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Hist 133C

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Rome Treaties and their Effects on European Cooperation

Headnote: “Signing of the Rome Treaties of the Founding of the European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom (European Atomic Energy Commission).” *Bildarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz*. March 25, 1957.

https://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=2862

This is an image taken at the signing of the Rome Treaties, which occurred in 1957 by photographer Mario Torrasi. They were initially signed by the leaders of France, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The treaty itself worked to build upon the foundation of economic unity and a common market for certain goods among European countries that was initially established by the Treaty of Paris in 1951.¹

The Treaty of Paris created the European Coal and Steel Community with the same countries mentioned, where production of both steel and coal would be placed under the supervision of an independent council in the countries involved. The agreement aimed to strengthen the political relationship between these nations on economic bounds and ultimately prevent future wars, which the Treaty of Rome also worked towards as well.²

Following a major dependence on the use of coal for energy, there was a desire to expand the use of nuclear energy in Europe with the depletion of coal deposits. Coupled with this, there was a push towards a common European market, prompting the creation of a preparation committee for an international conference: the Spaak Committee. The committee concluded that new institutions would be formed with lesser authority than the ECSC, as countries were hesitant

¹ Wikipedia contributors. “Treaty of Rome.” Wikipedia, October 24, 2024.

² Wikipedia contributors. “European Union.” Wikipedia, November 17, 2024.

to give more power that transcended their own governmental jurisdiction. These new institutions ended up being the foundation for the Treaty of Rome, which included the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Commission.³ The EEC consisted of other institutions as well, which included the European Parliament, the European Court of Justice and the European Commission among others.⁴ The European Court of Justice is fundamental in enforcing the rules outlined, as they have the authority over national courts to enforce penalties for offenders.⁵

The treaty itself was a massive building block for the present-day European Union. It was a major step towards economic unification and free trade, as the EEC abolished many tariffs within the countries involved and increased external tariffs. Additionally, the Euratom worked to enhance the research of nuclear energy and create an initial market for the usage of it in an attempt to pivot away from the almost exclusive use of coal that characterized the period.⁶

In the immediate years following the signing, the treaties however were met with initial scrutiny from the countries that weren't part of the agreement. Britain was one skeptic for instance, but they decided to apply to join just four years later.⁷ There were discrepancies with specific words among the different translations, particularly as it related to the appointment of the presidents of the European Court of Justice and the overall authority to enforce cooperation by the newly created institutions.⁸ Along with this, the common market initially failed to achieve its goal of a convergence of the member economies. There was an uneven distribution in terms of the net output of the different nations. Furthermore, the institutions lacked international authority to implement their own monetary and fiscal policies to stabilize economic growth, as national policies reflected their respective interests rather than unity.⁹

³ Wikipedia contributors. "Treaty of Rome." Wikipedia, October 24, 2024.

⁴ N.T., "The significance of the Treaty of Rome," *The Economist*, March 24, 2017

⁵ Dundas, R. E., "Treaty of Rome Interpreted by Court of Justice." *The Glasgow Herald*. August 7, 1967.

⁶ Wikipedia contributors. "Treaty of Rome." Wikipedia, October 24, 2024.

⁷ Willey, David, "EU summit: My part in the Treaty of Rome Signing," *BBC*, March 25, 2017

⁸ Polach G., Jaroslav. "On the margin of the Rome Treaties." *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, vol. 7, no. 4, 1957, pp. 593-599.

⁹ Hodges, Michael. "The legacy of the Treaty of Rome: a Community of equals?" *The World Today*, vol. 35, no. 6, June 1979, pp. 232-240.

Annotated Bibliography in Chronological Order

Cortesi, Arnaldo. "6-Nation Ceremony in Rome to Set Up Common Market and Atom Energy Pool." *New York Times*. March 25, 1957.

<https://www.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimeswindex/newspapers/west-europeans-sign-pacts-today/docview/114067257/sem-2?accountid=14522>

This article discusses the impact that the Treaties of Rome will have on the countries involved. The author mentions how the two treaties will remove customs barriers and work towards the development of nuclear energy for peaceful means. Additionally, the greater purpose of them isn't for economic benefits as it appears on the surface, but rather to create a political alliance and foundation for an international governing body for the future. The international bodies created have a speculative effect of preventing further conflict by strengthening relations between West Germany and France that was nonexistent following World Wars I and II.

Polach G., Jaroslav. "On the margin of the Rome Treaties." *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, vol. 7, no. 4, 1957, pp. 593-599.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/837267>

This source brings to light the nuances in the language used in the treaties. The different translations of them offer different meanings entirely to some aspects, including the authority of the communities as well as the appointment of the presidents of the European Court of Justice as well. For example, the English translations of them give more power to the institutions by allowing them to order nations to take certain actions, while other translations lack this authority and can only request compliance instead. Similarly, the English translation states that the presidents of the Court are to be appointed by the judges of the court, while the Dutch, French and German translations require an election instead of an appointment.

Dundas, R. E., "Treaty of Rome Interpreted by Court of Justice." *The Glasgow Herald*. August 7, 1967.

https://books.google.com/books?id=ClxAAAAIIBAJ&pg=PA3&dq=%22Treaty+of+Rome%22&article_id=2912,894301&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjJzu7x2-yJAxUJIEQIHSLGCI0Q6AF6BAgQEAI#v=onepage&q=%22Treaty%20of%20Rome%22&f=false

Dundas dives into the European Court of Justice's role in enforcing the obligations required by the Treaty of Rome and how the court's officials are chosen. Penalties may be issued if they are not met. In terms of the makeup of the court, there are seven judges and two advocates-generals that are appointed by the member countries of the Treaty. The judges are then able to appoint their own president from among themselves.

Hodges, Michael. "The legacy of the Treaty of Rome: a Community of equals?" *The World Today*, vol. 35, no. 6, June 1979, pp. 232-240.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40395120>

This source reflects on the failures of the "common market" established in the Treaty of Rome in terms of creating economic equality among the member states. Countries such as Italy were contributing more than others such as Denmark in terms of their net output. Because of the lack of supranational authority for the institutions created, there was an absence of cooperation towards a convergence of their economies. National monetary policies revolved around their own respective interests and worked to undermine this unity, as there wasn't international policy to stabilize their economies.

N.T., "The significance of the Treaty of Rome," *The Economist*, March 24, 2017

<https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/03/24/the-significance-of-the-treaty-of-rome>

This article reflects the impact of the Treaties of Rome from a more contemporary standpoint. The author initially discussed the framework of the agreement and the institutions that were established, which laid the foundation for the EU itself. This international cooperation marked an understanding of the importance of foreign relations between countries in Europe. Some aspects of national sovereignty were forfeited due to the European Commission's authority to suggest European laws. But this was welcomed in order to create common international institutions to help preserve peace on the

continent. Countries such as Britain weren't particularly fond of the Treaty of Rome, as they were not included in the original agreement.

Willey, David, "EU summit: My part in the Treaty of Rome Signing," *BBC*, March 25, 2017

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39365281>

The author talks about his role in covering the signing of the treaty as a journalist for Reuters in wake of its 60th anniversary. He discusses the differing attitudes that countries had in response to the treaty. For instance, it was widely celebrated for the six nations involved, but others such as Britain mainly disregarded it. They were invited to participate and declined the offer. Despite this, they changed their position and created an application to join it only four years later.

Wikipedia contributors. "Treaty of Rome." Wikipedia, October 24, 2024.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Rome

The Wikipedia article gives a background to the Treaty of Rome and its goals to coordinate international cooperation among economic bounds as well as to foster research towards nuclear energy. It gives historical context about how it built upon the Treaty of Paris and the desire to create a common market for the countries involved.

Wikipedia contributors. "European Union." Wikipedia, November 17, 2024.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union

This source discusses the framework and scope of the European Union. Its governance, branches of power, international law, defense and budget are laid out. It draws on its history, as the need for international cooperation in the continent was crucial following the end of World War II. The Treaty of Paris, which was signed in 1951 and established the European Coal and Steel Community, was the initial step towards this goal and laid the foundation for following agreements such as the Treaty of Rome.