Newspaper Coverage in France and Germany Before, During and After the Hague Summit

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MAY 21ST 2015
1. Context in Germany and France
2. Newspapers as Scientific Sources
3. Overview of Sources
4. National Newspaper coverage before, during and after the summit
5. Local Newspaper coverage in the Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger
6. Anniversaries in German and French Newspapers
7. Conclusions
General Context

- Previous Failures
  - 1963: French veto against enlargement
  - 1965: Empty chair crisis
  - 1967: Failed enlargement

- Political Changes
  - Georges Pompidou assumed office as President of France on June 20, 1969
  - Willy Brandt assumed office as Chancellor of Germany on October 21, 1969

- Economic Challenges
  - Lower industrial output in France
  - Recessions in Europe throughout the 60’s
  - 1966 American Credit Crisis

CVCE, 2014 and Geary, 2012
Sources of information
- On the topic they report on
- On the positions that are discussed at the respective time

Active participation in political communication
- Influence public opinion and politics

Discourse analysis: anti-realist & constitutionalist

Constitution of a particular view of social reality through language

“Saying something is always an act of not saying something else“
### FRANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Le Monde</td>
<td>1944</td>
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### GERMANY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Der Spiegel</td>
<td>1947</td>
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<td>Die Zeit</td>
<td>1946</td>
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<td>Frankfurter Allgemeine</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
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<td>Süddeutsche Zeitung</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Left-Liberal</td>
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<td>Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger</td>
<td>1876</td>
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### Newspaper Coverage Before The Summit

#### Germany

**Pages with articles in which The Hague was a main topic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Der Spiegel</th>
<th>Die Zeit</th>
<th>Süddeutsche Zeitung</th>
<th>Frankfurter Allgemeine</th>
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<tr>
<td>24th November</td>
<td>Cover; pp. 124-140</td>
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<td>28th November</td>
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<td>p. 4</td>
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<td>29th/30th November</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>p. 4; p. 9; p. 25</td>
<td>p. 3</td>
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<td>p. 32</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>p. 1 (3x); p. 5; p. 9</td>
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<td>-</td>
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Newspaper Coverage Before The Summit
Germany

- Skepticism
- Der Spiegel, November 1969: „Decomposition of the EEC?“
- Die Zeit: „A deadly existential crisis“
- Frequent reference to idea of stagnation
Newspaper Coverage Before The Summit Germany

- Directly before the Summit, the daily newspapers report about participants being optimistic
- Importance of Summit widely recognized
Newspaper Coverage Before The Summit

France

- Recognition that European unification has stagnated
  - "A process which has lost its dynamism"
- Disagreements between countries and national parties
- Preparatory meetings, change of dates from mid-November to December 1 and 2 1969

AVANT LA RÉUNION DE LUXEMBOURG Bonn n'est pas favorable à la méthode du "paquet" pour régler les questions européennes
LE MONDE | 17.10.1969 à 00h00 • Mis à jour le 17.10.1969 à 00h00

L'EUROPE EN MAL DE RELANCE
LE MONDE | 27.11.1969 à 00h00 • Mis à jour le 27.11.1969 à 00h00

L'EUROPE À BOUT DE SOUFFLE ?
LE MONDE | 29.10.1969 à 00h00 • Mis à jour le 29.10.1969 à 00h00 • PIERRE DROUIN
Newspaper Coverage Before The Summit France

“Summit” is always in quotation marks

Possible translations
  - Summit as in ‘a gathering of leaders’
  - Summit as in the ‘top of mountain’

Sarcasm? Reservations? Uncertainty vis-à-vis a new concept?

La conférence européenne " au sommet " pourrait être retardée de quelques jours

À LUXEMBOURG LES " SIX " PRÉPARENT LA RÉUNION " AU SOMMET " DE LA HAYE
Newspaper Coverage During The Summit
Germany

- Front pages full of The Hague
- More reports than comments
- Positive perception of Brandt:
  - He “demands” (Süddeutsche), “presses” (FAZ)
- Negative image of Pompidou
  - He “indulged in general wishes” (FAZ)
Newspaper Coverage During The Summit
France

- Little coverage on days of Summit
  - Overview of attendees, distinction made between George Pompidou – a Head of State – and others who were Heads of Government
Newspaper Coverage After The Summit

Germany

- Wide-spread notion of success (though some caution)
- Metaphors of movement are common: The Summit “has moved a boulder out of the way” (Die Zeit)
- “Credibility” (SZ)
Newspaper Coverage After The Summit

Germany

- Key figure in success story: Willy Brandt
- Der Spiegel: Brandt “got the stuck EEC back on the road […] almost on his own”
- Perception of Pompidou is more mixed
Optimism after the summit

Hope for further European unification “re-born” after summit, but more work ahead

Schuman: “From a European perspective, as from a French perspective, this was a total success”

Less focus on Brandt and Pompidou
1 December 1969

One article, title page

- Optimistic, even though hard negotiations with France are expected
- Notions like „Fortentwicklung“ and „Weiterentwicklung“ (further development) of the EC

Weitgehende Europa-Vorschläge aus Paris

Heute Beginn der EWG-Gipfelkonferenz — Brandt drängt auf Beitrittsverhandlungen
2nd December
2 articles, title page & second page

- **2 opposing attitudes of Germany and France** already visible in the title (the two players Pompidou and Brandt are named explicitly)
- Frustration, **pessimism** after the speech of Pompidou
- The French fear of a strong Germany is mentioned
3rd December

3 articles, front page, third-fourth page and sixth page

- Different proposals
- „EEC wants to talk to England“: consent among EC members
- Brandt: „The outcome is the least far-reaching of a possible positive outcome“
- Pompidou satisfied, Britain starts to hope
- Disappointment regarding Pompidou's reluctance
4th December:

4 articles, front page, third page and sixth page

Summit is considered as success by German Bundestag

Brandt: "Europe has a new chance!"

Outcome of the Summit praised by all governments

"Changing perception" of the summit and its outcome in the course of the negotiations

Pompidou often criticised for his guarded attitude

After all, all parties consider The Hague Summit as success and chance for Europe
No mention of The Hague Summit

Issue 50/1974, 6th December:

Preparations of the Paris conference, brief mention of The Hague

2nd December 1970

Referred to The Hague Summit as the starting point of a chain of events by French foreign minister Maurice Schuman

The Hague Summit not considered as important event in the history of the EU?

Instead of reporting on the roots/origins of the EU, public awareness focuses on current situation and problems

Conclusions

- Doubts and pessimism were prevalent leading up to The Hague Summit
- Renewed optimism and hope following The Hague Summit; all parties saw the Summit as a success
  - Supports idea that the Summit was a ‘critical juncture’ in European integration
- Brandt viewed as a key player in German press
- No major disparities in perception by different media
- Little to no coverage on anniversaries of Summit
  - Future coverage focused rather on current issues and problems
Academic References


Thank You