reduce the European construction to a mere avatar of the Cold War while denying the impact of the Second World War. Admittedly, the founding texts of the European project make little reference to the notion of war and, more specifically, to the Second World War, but European leaders were nevertheless strongly influenced by the trauma they had experienced during WWII. The ECSC was launched only five years after the end of the war, and all Europeans still felt the scars left by the conflict. The war was still so present in the collective consciousness that the heads of government of the time did not consider it necessary to remind anyone, explicitly and systematically, of the trauma.

The argument according to which the European construction was far more an economic project than a political one is not convincing either. If this project had no other ambition than to revive devastated economies and satisfy French interests, why then did it take the form it did? The

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41 Chiara Bottici, op. cit., p. 48.
founding fathers could have settled for a classic intergovernmental structure like that of the OEEC. In fact, several states, such as Switzerland and the Nordic countries advocated a regional integration system, which would have been based on the development and extension of the OEEC, which would have been easier to achieve since this organisation already existed and benefited from American aid.

As for realists’ claim that the Cold War was the historic event that crystallised the European integration process, it is equally reductive. This is not to say that the Soviet threat did not play a part and did not haunt people’s minds at the time, but it would be incorrect to overestimate its importance to such an extent as to make it an explanatory monism. If the threat of war with the Soviet Union and its allies had been the determining factor, the Europeans would have responded by constructing a common defence force; something they were unable to achieve. Furthermore, the six founding countries were already members of NATO or were about to join it. They, therefore, did not need to create a second, purely European, military alliance.

The fear of war and desire for peace were certainly decisive factors. But one must refrain from considering them as deterministic factors. In other words, the impact of the Second World War did indeed play a role, but the conflict did not have the automatic effect of prompting European leaders to launch the European Integration project.

**A western Europe at the intersection of two “tsunamis”**

It was precisely because western Europe was at the crossroads of two “tsunamis” of unparalleled importance in our history that the process of European integration could be launched. World War II was the greatest disaster in recent times: it would be a mistake to underestimate its impact on the traumatised generations of the 1950s. But it is also important to understand that what came to be called the “Cold War” was perceived at the time as the risk of a new – this time nuclear – world conflagration, in which two irreconcilable ideologies would confront each other, and which could have marked the beginning of the end of humanity. In such a climate the key issue of the future of the Federal Republic of Germany remained to be addressed. Indeed, the Second World War and other prior conflicts were still very much in people’s minds and caused the other European states to be wary of a re-armed Germany regaining control
Rejection of War, a Key Factor in the Launch of the European Project?

of its strategic industries (coal and steel), and which could be tempted to pursue expansionist plans again. It must be stressed here that many Germans, including politicians, intellectuals, or churchmen, shared the fear that their country’s imperialist demons could resurface. It was this fear that led France to refuse to withdraw from the Ruhr and to end its control of part of Germany’s strategic industries. This also prompted Paris to veto the creation, only five years after the end of the war, of a German army and to oppose its integration into NATO.

The other component in the equation was the pressure from Anglo Saxon powers to rehabilitate the new-born German Federal Republic (founded in 1949) to ensure that its army could be relied upon in the event of war against the Soviets. This rehabilitation required that the Germans turn the page from their past and overcome their sense of humiliation, and therefore that the victors of the war do not repeat the mistakes made in 1919 with the Treaty of Versailles. It was essential for the Germans to feel that they belonged to the western camp again, to regain control of their raw material resources, to no longer be subjected to sanctions and to build an army they could be proud of, bearing in mind that it would be on the front line should a world conflict erupt again.

Solving the dilemma: a strong or weak Germany

In other words, a “magic formula” was needed to find a way out of the weak Germany/strong Germany dilemma. As the Germanist scholar Alfred Grosser appropriately put it, a German army had to be created that would be “stronger than the Russian army but weaker than the French army.” Jean Monnet, then Commissioner-General of the French National Planning Board, eventually found the solution. The latter went against policy advocated by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs and most other French leaders at the time. Most of them persisted in their mistrust of Germany. The inventiveness of Jean Monnet lay in developing a “European solution” to the German dilemma. In other words, he proposed that the allied nations end their control over German

strategic raw material resources while in parallel creating a supranational European authority. Thus, the end of the Allied (and French) control over German coal and steel would be compensated by a new type of control which would be neither strictly German nor strictly French but supranational. This allowed the French to monitor the German coal and steel production while giving Germany the opportunity to regain its sovereignty and therefore its dignity.

The guiding principle was then to secure peace through mutual control, close relations, a permanent exchange of information and an improvement in mutual understanding between the different European populations.

This same logic guided the project — albeit aborted — for a European Defence Community; more so even than in the case of the ECSC, the objective was political and military:

On the one hand, the Anglo-Saxons and a number of Germans wanted to allow West Germany to have an army to ensure that it would be prepared for a potential conflict. Pressure increased in the summer of 1950 after North Korea’s attack on South Korea, which according to some served as a general rehearsal for a possible East German attack against West Germany. The Americans had to intervene massively with their allies to repel communist aggression. In this context, the Anglo-Saxons pushed for the prompt creation of a Bundeswehr.

On the other hand, the French, with the wars and especially WWII still fresh in their memory, were concerned that a new German army would be tempted to wage war against its neighbours to the West instead of those in the East. Hence Jean Monnet’s idea to accept the creation of German armed units, but not of a real army. This would enable the West to harness the German military potential in the event of a “Third World War”, while avoiding the risk associated with an overly independent German defence force that might eventually turn against France. Thus, the EDC project, as well as the ECSC provided a sort of “magic formula” that helped to solve the issue of a strong or weak Germany.

Another illustration of the importance of the “war” factor in the origins of the EU is found in the fact that other attempts at regional integration conducted in the rest of the world all fell short of the expectations formulated in the official rhetoric. Indeed, on all continents, at different times, leaders have tried to establish groups of countries similar to the EU,
most often referring, explicitly or implicitly, to this project. Among those attempts were the many integration projects in Latin America, Africa, South-East Asia, the Arab world, and the former Soviet Union. Yet, many of them have failed or have had mediocre outcomes, particularly due to the absence of an exceptional context like that prevailing in Europe in the early 1950s.\footnote{Fraser Cameron, \textit{The European Union as a Model for Regional Integration}, New York, Council on Foreign Relations, September 2010. https://www.cfr.org/report/european-union-model-regional-integration.}
3. The EU – A Guarantee for Peace in Europe?

We must now try to determine whether the claim that the EU has been and remains a factor for peace is valid or is part of the Europeanists’ proselytising discourse. In other words, does the EU possess characteristics that can help to prevent the risk of war in Europe – a notion that now acts as an explanatory (independent) variable? And is the rejection of war or quest for peace the explained variable (dependent)?

The validity of the claim that Europe has uninterruptedly been at peace since the end of the Second World War is questionable. The former Yugoslavia was the scene of deadly clashes in the 1990s. Conflicts have plagued and continue to plague the former Soviet Union’s territories (Ukraine, Chechnya, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Transnistria). Furthermore, some Member States (Northern Ireland, Spain) have gone through internal conflicts themselves.

The fact remains, however, that for nearly seven decades, there has been armed conflict neither between the countries of western Europe, nor with those of central and eastern Europe. This is all the more remarkable given the fact that the peoples of the old continent were constantly at war with one another for several centuries, that the first half of the twentieth century was an age ridden with particularly violent wars, and, finally that a “Third World War” was considered a serious possibility in the early 1950s, due to the confrontation between the western camp and the Communist bloc.

The Europeanists’ Arguments

According to the Europeanist approach, the situation prevailing in Europe is mainly due to the very existence of the EU. Europeanists consider that, owing to its characteristics, the EU has deterred countries from resorting to war and as such is, therefore, an antidote to the risk of confrontation between the Member States. As Robert Schuman clearly
expressed in his opening statement, on May 9th, 1950, "For peace to have a real chance, there must first be a Europe"1.

Konrad Adenauer, the German Chancellor, offered a similar line of argument: "It is my deepest belief that the United States of Europe can finally bring peace to this Continent which has been ravaged by war so often"2.

The joint control of coal and steel production: antidote to war

Europeanists consider the proposal made by then French Foreign Minister, Robert Schuman, to create a European Coal and Steel Community, as the first means by which a new war between France and Germany was averted.

In support of their interpretation, they refer to Schuman's statement, on August 9th, 1950, according to which "[its primary objective was to establish] a solidarity in production that would make it plain that any war between France and Germany would be not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible"3.

According to Robert Schuman: "The pooling of coal and steel production[...] will change the destinies of those regions which have long been devoted to the manufacture of munitions of war, of which they have been the most constant victims"4.

It should be noted that Robert Schuman also predicted – at a time when decolonisation was not yet on the agenda – that "this production will be offered to the world as a whole without distinction or exception, with the aim of contributing to raising living standards and to promoting peaceful achievements. With increased resources, Europe will be able to pursue the achievement of one of its essential tasks, namely, the development of the African continent"5.

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4 ibid.
5 ibid.
As Jean Monnet pointed out in his memoirs, "coal and steel were at once the key to economic power and the raw materials for forging weapons of war". Thus, a mechanism for the joint control of steel production (a Supranational High Authority) was a means of preventing Germany from once again producing equipment for military purposes. The same reasoning applied to coal. In the 1950s, the latter was essential to the production of weapons and the functioning of the railway industry, and was therefore of strategic importance, just as oil and gas are today.

Thus, the Schuman Plan was largely designed to counteract the fear associated with a possible German rearmament. Steel and coal had a strong symbolic dimension and was perceived by many as representing both "cannon merchants" and German military power.

The fact that two former enemies could decide to jointly manage those two resources encompassed an undeniable psychological value. The main political goal was to banish the spectre of war, while paving the way for European integration. Political motivations prevailed over mere economic considerations. By denationalising Germany's raw materials industry, the creation of the ECSC contributed to eliminating any temptation to rebuild any independent and therefore potentially dangerous military-industrial complex.

The European project as a factor of reconciliation between France and Germany

Europeanists consider that one of the most valuable merits of the ECSC, and later of the EEC / EU, is to have promoted Franco-German rapprochement and to have established close cooperation between both countries, which was, and still is, a key factor of geopolitical stability in Europe.

Thus, European integration first contributed to the sustainable reconciliation between the two states. It also encouraged them to work together on almost all non-military issues. The Franco-German axis played a decisive part in most important decisions of Europe in general, and of the European Union in particular.

In addition to the above-mentioned considerations (solving the dilemma of “strong or weak Germany,” controlling the coal and steel production), Europeanists use two other arguments to back their position.

*The Saar question*

After the Second World War, the Saar was included in the French occupation zone and became a French-administered military and economic protectorate with its own constitution and government. Its coal production was intended for use by France. To help the Saar to gain greater international recognition as an entity of its own, Paris endeavoured, and succeeded in making the territory an associate member of the Council of Europe.

Bonn, on the other hand, wanted to put an end to this special status and to reincorporate the Saar into the new Federal Republic of Germany.

The ambiguity around Saarland’s status was a source of permanent tensions and became an obstacle to Franco-German reconciliation. On July 23rd, 1952, Robert Schuman, then French Minister for Foreign Affairs, proposed to give the Saar the status of European territory and to make it the capital of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Saarland would remain an autonomous territory, placed under the responsibility of a Commissioner who would be neither French nor German nor from the Saar.

Eventually, in 1954, French and Germans agreed to grant the region a “European status” within the broader framework of the western European Union – the embryo of a future federated European state – which would mark the reconciliation between two countries.

However, in the referendum of October 1955, 67.7% of Saar’s voters rejected the European territory status proposed in the Paris Agreements. The Luxembourg Agreements, signed by France and the Federal Republic of Germany in 1956, eventually provided for the political incorporation of the Saarland to the FRG, a decision ratified on January 1st, 1957. These agreements contributed to ending the problematic dispute that had affected the relations between France and Germany since the end of the war.

The resolution of the Saar question and the ECSC are linked in two ways: First, the dispute around the Saar partly revolved around the

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control of the coal and steel production in that region. France wanted to control and even exploit these resources, while Germany wished to regain its sovereignty over the raw materials of the Saarland. However, according to Europeanists, the fact that a mutual monitoring mechanism was already in operation within the ECSC contributed to a routinisation of Franco-German relations.

Secondly, the overall improvement of the relations between the two countries, facilitated by the good functioning of the ECSC, helped to de-demonise the Germans in the eyes of the French and vice versa. This created a climate of trust that helped to find a solution acceptable to both parties.

The question of the Saar is emblematic of how thorny the Franco-German dispute was. The Europeans interpreted its peaceful and lasting resolution as the symbol of Franco-German reconciliation. They further underline how the virtuous dynamic of cooperation engendered by the ECSC contributed to dispelling the spectre of a possible war over the Saarland.

**Normalisation of Germany’s situation in the international arena**

Europeanists consider that one of the most significant merits of the EU is to have contributed to normalising Germany’s situation on the world stage and to restoring its place in the international community by placing it on an equal footing with France and the other victors of the Second World War. Without the EU’s existence, the FRG would have continued to be seen as a sort of “pariah state”, which in the long run could have resulted in resentments similar to those which Hitler had exploited so successfully by denouncing the humiliations inflicted on the German people by the Versailles Treaty (1919) to fuel his quest for power. According to Pascal Fontaine, the European Community was first a peace-making venture, in that it successfully brought together the victors and the vanquished of the last intra-European war within an institutional framework founded on the principle of equality: “The aim, in the aftermath of the Second World War, was to secure peace between

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Europe's victorious and vanquished nations and bring them together as equals, cooperating within shared institutions."\(^{10}\)

In May 1950, when the Schuman Plan was launched, the FRG was not a member of the main international organisations of the time: UN, Council of Europe, or NATO. And throughout the world, particularly in Europe and France, resentment towards Germany was still high and was further fuelled by Communist propaganda, which presented the FRG as a "Fourth Reich" harbouring nostalgia for the Nazi era.

By proposing that Germany become a founding member – on par with the others – of a new, partly supranational organisation (the ECSC), France created the conditions for a rehabilitation of the FRG on the international scene.

Historian Marie-Thérèse Bitsch refers to a confidential text on the subject. It unambiguously defines the purpose of the ECSC\(^{11}\): "The objective of the proposal presented on May 9\(^{th}\), is above all political. By organising Europe on a better basis, it aims to make an essential contribution to the maintenance of peace. The necessary coming together of the European nations requires the elimination of the age-old rivalry between France and Germany. By developing common interests between the western powers of Europe and Germany, we truly work towards integrating the latter into the community of free peoples and in so doing reduce the risks of war."

The proposal made by Robert Schuman in May 1950 had, indeed, been interpreted by the German leaders as a first step towards the return of their country in the concert of nations and its better integration in the western world (Westbindung or Westintegration)\(^{12}\).

A few months later, in October 1950, the EDC project was launched with the same intention: to enable Germany to acquire substantial military capabilities and to become a normal state once again, with the capacity to defend itself should it come under external attack.


The creations of the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) and of the EEC in 1957 were guided by similar objectives. EURATOM gave Germany the possibility to acquire civilian nuclear power capabilities while assuaging the fear that it might use them for military purposes. As for the EEC, it had beneficial effects on the country's economic normalisation. Until then, the German industry has been struggling to find export markets for its production capacities. It had lost those it had historically operated in eastern Europe following the establishment of communist regimes. The rest of the world did not, at the time, have the capacity to absorb Germany's surplus production and western European markets remained inaccessible to the FRG because of protectionist policies and anti-German sentiment. The establishment of the Common Market (1957), and with it the elimination of customs barriers and quotas, were going to provide Germany with new market opportunities to realise its export potential.

Four decades later, the Community framework provided Germany with the opportunity to rebuild its ties with central and eastern Europe countries, its historical trading partners, and to (re)gain its position as an important economic and commercial partner without however arousing concern among its European partners, especially France. It was also thanks to European integration that the German military was able, through its participation in EU-led peace-keeping missions, to engage again in foreign operations.

**The pivotal role of the Maastricht Treaty and the single currency**

In the Europeanist discourse, the Maastricht Treaty (signed on February 7\textsuperscript{th}, 1992), which created the European Union and thus the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), is seen as having significantly contributed to peace by helping Germany to win back its position on the international stage.

Two years earlier, the end of the Cold War had created a new geo-strategic landscape. German reunification (October 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 1990), which had led to the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from East Germany, produced a new situation which would also alter the power balance between France and Germany.

During the Cold War period, the FRG was prohibited from possessing unconventional weapons, and from conducting or taking part in any
military operations outside its borders, and, therefore, could not exercise its full sovereignty. Furthermore, it was forced to accept the presence of foreign troops in West Berlin, which was landlocked in East German territory. It was one of the countries that would be the most exposed to enemy fire in the event of a war with communist countries and, was both militarily and diplomatically in a position of inferiority compared with France, which, for its part, possessed nuclear weapons and was a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

Since the East-West conflict ended, the relationship between Paris and Berlin has changed substantially, and Germany has regained a central position in Europe. French President François Mitterrand expressed concern, for a time, that Germany might take back a position of excessive power. Paris did not, however, attempt – unlike other western and even central European states (Poland, Czechoslovakia) – to counterbalance German influence, as it had done in the past with the Triple Entente (before the First World War) or the so-called Pact of Locarno (in the inter-war period).

Europeanists consider that the EU and the single currency played, in this context, a decisive role, and led to a "Europeanisation of Germany rather than a Germanisation of Europe". By agreeing in 1999 to abandon the Deutsche Mark and to support the creation of a single currency, Germany, in their view, renounced part of its monetary power in return for the reunification of its territory and the withdrawal of the Soviets. This monetary integration also completed the return of Germany to the international community without, however, generating new tensions with its neighbours, particularly the French. The German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, explained on several occasions how he had to fight to get large sections of the Germany population, including in his own party – the Christian Democrats – to agree to the establishment of the EMU. The leaders of the Bundesbank, Kohl’s partners in the Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU), many employers’ organisations and a large part of the SPD (Social Democrats) were highly sceptical about the creation of a

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15 Helmut Kohl, Erinnerungen, München, Droemer, 2005, p. 36.
new supranational currency governed by a European Central Bank, which would be independent of the German Government and the Bundesbank.

**The benefits of political integration**

An essential characteristic of the EU is, according to Europeanists, to have established an unprecedented level of political integration. No other regional integration organisation has achieved such a high degree of interdependence, supra-nationality – particularly on the legislative front, consultation between state leaders, exchanges between experts and free trade; all of which are considered key contributors to the maintenance of peace on the continent. This level of integration is based on a vision of the world which balances Kantian liberalism, functionalism, and free trade principles.

**The contribution of Kantian liberalism**

Cosmopolitan liberalism has its primary origins in the works of philosopher Immanuel Kant, and more specifically in his essay entitled *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), which has influenced many thinkers. First, Emmanuel Kant had the conviction that international peace was possible; a postulate that has been and remains contested by many realists. Kant also firmly believed that the conditions for achieving peace were attainable.

There are three prerequisites to facilitating the advent of peace at a global level: the first is to promote international trade (see below).

The second is to establish a republican constitution in all states. Indeed, a republican governance system is the only one that allows for the separation between legislative and executive powers. If the people participate in decision-making, they cannot possibly want to wage war, as they would suffer the consequences thereof. In a despotic regime, in which executive and legislative powers are intertwined, war only depends on the goodwill of the ruler, who can ignore the will of his people. Admittedly, not all EU Member States are, strictly speaking, republics; some are constitutional monarchies in which the separation of powers is also secured.

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The third condition is to build a legal system for governing relations between states, without which war will continue to occur. The establishment of international law is regarded as the primary factor of pacification\textsuperscript{17}. The absence of a recognised supranational legal system enforced by a legitimate authority (i.e. one that should possess the monopoly on violence) is considered as one of the main factors of war at the international level.

By creating a supranational legal system – one which, moreover, is respected – the EU has contributed to peace in the international community. Ernst-Otto Czempiel highlights the example of the European Union which, in his view, has moved beyond a mere association of states and has become closer to resembling a Federation of states in which a European peace, like that described by Kant, seems to have been achieved\textsuperscript{18}.

The jurist Stéphane Bloetzer makes abundant references, in his works, to Kantian philosophy to show that the European Union has been a factor of peace: “There is no denying that the greatest achievement of European integration is the peace that has prevailed for fifty years in western Europe thanks to an association or an alliance of republican states – in the sense understood by Kant – which has put a definitive end to centuries of warfare.

The EU is an example that proves the relevance of the normative postulates formulated by the great Baltic philosopher.

The positive effect that the EU has had on peace through legal and economic integration is such that the Union has become a powerful pole of attraction; it is a growing alliance of countries, due to be extended to include ten new members.

Finally, this association […] has ended the imbroglio that characterised the old continent and has promoted peace in Europe and the world\textsuperscript{19}.


Functionalism

Functionalism is a school of thought represented by thinkers such as David Mitrany, and which advocates the establishment of a peaceful international order through functional relationships that transcend the nation-state. According to David Mitrany, instead of hoping to secure peace through an unlikely political agreement between all the states, the latter should focus on what unites them and then use these ties to develop interdependencies. Bilateral arrangements aimed at ensuring security — whether they be military alliances or pacts — are considered insufficient as they do not stand the test of time. To achieve the peace that people aspire to, Mitrany advocates developing and implementing cooperative mechanisms based on the creation of international public institutions.

Thus, the functionalist method presents three advantages:

First, it reduces the power of the nation states, limits their sovereignty, and discourages belligerent impulses by promoting the development of common interests.

Secondly, it facilitates the formation of closer international relationships by avoiding political divisions. By focusing on the identification and fulfilment of common economic and social needs, it relegates the question of individual political motivations to the side-line.

Finally, it sets in motion a transformation of the international system by focusing on the role of experience and learning. The development of successful international public institutions does not merely help to reinforce interdependencies, but it also paves the way for the emergence of a sense of international responsibility.

The technocracy

In the functionalist approach, technocracy — a system of governance in which experts play a central part in decision-making — is seen as having a positive role. Instead of politicians, it is intellectuals and technologists who are placed at the forefront of the governing process because they are

For more information, read Stéphane Bloetzer, Éléments d'une théorie de légitimité pour l'Union européenne: Le cosmopolitisme d'Immanuel Kant — Idéal de justice politique pour l'ordre constitutionnel de l'UE?, Geneva, Faculty of Law, 2009.

thought to use more or less the same language whatever their origins and are, therefore, supposed to understand one another better. Technocrats are known to be highly qualified experts, selected according to meritocratic criteria, and driven by long-term visions rather than by short-term political calculations; in this regard, technocrats are also supposed to be less dependent than political leaders on lobbies and other interest groups.

Since the 1990s, Europeanists have tended to use the phrase “epistemic community” to highlight the positive effects of European technocracy on peace\(^2\). Let us recall that an epistemic community refers to a group of people of different origins, cultures, and languages, who nevertheless have the same thought patterns, a similar way of approaching problems and identifying common perspectives\(^2\).

Has this confidence in technocracy also played a part in promoting peace in Europe? A figure such as Jean Monnet undoubtedly shared the functionalists’ favourable views on technocracy, although he made no explicit mention of it in his writings. He, himself, never held an elected office and was nominated at the head of the General Planning Commission, an institution (in operation between 1946 and 2006) responsible for defining France’s economic policies, via five-year plans. Thus, he could only subscribe to this conception, which attached more value to competence than to political representativeness.

Jean Monnet was suspicious of the teleological approach – too political for his taste – advocated by the federalists. Thus, the ECSC was indeed a sectoral initiative that contributed to developing concrete solidarity; a project also supported by David Mittrany. However, the father of functionalism considered that the European Economic Community (EEC) project was too general, too political, and too closed\(^2\). The “Monnet method” advocates identifying and developing common interests as the basis *par excellence* for all cooperation; integration must be conducted step by step, as progress is made in the field, and should aim


at gradually extending, through a spill-over effect, the process to other domains; a notion popularised by the neo-functionalists\textsuperscript{24}.

Let us recall that the Schuman Declaration, inspired by Jean Monnet, was nothing if not explicit about how European integration should proceed: "Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a \textit{de facto} solidarity"\textsuperscript{25}.

\textbf{An unrivalled level of integration}

The EU has a much higher level of integration and supranational governance than any other regional organisation in the world. No other grouping of states has gone as far as the EU in limiting the sovereignty of nation-states; this is well illustrated by the willingness of the latter to relinquish their right of veto and to consent to majority rule for decisions made by the European Council of Ministers. This majority rule applies in many areas, though not in matters of foreign policy, security, defence, taxation, and social policy. Member States have also agreed to give a number of supranational institutions such as the European Commission, the European Central Bank (for the members of the Eurozone) and a plethora of specialised agencies, the power to make legislative or normative proposals and to oversee the implementation of EU law by the Member States. The twenty-eight EU Member States have also approved the project to gradually elaborate an EU law that has primacy over national legislations in several areas, primacy guaranteed by the European Court of Justice, which has competence to invalidate national laws. The EU also has a unique kind of Parliament: its members are directly elected by European citizens and are, therefore, not appointed by national parliaments, and it has the power to veto the decisions adopted by the Council of Ministers in almost all areas, except in matters of foreign, security and defence policy.

In addition, the EU has at its disposal more financial (an annual budget of €140 billion) and human resources than any other international organisation: more than 60,000 public officials and civil servants (including those in the specialised agencies and the European Central

\textsuperscript{24} René Schwok, \textit{Théories de l'intégration européenne}, Paris, Montchrestien, 2005, pp. 53–70.

Bank) are employed in its institutions; institutions in which meetings between representatives of the Member States are held on a daily basis and which depending on the cases at hand, include representatives of interest groups (approximately 30,000 people).

**A vector of peace**

This high level of integration has, according to Europeanists, largely helped to ensure peace in Europe for at least three reasons: Supranationality, as a form of governance beyond the nation-state, is a means of overcoming nationalism in its most radical forms and, therefore, lessens the risk of conflict.

Interdependence enhances political transparency among the members of the Union and implies that the interests of each stakeholder are considered. Regular meetings between community leaders create ties that can be useful in times of crisis, in that they contribute to a “routinisation” of dialogue, and in so doing help to avoid misunderstandings. Joint management of issues has led to the creation of institutions tasked with overseeing this co-operation, while interdependence promotes the development of mutual interests which all stakeholders are dedicated to pursuing. Technocracy itself contributes to peace. The experts in charge of managing European affairs are supposed to do so competently, with probity and the general interest in mind, perhaps more so than some politicians. They often form networks, build formal and informal relationships, which, in the event of a crisis, help to ensure a level of stability.

**The merits of free trade**

For some Europeanists, one of the most positive achievements of the EU is to have effectively countered protectionism by promoting free trade, which is not only a factor of economic growth but also a factor of peace. Free trade is an economic theory that advocates developing economic exchanges through the abolition of quotas, customs, and non-tariff barriers; it calls for the dismantlement of obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, and capital, as well as, in the case of the EU, of persons.

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The theory according to which peace and trade development are linked has a long tradition. Thus, in 1748, Montesquieu, philosopher of the Enlightenment, spoke of “sweet commerce”, considering that “the natural effect of trade is to bring peace.” Two centuries later, economist Adam Smith strove to demonstrate that a free market economy, based on the pursuit of individual interests, eventually led to the development of international trade (the theory of absolute advantages) and universal peace.

A STEP BACK

Concept note by Jean Monnet

(August 5th, 1943)

“There will be no peace in Europe if it remains possible for regimes to be set up in which the right of opposition is not respected and in which free elections are not held. Both conditions are essential to the reestablishment and maintenance of fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, assembly, and association, etc., which form the very basis for the development of western Civilisation.

There will be no peace in Europe if the states rebuild themselves on the basis of national sovereignty, with its implications of prestige politics and economic protection (...). If the countries of Europe, once more, protect themselves against each other, it will once more be necessary to build vast armies. Some countries, under the future peace treaty will be able to do so; to others, it will be forbidden. We experienced this method in 1919 and know its consequences. Alliances will be concluded between European countries; we know what they are worth. Social reforms will be prevented or delayed by the pressure of military expenditure. Europe will be reborn once again under the shadow of fear. The countries of Europe are not strong enough individually to be able to guarantee prosperity and social development for their peoples. The states of Europe must therefore form a federation or a European entity that would make them into a common economic unit.


The countries of Europe are too small to give their peoples the prosperity that is now attainable and therefore necessary. They need wider markets. It is also important that they do not devote a substantial share of their resources to maintaining supposedly key industries to meet the requirements of national defence, industries which are rendered obligatory by the form that states take, with their national sovereignty and protectionist reflexes, such as we saw before 1939.\footnote{During the Second World War, Jean Monnet, a member of the French National Liberation Committee in Algiers, raises the question of how to restore lasting peace and to rebuild the European economy after the war. Source: Jean Monnet Foundation for Europe, Lausanne: Archives Jean Monnet. Fonds AME. 33/1/4. \url{http://www.cvce.eu/obj/note_de_reflexion_de_jean_monnet_alger_5_aout_1943-fr-b61a8924-57bf-4890-9e4b-73bf4d882549.html}.}

An unprecedented level of trade liberalisation...

Europeanists firmly believe that the EU has fought protectionism more than any other regional integration initiative and stress that the EU has removed trade obstacles to an extent equalled by no other organisation. Although some regional organisations have succeeded in abolishing some customs duties for their Member States, as well as some non-tariff barriers, this has never included all goods, e.g. agricultural and fishery products.

Furthermore, most non-tariff barriers (other than customs duties) are still in place; those organisations have consequently not reached the level of harmonisation of standards, patents, certificates, tests, and regulations that the EU has achieved. The latter has also opened up public procurement markets to an extent unrivalled by other organisations. Indeed, the highly developed competition law of the EU has been an instrument to fight cartel-like agreements, oligopolies, and unfair financial support by states.

... which contributes to peace

For the Founding Fathers of the EU, there is no doubt as to the dialectical link between protectionism and war. Thus, Jean Monnet saw protectionism as a scourge that had to be combated by all means. He considered protectionism as a form of economic nationalism that fostered hatred towards others, and therefore as a primary factor of war and warned against reproducing the pre-1939 situation (see box, Note by Jean Monnet p.?). Robert Schuman – and even more so the Founding
Fathers, particularly German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Dutch Foreign Minister Johan Willem Beyen – shared this point of view\textsuperscript{30}.

On December 11\textsuperscript{th}, 1952, Beyen, Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs, had presented his five partners in the European Coal and Steel Community with a memorandum, known as the Beyen Plan, which proposed shifting from sectoral integration to “horizontal” integration, thus creating a common European market. The Beyen proposal was collectively presented by the Benelux countries at the Messina conference on June 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 1955. Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, then presided over the committee of governmental experts who drafted the treaties of Rome, keeping them in line with the Beyen plan.

How does trade liberalisation serve as a vehicle for peace? Three arguments are put forward: first, free trade, in fine, improves the welfare of all in that it leads to a drop in the prices of goods due to the intensification of competition. Openness to foreign markets also stimulates domestic growth through the creation of new opportunities, which attract investment; opportunities which do not exist when the markets are closed to foreign competitors. The resulting increase in consumers’ buying power largely offsets the losses incurred by some enterprises or sectors of activity.

Secondly, foreign trade facilitates the diffusion of technologies, and in so doing leads to higher productivity gains thanks to a better division of labour and economies of scale.

Finally, openness to foreign trade forces companies to be more innovative to maintain a reasonable level of competitiveness, which requires an increase in R&D spending. As contemporary international trade consists primarily of intra-industry trade between industrialised countries, product differentiation appears to be a key driver of international trade and, therefore stimulates growth for the economy of the most innovative countries.

Europeanists thus see free trade as a vector of peace for the following reasons: first, the surplus generated by free trade helps to increase the incomes of all categories of the population and in so doing reduces

people’s receptivity to populist and warmongering ranting, most often directed at the outside world.

Secondly, free trade serves the general interest, contrary to public intervention which, in fact, only benefits private or corporate interests, which is a source of dangerous resentment.

Third, free trade helps to reduce inequalities. The distribution of earnings between trading partners is thought to automatically benefit the poorest populations as per “Mill’s paradox”\textsuperscript{31}. Compared to small and/or poor countries, rich countries gain less from the trade due to their high demand, which increases the price of the products they import. Less frustration among the populations of poorer countries implies that they are less likely to embark on vengeful warfare.

Finally, the free circulation of goods, services, capital, and people also promotes the free flow of ideas, cultures, and technology, which gives rise to new aspirations for more rights and freedoms among citizens of other countries.

**Peace Owes Nothing to European Integration**

The Eurosceptic approach calls into question the very notion that the existence of the EU – with its attributes, methods, and policies – has reduced the risk of war. According to this approach, other non-EU-related factors have contributed to preventing conflicts among European countries. Some Eurosceptics even argue that the EU can sometimes play a destabilising and potentially war fomenting role.

**The flawed arguments of the Europeanists**

*There was no real integration of coal and steel production*

The Eurosceptic approach considers that the ECSC had no impact whatsoever on the establishment of peace in Europe quite simply because it never really functioned as a common market in coal and steel\textsuperscript{32}. They


attribute its failure to three factors: firstly, the strategies advocated by the High Authority and later by the European Commission were unsuccessful. The Member States continued to pursue their own policies with respect to those two resources, particularly Germany, which decided how much to produce. In the 1950s, the European executive had little influence on the German government’s initiatives (including the creation of the Ruhrkohle AG holding company) to solve the mining crisis.

Secondly, the national governments did not take into account the recommendations given by the High Authority of the ECSC concerning steel production levels, and prices continued to be set according to market conditions. As years went by, steel became less important in arms production and was increasingly used for other productions which were not under ECSC control.

Third, it must be noted that in recent years – especially since 2011 and the Fukushima disaster – there has been some revival of Germany’s coal production despite criticism from environmentalists (harmful CO₂ emissions, global warming) and the ECSC exercises no control over production levels.

In addition to the fact that the ECSC had no real authority, the EU has never succeeded in developing a common energy policy covering all energy sectors (i.e. not only coal but also nuclear energy, oil, and gas – strategic raw materials which are nowadays much more used than coal).

Finally, France and Germany have maintained and even developed their arms industries, despite the existence of the ECSC. This is also the case for Member States such as the United Kingdom which, although they have benefited from the experience and expertise acquired by the ECSC since their accession, have not contributed to the creation of an integrated European arms industry.

_The European project played no part in the reconciliation between France and Germany_

Regarding the resolution of the Saar question, Eurosceptics do not believe that European integration had much impact. Robert Schuman had, indeed, suggested that the Saar be given the status of a European territory and become the capital of the ECSC, but this proposal never came to fruition as a result of Bonn’s refusal to place this autonomous territory under the authority of a European Commission. Robert Schuman was even criticised for reviving the conflict by causing the French and the Germans to draw public attention to their antagonism.
The fact that the Saar population rejected the plan in a referendum – although it was initially supported by both the French and German governments – and the subsequent integration of the territory into the FRG prove that there is no cause and effect relationship between Franco-German reconciliation and European integration. Eurosceptics even argue that, paradoxically, it was the failure of the project to Europeanise the Saar which paved the way for the Treaties of Rome, in that European construction could not proceed if it violated German identity through the construction of a so-called supranational entity the purpose of which was, in fact, to conceal the imperialist ambitions of France. Franco-German reconciliation is therefore primarily attributable to factors external to European integration: first, it is due to the role played by “great men” such as Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and General de Gaulle, as well as President François Mitterrand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

A second factor has been the realisation of bilateral projects: the 1963 Treaty of Élysée, military cooperation projects such as the Franco-German brigade, youth exchanges with the creation of the Franco-German Youth Office, the twinning of German and French towns and industrial cooperation programmes (Airbus, Ariane).

As for Germany’s return to the international community, the Eurosceptics’ view is that the FRG would have regained its normality as a nation-state sooner or later. The Soviet threat played a decisive role in this regard, making it imperative for the FRG to be firmly attached to the western camp. American leaders were obsessed with the communist threat and were determined to renew their relationship with Germany to achieve their goal and carry out their arms programme, even if this involved dealing with former Nazis!

The first and foremost factor was the integration of the German army – once rebuilt – into NATO. The creation of the Bundeswehr admittedly went hand in hand with the foundation of the western European Union (1954), which could have provided the impetus for greater military integration. But this organisation remained an almost empty shell until its dissolution in 2011 precisely because it did not have any real function.

Eurosceptics also contest that the EEC and EMU contributed to the normalisation of Germany, arguing that the development of economic exchanges between the FRG and its neighbours had begun long before the abolition of customs duties between the Member States had produced its effects in the mid-1960s, and that the "German economic miracle" had been underway for a few years.

As for the euro, Eurosceptics point out that plans to introduce it date back to the 1970s, when the dollar’s convertibility into gold was suspended. They draw attention to the fact that the Delors Commission, which drafted the plan for a single European currency, was already in place in June 1988, before anyone could imagine that the Cold War might end, and that Germany could be reunified. The process through which Germany decided to abandon its national currency and its dominance in the European monetary system started before the end of the East-West standoff.

The most Europhobic elements in the Eurosceptic movement even claim that German leaders cunningly presented the creation of the euro as a German sacrifice and that the "Germanisation of Europe" is, in fact, stronger than ever. According to Jean-Pierre Chevènement, among others, the "Maastricht mistake" had the opposite effect to what was intended. As evidence of this, they point to what they see as the dominant and negative influence of Germany in European monetary affairs in recent years. Some even hold Germany responsible for intensifying the recession triggered by the financial crash of 2008, accusing it of behaving like a pyromaniac fire-fighter, especially towards Greece on which it imposed – as a diktat – a series of drastic austerity measures at the risk of destabilising it.

*Political integration has not been a key factor in peace-building*

The Eurosceptic approach does not deny that European Law has developed remarkably but considers that it essentially governs economic activities and, to a lesser degree, social life. Thus, it argues that it has nothing to do with the international law system advocated by Kantian political liberalism to solve international conflicts. European law does not address matters of war or peace between Member States, nor does it deal with war – or peace – related questions outside the Union.

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Moreover, the EU does not have the monopoly of legitimate violence in the Weberian sense of the term: it does not have a police force or an army with the right or capacity to intervene in the territory of the Member States. This is evidenced by the fact that the Union was careful not to intervene in problems that developed within its territory and which could have led to military conflicts (Northern Ireland, Cyprus, the Basque Country, Catalonia). As for the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), it is only competent to intervene outside the Union – in accordance with the Treaties.

Technocracy under fire

Critics of the EU have always been quick to emphasise its bureaucratic and undemocratic nature and stress the arrogance and remoteness of the European Commission from its citizens. The list of criticisms against the bureaucratic nature of the EU is too long to enumerate here. The words of former French President Charles de Gaulle describing the European Commission as “some technocratic, stateless and irresponsible Areopagus”\(^{36}\) serves as a striking illustration of the type of criticism the EU has attracted.

First, critics often condemn the European Commission for regulating every single aspect of everyday life. Its laws are often seen as complex, illegible, and incomprehensible. Some speak of a ‘democratic deficit’ because European commissioners are not elected by citizens. In addition to this, the power to initiate legislation lies with the Commission. The management of European funds is often unnecessarily complex and cumbersome, if not absurd. And in some fields, bureaucracy at national and regional levels adds to the Union’s administrative burden.

Wary of functionalism, some Eurosceptic figures make a point of arguing that despite the increasing number of specialised regional and international organisations, the number of conflicts in the world has not gone down.

Some even stress that technocracy can sometimes be a factor of conflict. Commissioners are not elected by the people of Europe and, therefore, are not accountable to citizens and tend to make decisions with cold and theoretical rationality, detached from realities.

Moreover, this techno-structure is “surrounded” by lobbying firms with which it collaborates closely. This would tend to suggest that the European integration project is, just like the American system, in the hands not of politicians but of technocrats manipulated by private interest groups.

During the period following the 2008 crisis, many analysts accused the top officials of the troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund) of imposing overly severe austerity policies on Greece and other Mediterranean countries and in so doing, of having accentuated the economic crisis, aggravated poverty, thus creating a breeding ground for extremist political forces, especially in Greece but also in other countries, including France. Some have even predicted that the electoral successes of extreme right and radical left political parties would eventually give rise to serious tensions within and between the Member States. A plethora of doomsayers have sharply criticised the “technocratic utopianism” of the new Fiscal Stability Treaty and refer to it as a ticking time bomb: while it is admittedly a rational response to the current financial crisis, it is overly technocratic and could lead to extreme political and social upheaval.

The virtues of free trade contested

The question of free trade is the most controversial of all. The claim that it is a factor of peace is frequently disputed. Most critics of free trade incidentally come from two opposed camps: the ultra-liberals, on the one hand, and economists from the Marxist tradition on the other. The ultra-liberals – overall quite close to British conservatism – criticise the EU for being too interventionist, too prescriptive and for not sufficiently promoting free trade. According to them, this position aggravates the poor economic situation of Europe, results in an impoverishment of the population and therefore in discontent, which is a source of tension.

The EU is also charged with being too protectionist. While free trade between the Member States has developed, it has been limited geographically and, therefore, implies a degree of protectionism vis-à-vis third countries, even though no new barriers have been created against them.

The Union is thus accused of having an increasing number of bilateral free trade agreements, which goes against both the World Trade Organisation’s trade policy and the post-war multilateral system, which was intended to make free trade universal.

As far as far-left critics are concerned, they consider, on the contrary, that the EU is liberalising trade excessively and promotes the interests of big business, and in so doing reinforces social inequalities and generates frustrations, which in turn can lead to conflicts. Their theory is well known: commercial trade between capitalist economies is based on the exploitation of the proletariat and gives rise to imperialist policies, which lead straight to war. This international division of labour benefits the strongest at the expense of the weakest.

In this approach, innovation is not necessarily a positive factor. Thus, the ever-sought-after economies of scale contribute to standardising consumption patterns. The losers of free trade competition are likely to feel resentment and are consequently more prone to seeking international confrontation. Some critics point out that history provides many examples of conflicts waged in the name of free trade. Among them is the Opium war fought in the 1830–1840s between the British and the Chinese when Great Britain decided to open up the Chinese market, even though China was, at the time, economically self-sufficient.

The Marxist school of thought has always considered that armed conflicts between world powers resulted from economic warfare waged between nation states seeking to capture new foreign markets, seize the monopoly on natural or energy resources, or gain technological or financial power. Interdependence can lead to armed conflicts. According to the unfair trade theory, international trade is a factor of conflict. This was the rhetoric used by the leaders of the communist countries for 80 years, and the collapse of the Soviet Union did not end this controversial question.

**The EU: one among other factors of peace**

Two trends of thought – one idealistic and the other realistic – consider that peace in Europe results from various factors of a geopolitical and economic order.

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An idealistic approach

As mentioned above, the shock caused by the wars, particularly WWII traumatised the Europeans to such a degree that it caused them to develop a profound aversion to any conflict. This repulsion has given rise to a kind of "pro-peace" ideology and made European co-operation all the more acceptable. Even if European integration had not happened, peace would have reigned.

Some approaches also argue that this is the development of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the protection of minorities that have first and foremost, promoted peace in Europe.\[39\]

These political and social advances were made hand in hand with vigorous economic growth, the development of the welfare state and a movement towards societal liberation (sexuality, parental authoritarianism, a secularisation of society, the emancipation of women, tolerance towards sexual minorities). All these factors have formed a virtuous circle and played a far more decisive role than European integration in alleviating tensions and limiting the risk of instrumentalisation for war purposes.

We can refer here to the Kant-inspired theory of "democratic peace" (developed by scholars such as Dean Babst and Michael Doyle) according to which war in Europe has become inconceivable, not because of the unification of Europe, but because the latter is comprised of democratic nation-states which, while they might occasionally wage war, never do so among themselves.\[40\]

Thus, this reasoning is applied to Germany, in which democracy is believed to have helped break from war-mongering temptations, and where the Americans' intervention was far more decisive than that of the other European states. The idealistic approach also emphasises the importance of the Germans' attachment to their Constitution (in the sense meant by German philosopher Jürgen Habermas) and the peace-building effect of German federalism, which prevents the emergence of an overly powerful central government. Finally, this school of thought emphasises the importance of Germany's efforts to redeem and renew

\[39\] Elie Barnavi, "L'Europe, ce n'est pas la paix, c'est la conséquence de la paix", Le Monde, October 8th, 2013. This Israeli professor, also a former diplomat, is a scientific advisor to the Museum of Europe in Brussels.

itself, without which nothing would have been possible and to which personalities such as Konrad Adenauer, Helmut Schmidt, Helmut Kohl, and Angela Merkel significantly contributed.

A realist approach

Essentially defended by international relations theorists, particularly in the United States, the realist approach considers the communist threat as the main factor in preventing war in Europe\(^{41}\). The prospect of war between the East and the West possibly involving the devastating use of unconventional weapons (nuclear, chemical, or bacteriological) served as a decisive deterrent against war. This possibility of mutual destruction (Mutual Assured Destruction, MAD) was the most effective deterrent during the Cold War.

Realists also stress the key role of the joint “US+NATO” protection of the European continent. The large presence, following WWII, of American forces on European territory, particularly in West Germany, played a decisive part in defending western Europe and in dissuading the Soviet Union and its satellite communist nations from attacking its western neighbours. What safeguarded peace was the fact that the Americans did not repeat the mistake they had made after the First World War when they withdrew their boys from Europe, leaving a geopolitical vacuum which political extremists took advantage of (authoritarian and aggressive regimes in Germany, Italy, Japan, Poland, Hungary etc. overthrowing democratically elected governments). By legitimising American presence in Europe and formalising a military alliance with most European states, the creation of NATO has largely contributed to dispelling the spectre of war in this part of Europe.

All in all, the argument proposed by Eurosceptics is the reverse of that adopted by Europeanists: the former believe that it was not the construction of Europe that brought peace, but peace that brought the construction of Europe. It was under the shelter of peace that the European project could develop.

A Mid-Way Evaluation

Considered one by one, none of the arguments put forward by each “camp” seems unfounded. But they all need qualifying.

\(^{41}\) John Mearsheimer, 1990, \textit{op. cit.}
The ECSC and the French-German couple

It is an exaggeration to claim, as Europeanists do, that the ECSC was a crucial factor in bringing sustainable peace in Europe and made war materially impossible. One cannot but admit that efforts to coordinate European energy policy have been rather unsuccessful and that each Member State has continued to do virtually what it pleases regarding steel and arms production. The historical importance of the ECSC lies not in its primary objective (which was to monitor the production of two raw materials) but rather in the integration process that it set in motion.

Regarding the reconciliation between France and Germany, both approaches have tended to overstretched their arguments. On the one hand, the Paris-Berlin rapprochement cannot be solely attributed to the European integration process. But, on the other hand, claiming that European construction had no impact whatsoever on the reconciliation between the two countries is an exaggeration. The setting up of the ECSC, on a parity basis, undoubtedly created the necessary conditions for initiating an active process of bilateral cooperation, which helped to normalise Germany’s relationships with other nations without giving rise to anti-German sentiment among its neighbours.

The 1957 Treaty of Rome establishing the EEC was – as the Eurosceptic school of thought has suggested, and as the term implies – essentially motivated by economic considerations. But the fact remains that Chancellor Adenauer had to fight hard to convince members of his own party – including Ludwig Erhard, his powerful Minister of the Economy (from 1949 to 1963; he then became Chancellor until 1966) – to accept the establishment of the EEC for political reasons; indeed, he considered its creation as a means of strengthening his country’s strategic ties with France.

Germany and the euro

However, the debate is still open as to what motivated Chancellor Kohl to support the EMU and to “sacrifice” the Deutsche Mark. On the one hand, there is some credibility in the Eurosceptics’ argument that reflection on the need to stabilise exchange rates was already under way prior to 1989 and therefore before the fall of the Berlin Wall, and that the Delors Commission, which drafted a plan for monetary union, had already been appointed in 1988.
On the other hand, however, this Commission could have proposed an alternative to the replacement of national currencies with a single European one; it could, for example, have proposed the establishment of a common currency to be used alongside the existing national currencies. The forces opposed to the euro (then called the ECU) could very well have "torpedoed" the project, either at the time of the Maastricht Treaty and its ratification or during the years that followed, or even during the period of transition towards fixed exchange rates in 1999. At the time (as in 2015), the failure by most of the Eurozone's founding members to fulfil the Maastricht convergence criteria would have been a good enough pretext to reject the abolition of national currencies.

Thus, the rise among German people of a kind of "Euro-patriotism," their collective consciousness of the fact that an over-powerful Germany would jeopardise peace, and above all, Chancellor Kohl's resolute support, are all factors without which the monetary and ultimately political Europeanisation of Germany might not have taken place. The former German head of government explained his position time and again, by emphasising the dialectical relation between the single currency and peace.

**The EU or the art of dialogue and compromise**

Regarding political integration, there is some validity in the Eurosceptics' argument that there is no solid relation between the remarkable development of European law and Kant's cosmopolitan theory (of peace through law).

More convincing is the Europeanists' analysis according to which the unequalled level of integration achieved by the EU has without a doubt contributed to building countless relationships at all levels of institutions, and in so doing has enhanced proximity, improved human relations, promoted socialisation between high level officials of the various Member States, all of which help to avoid misunderstandings, to minimise tensions, and even to avoid conflicts.

Thus, more than any other organisation, the Union has developed an "art of compromise" and a culture of consultation which the President of the Council, Herman van Rompuy, and the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, highlighted in their acceptance.

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42 Thomas, Risse et al., "To Euro or Not to Euro?", op. cit., pp. 164–166.
speech during the European Union’s Nobel Peace Prize ceremony on December 10th, 2012.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AWARD

(...) Symbolic gestures alone cannot cement peace. This is where the European Union’s “secret weapon” comes into play: an unrivalled way of binding our interests so tightly that war becomes materially impossible.

Through constant negotiations, on ever more topics, between ever more countries. It is the golden rule of Jean Monnet: “Mieux vaut se disputer autour d’une table que sur un champ de bataille.” (“Better fight around a table than on a battle-field.”)

If I had to explain it to Alfred Nobel, I would say: not just a peace congress, a perpetual peace congress.

Admittedly, some aspects can be puzzling, and not only to outsiders. Ministers from landlocked countries passionately discussing fish-quota. Euro-parliamentarians from Scandinavia debating the price of olive oil. The union has perfected the art of compromise. No drama of victory or defeat, but ensuring all countries emerge victorious from talks. For this, boring politics is only a small price to pay...

It worked. Peace is now self-evident. War has become inconceivable. Yet ‘inconceivable’ does not mean ‘impossible.’ And that is why we are gathered here today. Europe must keep its promise of peace. I believe this is still our union’s ultimate purpose.

Technocracy, a disproportionately important role?

The issue of technocracy is a complex one. For anyone genuinely committed to democracy, allowing technocrats to have a disproportionate role in governance and to impose their will without considering the aspirations of citizens is clearly unacceptable. However, the daily reality of the European construction project does not entirely correspond to the

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functionalist conception described by David Mitrany and envisioned by Jean Monnet. European bureaucracy is finally less important than what they describe, and the Member States continue to keep the system locked.

It should be noted that the European Commission, which according to many people, embodies this so-called reign of technocracy, has no legislative power. It only has the power to propose legislation in some areas, excluding foreign policy, security, and defence. It never proposes new laws without the prior consent of the majority of the permanent government representatives (COREPER – Committee of the Permanent Representatives of the Governments of the Member States to the European Union).

Contrary to a relatively widespread myth, the Commission does not pass legislation. And once the laws have been adopted by the ministers of democratically elected national governments and by the elected Members of the European Parliament, the Commission is then only responsible for their implementation and does so in close cooperation with the administrations of the Member States.

Let us bear in mind that national governments often use Europe as a scapegoat, to shirk their responsibilities, taking advantage of the fact that citizens forget that all major policy decisions made by the EU have necessarily been approved by their governments.

Admittedly, the European Commission and the European Central Bank have broad latitude, particularly in monitoring compliance with competition law and the application of European legislation by the Member States. But is it not the case that other democratic states such as the United States also have a federal bank that operates independently from the government, as well as institutions supervising compliance with competition law, and which do not receive their instructions from the executive branch?

The technocratic structures of the EU do not enjoy as many autonomous powers as some people claim. They are bodies that pursue an aim of general European interest and promote the development of an epistemic community that contributes to the security of Europe.

While the vast distance between Europe and its citizens, resulting in particular from Europe’s current democratic deficit and the excessively intrusive or complex nature of certain European directives, may partly explain why some citizens experience the EU as a large technocracy, the
notion of Europe as a huge bureaucracy is more based on ready-made assumptions than on reality.

**The issue of free trade, an endless debate**

Even more complex than the issue of technocracy, that of free trade is a source of interminable disputes and particularly deep-seated disagreement. Two centuries of debate have not settled the question of whether exchanges contribute to developing peaceful relationships between countries or on the contrary, whether they pit nations against one another. Many empirical studies have analysed the relation between trade and peace, while mathematical and econometric models have yielded inconclusive, sometimes contradictory results.⁴⁴

An element of the answer is counterfactual. In other words, without free trade agreements, the opportunity cost of war (what is foregone) would increase drastically. Thus, to increase the resources available within a country, wars become comparatively less profitable than negotiation or free trade.

One could assume, as Eurosceptics do, that even if the EU had not existed, the establishment of peace in Europe would have been possible thanks to the growing awareness, among Europeans, of the evils of war, combined with the development of democracy, the rule of law, economic prosperity, social welfare, and societal transformation.

Similarly, the realist analysis posits that during the East-West conflict (1950–1989), the American military shield was the deciding factor in averting war, notwithstanding the fear of mutual destruction caused by the potential use of unconventional weapons. In this respect, the EU admittedly only played a marginal part. The fact remains, however, that the European institution has been instrumental in preventing conflict between the various Member States and in building long-term peace — that is to say, a peace entailing more than a mere ceasefire. Beyond the symbolic gestures, the “magic formula” used by the EU has produced its effects, bridging the interests of the Member States, through constant negotiations on an ever-growing number of topics and between an ever-increasing number of countries.

Finally, another critical factor has been the desire shared by the vast majority of Europeans to build a peaceful and united Europe, walking in the direction of history and in so doing setting itself a goal\(^45\).

**SWITZERLAND: SCEPTICAL ABOUT THE EU BEING A VEHICLE FOR PEACE**

In the Swiss political discourse, the question of the link between peace and European integration is seldom discussed. In the Federal Council’s communications, the EU’s contribution to stability in Europe has always been recognised, but only incidentally and by the way, and without any emphasis. The arguments used in the Swiss debate have always primarily revolved around economic, political migration – and identity-related considerations.

The Swiss conception of defence has remained deeply rooted in classical realism, which can only be Eurosceptic.

This form of realism results in a policy of territorial defence founded on a well-equipped and mostly self-reliant army of citizens. Moreover, although references to “democratic peace” are sometimes made in relation to the stabilisation of Africa or the Middle East, they are rarely found in relation to Europe.

More surprisingly, the EU’s often slow consensus-building and consultation mechanisms, which lead to convoluted compromises, are generally mocked and considered far less efficient than the Swiss decision-making system.

Finally, although the EU is sometimes pejoratively nicknamed “the Big Switzerland” – because of its lack of international engagement – this does not make it any more attractive to the Helvetians, who continue to consider it as much too interventionist.

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