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Laurent Warlouzet

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European Integration History: Beyond the Milward Vs. Federalism Debate

Laurent Warlouzet, Paris Sorbonne Université

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Bio

Laurent Warlouzet is professor of history at Sorbonne Université. He was a postdoctoral fellow at the European University Institute (EUI) and at the London School of Economics (LSE).

He has published two books framing European integration as a contest between neoliberal, social, environmental and power dynamics, one in English on the period ranging between 1973 and 1986 (*Governing Europe in a Globalizing World. Neoliberalism and its Alternatives since the Oil Crisis*, Routledge, 2018) and one in French spanning more than 60 years, from 1945 to 2021, including Brexit and the covid crisis (*Europe contre Europe. Entre liberté, solidarité et puissance*, Cnrs éditions, 2021).

He has also published a textbook: *Reinventing Europe. The History of the European Union, 1945 to the Present*, Bloomsbury, 2023, with Brigitte Leucht and Katja Seidel.

His books were reviewed in *Foreign Affairs*, *Le Monde*, *Le Grand Continent*, and *Mediapart*.

Abstract

The field of European integration history has been revamped. It has moved away from the old-fashioned traditional debate between the federalist narrative and Alan Milward's Rescue of the Nation book (1992), which has remained influential, nonetheless. Nowadays the field is blossoming thanks to recourse to even more diversified archival records and the studies of new types of actors -notably European institutions and transnational networks. It has renewed our perspective on more general debates, such as those on global history, neoliberalism, and the nature of European institutions in international relations.

Introduction

At more than 70 years old, the European Union (EU) is now an historical character. Its current features are shaped by ancient bargains, especially the 1957 Treaty of Rome, which still forms the basis of our current treaties. Neither Brexit nor the quarrel over monetary integration can be understood without a deep understanding of distant historical events.

The academic historical approach's main added value is the recourse to additional documents available only after a long period of time – usually archives released after 30 years. The use of written documents deemed as secret is a better source to understand the motivation of actors than official speeches, memoirs or interviews, in which the actors (in particular the politicians)

are often tempted to idealize their lives. Oral archives can be gathered through interviews, especially of actors neglected by the medias or their time.

At the same time, historians must overcome three main challenges. First, the archives have limitations. Written archives are difficult to access and to use, especially in the study of European integration history, since they require the mastering of several languages and cultures. Vital information, such as phone and corridor conversations, are missing. Oral archives are not more reliable as memoirs. Second, the use of archives is sometimes considered an end in and of itself by some historians, who simply summarize them without conceptualizing. Many historians still refrain from what they perceive as some superficial social science studies, which conceal a lack of innovative information behind neat literature reviews and pedantic jargon. Third, since they already know the end, historians might be vulnerable to teleology — i.e. a vision influenced by the end ('telos' in Greek) of the story. The risk lies in writing history as a preordained narrative, and disregarding the possible alternatives and the notion of contingency. If they are especially sympathetic to their topic, European integration historians may interpret history as a giant struggle between the positive EEC/EU, which heralds the bright future of a federalized Europe, and the backwards nation-states (Gilbert 2008).

Paradoxically, the criticism of European integration history as being too unsophisticated and too teleological, implicitly guided by a federalist narrative, was made first and foremost by the most renowned member of the field, the British LSE and EUI professor Alan Milward. In his famous *Rescue of the Nation-State* volume released in 1992, he inserted a provocative chapter intitled 'The Lives and Teaching of the European Saints,' in which he castigated the federalist scholars saw European interpretation as an idealistic endeavour towards the United States of Europe (Milward, 1992). He urged historians to engage in interdisciplinary debates and called historians to forge their own concepts and interpretative theories (Milward 1995).

This chapter argues that this traditional assessment of European integration history is still stimulating, but it has been overcome by increasing diversity and sophistication. Of course, some scholars still indulge in teleological narratives, but not more in this field than in others. A first part will show how both Milward and the federalist school are now surpassed by new references and teleologies. A second part will address the wide diversification of works in this blossoming field, while a third part will underline three major interdisciplinary debates.

1. MILWARD AND THE NEW TELEOLOGIES

The traditional vision of European integration history is dualistic, with the towering figure of Alan Milward – often the only historian quoted in non-historians' books – emerging from a ramshackle field of idealistic federalists. While not entirely false, this interpretation remains biased: Milward has certainly been the most influential scholar in the field, but the federalist narrative has been overcome by new teleologies.

The central position of Alan Milward

Milward has certainly been an inspiring figure, able simultaneously to master archival sources in many different languages, conceptualize his findings, and encapsulate his insights in a few concise catchphrases. His provocative streak also helped him to become famous.

Milward has had a major influence on the field, through his masterpiece *The Rescue of the Nation-State*, in which he interpreted the early years of integration as part of the national

strategies of reconstruction after the war. According to him, the whole process was driven by national materialistic interests, most of all economic ones, rather than by flimsy federalist ideas.

But Alan Milward's oeuvre also had limitations (Ramirez 2012). He largely ignored community institutions, and did not take into account non-materialistic motivations. Born in 1935, Milward spent much of his career studying the 1940s and 1950s due to the 30-year time gap between the production of archives and their release. When he delved into the 1960s, it was mainly to examine the EEC from the outside, through British eyes (Milward, 2002). Ironically, the most renowned historian of European integration had hardly ever studied the EEC/EU himself.

Paradoxically, Milward's limitations allowed the political scientist Andrew Moravcsik to massively influence the field of European integration history. His *Choice of Europe* was a comprehensive history of some of the critical junctures of EEC treaties promoting his liberal intergovernmental interpretation (Moravcsik 1998). While he did not resort to archives, he used a wide range of books, including many written in languages other than English.

Moravcsik was the first in a long list of political scientists who used long-term history to build their overall interpretation of EU integration, such as Stefano Bartolini (2005), Craig Parsons (2003), Berthold Rittberger (2005) and Chris Bickerton (2012), to name but a few. Conversely, some historians have eagerly taken on the challenge of interdisciplinarity put forward by Milward. In a nuanced and sophisticated article, Wolfram Kaiser has called for a more systematic, if selective, use of concepts by historians, not to ape other social sciences but rather to refine our understanding (Kaiser 2008). Others have actually put concepts borrowed from political science at the core of their studies (Warlouzet 2016 and 2018).

The only attempt by historians to counter Moravcsik with a large-scale volume driven by a single idea was ill-founded. The book released by John Gillingham in 2003 embarked in another teleology, this time of Margaret Thatcher saving European integration from its horrendous bureaucratic Franco-German roots (Gillingham 2003). Littered with errors, it is considered to be "about as reliable on European integration as is *Da Vinci* by Dan Brown on the historical development of the Catholic church" (Ludlow 2010, 53).

The new teleologies

Gillingham's book demonstrated how unfair the criticism of the domination of the federalist narrative is and even was. In 1992, Milward criticized only a handful of federalist historians, notably Walter Lipgens. Milward himself was part of the first grouping of EU historians, known in those days as the '*Groupe de Liaison*' (Liaison committee), which was made both of economic and of international relations historians, some of them with a federalist streak, but most of them clinging to a state-centred vision of history. In an influential article released in 2008, Mark Gilbert updated Milward's argument on teleology by criticizing the oldest historians from this field (Walter Lipgens, born in 1925; Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, born in 1917; and Pierre Gerbet, born in 1918), while exempting the new generation of historians, such as Piers Ludlow, of this same criticism (Gilbert 2008).

On the whole, while it is true that some historians are federalists (which is, indeed, their right), the teleological streak does not seem to be particularly worse than in other fields. After all, many environmentalist historians praise environmental activists, many business historians lionize entrepreneurs, and, more generally, biographers tend to examine their subject with a positive lens. Regarding transnational history, Kiran Klaus Patel observed: 'Trading the nation-state for international organizations and NGOs as subjects and narrative centres comes with obvious pitfalls and problems. It can easily obfuscate human agency in favour of institutional actors. Moreover, it might lead to new 'Whig' accounts, particularly if these organizations are

identified as positive historical forces' (Patel 2016). In the same way, the role of illiberal internationalism has recently been explored to counter-act the teleological narrative of an inherently progressive liberal internationalism (Hetherington and Sluga, 2020).

Another criticism aimed at European integration history is the weight of official history. Indeed, European institutions commissioned historians to write their own history. By their own design, the volumes resulting from those enterprise are necessarily descriptive. They do not hide the internal division of those institutions, nor their limitations, even if they do not put them at the core of their message. The third volume of the History of Commission, for example, treated more shameful events, such as the downfall of the Santer Commission and the accusations of corruption (Ludlow 2019). More generally, while the first volume of the *History of the Commission*, which deals with the formative period (1958–72) still contains eulogies of some of the first Commission Presidents (Gilbert 2014), this tendency is less visible in the other volumes (Patel 2019). Moreover, the historians taking part in this venture have not been transformed into servile neofunctionalists (see Saurugger's chapter). To take just one example, Alan Milward's pupil Lucia Coppolaro still keeps her state-centred perspective, despite having written the chapter on external trade in the third volume of the History of the Commission (Coppolaro 2018). All in all, those volumes are departure points rather than endpoints: they opened up new avenues of historical research, notably by providing oral archives, available to all, on the EU archives website and by pushing for the declassification of crucial archives for the entire scientific community, rather than promoting a specific interpretation of history. Official histories can contribute, in this way, to scientific knowledge without being the obvious place for historiographical quarrels. As a matter of fact, many international institutions, national ministries, companies, and political and social movements commission official histories; Milward himself became the official historian of the British cabinet for his volume on the relationship between Britain and Europe (Milward 2002).

Moreover, a new critical teleological narrative has emerged from these criticisms. For John Gillingham and other neoliberal pundits, EEC/EU institutions have been dominated by Franco-German technocratic actors guilty of excessive bureaucratisation, a classical strawman of Anglo-American conservatives (Gillingham, 2003). On the other side of the political spectrum, the eurocrisis fuelled the left-wing critical interpretation of European integration; in 2010, two renowned scholars, Bo Strath and Hagen Schulz-Forberg (2010), released their *Political History of European Integration* which was subtitled *The Hypocrisy of Democracy-Through-Market*, written in the context of the Great Recession. More generally, the multiple crises of European integration since the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty of 2005 have made criticizing the current EU the default mode among many historians, which does not mean that they are Europhobic.

2. A BLOSSOMING FIELD OF HISTORICAL STUDIES

Thanks to the opening of many archival deposits, and to the passing of time, research on European integration history have thriven (Gehler 2016; Gilbert 2014; Kaiser and Varsori 2010; Loth 2009; Patel 2019). It has been quite attractive since prominent scholars of the field, such as Kiran Klaus Patel, Bo Strath and Antoine Vauchez, have turned to it after completing a PhD in a different topic. An embryonic structuration has emerged around the *Journal of European Integration History* and two associations promoting the work of young researchers, 'Heirs' and 'Richie'. Some historians meet during conferences organized by the Group of EU-Historians (the rebranded name of the '*Groupe de Liaison*'), but those are relatively rare and limited in size. Hence, one of the main meeting points for historians remains the conferences of the

Council of Europeanists (CES), an organisation dominated by social scientists, which is logical considering the impact of researchers non-affiliated to Department of History on the field (Andrew Moravcsik, Antoine Vauchez, etc.). This reflects both the lack of unity and the diversity of this blossoming field.

A multi-angle approach

The most stimulating methodological paradigm is one of multi-archival and multi-tiered research. It associates the exploration of several types of archives that come from different governments and different European institutions. Piers Ludlow's exploration of the 1960s through British, German, French and Commission archives largely pioneered this approach and brought up a more nuanced understanding of this formative period (Ludlow 2005). He shattered the traditional narrative of the Empty Chair crisis (1965-66), pitting the arch-nationalist de Gaulle against a bunch of idealistic federalists. On the contrary, he underlined that France was ready to commit itself to supranational procedures when they suited its. De Gaulle wanted to reform the Treaty of Rome, but was forced to back down. On the other hand, the federalist rhetoric – often present in many government speeches – proved to be mere window-dressing. When Hallstein presented his plan to reform the EEC institutions in a slightly more federalist direction in March 1965, nobody supported him bar the Dutch, who were at the same time adamantly in favour of enlarging the European Community to include the most intergovernmental country of all, the United Kingdom. Thus, Ludlow's book demonstrated how vain the nationalist French discourse, and the federalist rhetoric of the Five was.

This multi-archival approach has also been used to revisit the main EEC/EU accomplishments. Studies on the common agricultural policy have relativised the traditional narrative, according to which Paris was behind this policy, by putting an emphasis on neglected actors such as the European Commission, the Dutch and the Germans (Knudsen 2009; Patel 2009; Seidel 2010). The latter were the main culprits for the high prices of products set in the 1960s. In the same vein, the same multi-tiered approach has been used to test Kaelble's hypothesis about the European public space (Frank et al., 2010), and has tended to confirm a slow Europeanization of the debates in several quality newspapers, at least in the past (Meyer 2010a). The studies on European monetary integration have shed light on the interplay between the Franco-German debate and transnational networks of experts and of central bankers (Drach 2019, James, Mourlon-Druol 2012). Lastly, the perennial debate over European identity have been enriched by contributions delving into the EEC/EU policies devised to foster a sense of identification, often calling into question the official institutional narrative (Calligaro 2013; Cohen 2007; Krumrey 2018; Reinfeldt 2014). The history of the historians of European integration has even been attempted (Pichler 2011), in particular by showing the tensions between European institutions and the academic historians (Le Boulay 2010).

Beyond the Commission, the scope was enlarged to other supranational institutions such as the European Parliament. Historians have demonstrated that it had played an important role in socializing actors, in fostering debate, in agenda-setting and even, to some extent, in the decision-making process long before the granting of codecision rights in 1992 (see the special issue of the *Journal of European Integration History* of 2011, 17(1) and 2021, 27(1)). Traditional approaches, such as studies of 'great men,' are still practised; but they, too, are influenced by this multi-tiered approach including the various national lens as well as European institutions (Haeussler 2019). They have also concerned supranational actors such as European commissioners and civil servants (Ludlow, Seidel 2010). At the other end of the spectrum, scholars have strived to include subnational actors such as local authorities, thus leading to an

historicization of the concept of ‘multi-level governance’ (Hiepel 2016; Reitel and Wassenberg 2020; Thiemeyer 2019).

The geographical lens has widened too. Studies on transatlantic networks remain stimulating, as they were renewed by the multi-archival and multi-tiered approach (Bitumi 2018; Leucht 2010). In addition, the Community itself attempted to become a geopolitical actor. It remained extremely weak in this regard, even though it played a useful coordinating role in specific circumstances, such as the Helsinki conference (Romano 2009). Broadly speaking, the focus remain largely centred on the big three – Britain, France and Germany – but new works have emerged, especially considering the fact that the 30-year gap in the opening of archives has allowed historians to examine the case of Ireland, and of the southern countries that joined after the transition to democracy, such as Greece in 1981 (Karamouzi 2014), Portugal (Cunha 2015) and Spain (Gonzalez Madrid et al. 2020) in 1986. The role of transnational socialist networks has been especially examined regarding the Southern enlargements, as the old left-wing parties, particularly the French *Parti Socialiste* and the German SPD, competed to influence their young counterparts that had emerged from the embers of the dictatorship (Salm 2016). In all of those cases, economic, political and geopolitical concerns played a role. Lastly, the history of the former Soviet bloc’s relationship with European integration has also been tackled recently, albeit in a piecemeal manner. Most notable is a wide-ranging and original book, mingling personal recollections and primary sources, that was released by Philip Ther on post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe and the region’s painful, but also often successful, Europeanisation (Ther 2016).

The transnational turn

The inclusion of transnational networks represented another step further in this multi-archival logic, with the inclusion of non-state actors such as political parties, trade-unions, multinational corporations, experts, etc. The logistical challenge becomes daunting since those actors’ archival records are usually much patchier than those of governments.

The German historian Wolfram Kaiser took on this challenge in his *Christian Democracy and the Origins of the EU*, an impressive history of Christian-Democrat networks spanning a century and seven countries. His book underlines how important the watershed of 1945 was: political Christian networks existed before this date, but they had remained embedded in a nation-centred framework that was superseded only after the trauma of WWI, and the pressing urgency of the Cold War. At the same time, the pre-WWII experiences accelerated the creation of efficient transnational networks after the war. In other words, Kaiser confirms the caesura of 1945–7, which was necessary to materialize the idea of European integration, which had been around since at least 1919, while at the time unearthing the deeper structural dynamics that linked the pre and the post-war period. As a matter of fact, actors such as the Frenchman Jean Monnet, who had played a major role in transatlantic networks since the World War I and then again in the early years of European integration, epitomizes the deep roots of European integration, which has been examined for many years now (Bossuat 1996; Bossuat and Wilkens 1999; Bussi re 2005; Fontaine 1994).

In parallel, this approach has been practised by many scholars on transnational networks of business activists (Badel et al. 2004). Recent works have focused on peak organisations (Tsakas), or on multinational corporations and trade unions, particularly in the automobile sectors (Ramirez 2019; Suzuki 2020). Company records demonstrate that they closely followed the rise of EEC competition policy and adapted to it even when they were outside the Community (Rollings and Warlouz t 2020).

In the same vein, the technological approach put into question the traditional chronology. Studies on the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine, established in 1815 by the Vienna Conference, considered that it was the first modern form of European cooperation. Wolfram Kaiser and Johan Schot's history of European technical cooperation aimed at uncovering what they call the 'hidden integration of Europe' (Kaiser and Schot 2014). Their study nevertheless confirmed the traditional vision of European integration: technical cooperation was especially strong in the interwar period among the 'core Europe' countries, notably France, Germany and the three small countries in-between, leaving Britain usually on the fringes. It shows how strong the roots of European integration at Six, between 1950 and 1973, were. More generally, a growing number of studies have bridged the WWII divide to uncover linkages (and breaks) between the League of Nations' experience and those of post-1945 international organisations, including European ones (Gram-Skjoldager, Ikonomidou, and Kahlert, 2020).

To some extent, this burgeoning has also entailed a major drawback: the lack of synthesis in proposing an overarching interpretation of EU integration, since the latest attempt by historians was so very disappointing (Gillingham, 2003). Instead, historians risking their work to wide-range synthesis have written nuanced accounts, emphasizing the diversity of European integration (within and beyond the EEC/EU) without overarching interpretative framework (Patel 2020).

3. THREE MAJOR INTERDISCIPLINARY DEBATES

Three interdisciplinary debates are drawing history away from its near-isolation of the Milward years: the first on the EEC/EU in the world, the second on its institutions, and the third on its economics.

Global History

To begin with, the global turn has forced scholars to decentre their viewpoint by incorporating non-Western perspectives into their narrative. Regarding European Integration, Kiran Klaus Patel has echoed Dipesh Chakrabarty's call to 'provincialize Europe' by refusing to take the centrality of the EEC and of the EU for granted, and instead 'by comparing them to alternative organisations' (Patel 2013). Several edited volumes have since implemented this call by gathering various case-studies on the interlinkage between various institutions of European and of international cooperation (Kaiser and Patel 2017; Mechi, Migani and Petrini 2014).

For example, the debate on the control of large companies in the 1970s–1980s has been examined from such a global and multi-layered perspective, encompassing the European negotiations into a larger debate straddling many international institutions such as the OECD, ILO and UN (Warloutzet 2018). The comparative lens allows to better understand the strategies of left-wing actors, which prioritized first international institutions, as arenas that were more familiar to them, before turning – too late – to the EEC once they understood that the binding nature of the Community law was more advantageous for them. In technological cooperation as well, International and European cooperation were often intermingled, with the latter being often carried out by non-EEC/EU institutions (Bouneau, Burigana and Varsori 2010).

Environmental policy has been another natural area to implement this approach since debates on those issues started in the early 1970s in many international institutions established in Europe (the UN, the OECD, NATO, see Howorth's chapter). Scholars have examined the interlinkage

between international, transnational and EEC actors and institutions in the complex negotiations over environmental protection, from bird protection to sustainable development (Bussi re et al. 2020, Fasanaro 2019, Meyer 2010b).

Similarly, the approach to European social policies was renewed by its insertion into a wider framework than the EEC/EU, notably the interaction with the International Labor Organisation (ILO) and with Cold War concerns in the migration issue (Calandri et al. 2017, Comte 2018, Mechi 2012, Paoli 2016). The interaction between the EEC/EU and globalisation is at the heart of historical studies on trade negotiations, either through the classical Western framework of the GATT (Coppolaro 2013) or, more recently, through the North-South lens. The difficult North-South negotiations of the 1970s, notably the 1973 ‘New International Economic Order’ and its European response, the 1975 Lom  Convention between the Community and 46 poorer ‘associated countries,’ led to several studies (Migani 2014), including some based on archival sources of the South, a rare feat even in global history (Garavini 2012, Rempe 2012). The incipient global governance was studied through the simultaneous emergence of both the European Council and of the G7 in 1975 (Mourlon-Druol and Romero, 2013) and through the EEC/ASEAN negotiations (Kuroda 2019).

To sum up, far from reducing the importance of the EEC/EU, the global perspective has enhanced its importance in international history by showing how Brussels has been able to forge many linkages with other international organisations, and also by demonstrating how versatile and sometimes effective the semi-federal institutional framework of the Community was.

Defining the European institutions

The second debate relates to the characterization of the EEC/EU institutions, often considered as hybrid and peculiar –“sui generis”– forms of international institutional. Periodically, the old debate between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism is pronounced dead, only to be revived again like a phoenix. The first group, those that interpret the EEC/EU as a form of rationalized intergovernmentalism, take their cue from Milward and Moravcsik. Many scholars have followed this line of thought with more nuanced interpretation, such as Peter Lindseth with his masterpiece on the evolution of EU and national laws (Lindseth 2010). On the other side of the debate, neofunctionalism has been revitalized by multiple collective studies on the ‘integration-through-law dynamic,’ focusing on the role of the Court of Justice and the networks of lawyers (Cohen and Vauchez 2005, Davies and Rasmussen 2012, Davies and Nicola 2017).

As usual, historians have shied away from any full-blown conversion to neofunctionalism, preferring instead to offer a complex and nuanced history of the interplay between national and supranational dynamics. This is visible in Billy Davies’ studies on West Germany and the Court, in Morten Rasmussen’s (himself a pupil of Milward) examination of the Commission’s Legal Service, and in Antoine Vauchez’s (a socio-historian working on primary sources) study on transnational networks supporting the emergence of EU law (Davies 2012, Rasmussen 2012, Vauchez 2015). Some of those historians have taken part in the current debate over the Polish and Hungarian challenges to the federal character of EU law.

Neoliberalism

The third debate deals with economics, and in particular whether the EEC/EU is inherently neoliberal. The discussion is lively as it is embedded in a wider debate about the return of the “capital” and of growing inequalities since the 1970s-1980s, triggered by Thomas Piketty’s book (Piketty 2014). Tellingly, the field has been energized by a debate directly linked to

ongoing EU transformation. In the early 2000s, the European Commission's DG Competition revamped its approach both from the institutional and from the substantive points of view, largely putting into question the ordoliberal-inspired vision that had prevailed ever since. This has triggered an interdisciplinary debate on the ordoliberal influence over the 1957 Rome Treaty and over its early interpretation in the 1960s, since the articles on competition policy have remained the same ever since (see the synthesis in Warlouzet 2016 and 2019).

More generally, and in the same vein, some left-wing scholars, the 1970s demonstrated that the choice of a social Europe was impossible, and that the path to neoliberalism was irresistible (Andry 2019). This debate resonates with Fritz Scharpf's argument about the institutional 'asymmetry' of EU institutions, which tends to favour 'negative' over 'positive' integration (Scharpf 2010; see Bulmer's chapter). To some extent, John Gillingham fits in the same approach, even though he clearly asserts that it is a desirable outcome for him, so successful were Thatcher's reforms in his eyes (Gillingham 2003).

Other scholars have, on the contrary, pointed out how versatile, flexible and multifaceted the EEC/EU has been. In a recent book focusing on the history of ideas, Quinn Slobodian has shown how ordoliberals were at first very critical of European integration before investing this arena quite late (Slobodian 2018). More generally, a recent historiographical review explains the historical contingency of the triumph of neo-liberalism linked to the crisis of social-democracy in its attempts to reform Welfare states among national lines, and their ambiguity in favour of the development of a social pillar and European industrial relations, particularly in those countries with an advanced model of Welfare State (Ramirez Pérez, 2020). In my own book, I have interpreted European integration as a contest between three types of economic policies: i.e. socially-oriented, neomercantilist and market-oriented, with the neoliberal version being a radical version of the last one (Warlouzet 2018 and 2022). While neoliberalism has clearly been on the rise since the 1980s, it has co-existed with socially-oriented policies (such as cohesion, gender and environmental policies). Neomercantilist policies have remained limited, but not absent, especially during the 1970s and early 1980s. The EEC/EU remains embedded in a larger evolution of economic and social policies visible at the national and international levels, where the combination between the three types of economic policies have evolved over time.

CONCLUSION

European integration history evolves toward normalization. It is not more teleological or inward-looking than other fields. The critical perspective has always been present in European integration history, including by its most famous representative, Alan Milward himself, and has grown stronger ever since.

As time passes by, the multiplication of archival openings has allowed historians to work on a wide range of topics. Overarching interpretations are still rare since historians are loath to engage in such a quest, preferring instead nuanced multi-causal explanations that emphasize the diversity of European integration and its deep historical roots, going far back beyond the Schuman Declaration of 1950.

Amid a blossoming field, three debates have emerged that clearly link European integration history to other fields: i.e. globalisation, institutions and economics. The first two debates are especially useful to understand the specificity of European integration compared to other forms of international cooperation (Faure, 2019; Saurugger & Terpan, 2016), while the third reinserts it into a broader evolution of economic models also visible at the national and international levels. Even if the EU were to disappear soon (see Martill's and Faure and Lequesne's chapters),

European integration history would continue to develop, just as the fall of the Roman Empire has not diminished the intensity of historical research about it. Therefore, the only certainty is that the historiography of European integration will flourish, hopefully in greater intellectual synergy and mutual respect with social scientists, as Alan Milward wished it would 30 years ago.

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