

# **The United Economic States of Europe: A Comparative Analysis of European integration under Napoleon and the EU**

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## **Abstract**

With nationalism and Euroscepticism on the rise, mainly due to economic issues, there is a need for more research about the topic of European integration. But the European economies were not just politically brought together by the EU, Napoleon also attempted to conquer the entirety of the continent. Yet, there is only little knowledge about his contribution. Therefore, this thesis will answer the question: how did Napoleon contribute to the process of European economic integration, between 1804 and 1814, and how does his approach differ from the way the EU contributed to this process, as stated by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992? By studying the Berlin Decree, and the Continental System that followed, this thesis will examine the contribution of Napoleon to the process. Discussing the different zones within the First French Empire and their own specific way of being integrated, it can be concluded that Napoleon only integrated his regions based on the cultural and economic value to France. This conclusion can be made by studying regions like the Rhineland and Belgium. Furthermore, through an extensive research of the Treaty of Maastricht, this thesis will analyze the different ways that the original members of the European Union have contributed to European economic integration. By examining the different levels of contribution, it will highlight the different contributions and motivations of the different countries. Ranging from resisting integration to creating the framework of the Treaty of Maastricht, this thesis will study the contributions of countries such as Denmark, Italy and France.

Keywords: Economic integration, Napoleon, European Union

# Table of Content

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Table of Content</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Historiography</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Conceptual Framework</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Chapter 1: The Continental System</b> .....	<b>12</b>
The Berlin Decree.....	12
Intermediate Zones.....	14
Outer Empire.....	17
Inner Empire.....	21
Conclusion.....	25
<b>Chapter 2: The European Union</b> .....	<b>27</b>
The Treaty of Maastricht.....	27
Minimal Integration.....	28
Second-level Integration.....	33
Core of European Integration.....	36
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>42</b>

# Introduction

Euroscepticism has always been a significant element within the politics of the European member states. Highlight within this movement was Brexit in 2020. Supported by just 51.9% of the British voters in the referendum of 2016, it showed that Euroscepticism divided Great Britain by half. Then there is the rise of Nationalism and Populism in Europe. Countries such as Hungary, Austria and even the Netherlands, which has always been a very pro-European country, all have a very popular nationalist party. The aftermath of Brexit showed Europe that leaving the EU is not as impossible as once thought. On top of that, the economic crisis in 2008 showed that the European Union was not always successful in implementing measures in order to improve the economy. Especially countries in Southern Europe, such as Spain, Italy and Greece, were hit hard. High unemployment rate due to the collapse of the tourism sector, in combination with other economic problems, made sure that many people started to lose their faith in the ruling parties and the European institutions. Thus, they started to turn towards the nationalist political parties, resulting in a demand for less European integration. Slogans such as Hunexit in Hungary, Grexit in Greece and Nexit in the Netherlands all became popular for a limited amount of time.

However, the European Union is not the only time that there was one actor ruling over the European countries. The First French Empire, ruled by Napoleon Bonaparte, also once ruled over much of Europe. Although his reign over this region only lasted less than 16 years, his impact on Europe can still be seen today. For example, the current civil codes of Belgium, France and even Romania were all inspired by the Code Napoleon, the French civil code implemented by Napoleon in 1804. After the conquest of Germany in 1806, Napoleon even implemented this Code in almost every West German state. The reason behind this was simple. The French wanted to integrate the foreign regions within the First French Empire in order to create a powerful empire that would dominate the continent. However, as the European Union shows, integration is not something that can easily be done. On top of that, the motivations behind the integration could not have been more different, as the EU was founded to protect peace in Europe.

This is why this thesis will compare the integration of Europe under Napoleon and the EU. This thesis hopes to give more insight in the process of European integration through the centuries by answering this research question: how did Napoleon contribute to the process of European economic integration, between 1804 and 1814, and how does his approach differ from the way the EU contributed to this process, as stated by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992? In order to answer this research question, this thesis will consist of two chapters, each answering their own subquestion. The first chapter will answer the following: How did Napoleon contribute to the process of European economic integration between 1804 and 1814? The second chapter will focus on a more recent case of European economic integration by answering this subquestion: How did the European Union contribute to the process of European economic integration, as stated by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992? It is important to answer this research question because studying European integration from the past can help with tackling the problems that the EU is experiencing now. On top of that, this thesis will contribute to the academic field by comparing the two cases, which has not been done before.

# Historiography

## National historiography

European integration under Napoleon has never been a popular subject among historians.<sup>1</sup> There are far more academic works written on the French military during that time, or on Napoleon Bonaparte himself. But the studies that are about European integration are usually themed to the nationality of the academic.<sup>2</sup> For example, most Dutch historians only studied the Netherlands during the Napoleonic era. According to Robert Palmer, who wrote about French influences in the Netherlands from 1795 until the end of the Napoleonic War in 1954, Napoleon was not that interested in the integration of the Netherlands within the French empire.<sup>3</sup> He mentioned that the policy of the French was to exploit the Dutch maritime knowledge and their connections overseas. This was important to them, because Great Britain was their fierce rival. As Palmer noticed, the French did militarily occupy the Netherlands, but they rarely interfered in Dutch internal affairs.<sup>4</sup> Their only goal was to use the Dutch naval capacities against their most important enemy, Great Britain. By integrating the Dutch navy, the French hoped to finally create a maritime force that was strong enough to beat the Royal Navy. This lack of interference made the Dutch quite content with their French overlord, at least during the reign of king Louis Bonaparte.<sup>5</sup> Thus Palmer concluded that there was little French influence in Dutch affairs, only the maritime affairs were integrated within the French empire.

This narrative became widely accepted within Dutch historiography. Historians like Stephan Klein, who is an expert on French influences in the Netherlands during the Napoleonic era, wrote in 1995 that there was indeed little French influence on the Dutch state, but the Dutch population was already becoming slowly integrated with the French.<sup>6</sup> The Dutch patriots already started to hate the British before France occupied the Netherlands. On top of that, there was a growing discontent against the political system. Many patriots believed that the new American and French political system delivered much more freedom than the current Dutch system.<sup>7</sup> This part of the Dutch society quickly accepted the enemies of France as the enemies of the Dutch state. Everybody who did not follow this, was seen as traitors. Klein concluded that integrating the Dutch population within the French empire was easy and happened quickly, because of the strong pro-France sentiment.

Perhaps the two most important works within this historiography are written this century. The first one is *De Adelaar en het Lam* written by Johan Joor in 2000. Instead of following the accepted narrative, Joor states that the Netherlands tried to resist every form of integration by France.<sup>8</sup> The population often orchestrated local uprisings to show their discontent with the Napoleonic measures. More importantly for this thesis, Joor argued that the main reason for these uprisings was the Continental System. The Dutch had always been strongly in favor of free trade, but this Napoleonic

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<sup>1</sup> Martijn van der Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany: Conquest, Incorporation, and Integration* (Springer Nature, 2021), 7.

<sup>2</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*.

<sup>3</sup> R. R. Palmer, 'Much in Little: The Dutch Revolution of 1795', *The Journal of Modern History* 26, no. 1 (March 1954): 18.

<sup>4</sup> Palmer, 'Much in Little', 23.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>6</sup> Stephan Klein, *Patriots Republikanisme. Politieke Cultuur in Nederland (1766-1787)* (Amsterdam University Press, 1995), 142.

<sup>7</sup> Klein, *Patriots Republikanisme. Politieke Cultuur in Nederland (1766-1787)*, 142-143.

<sup>8</sup> Johan Joor, *De adelaar en het lam: onrust, opruiing en onwilligheid in Nederland ten tijde van het Koninkrijk Holland en de inlijving bij het Franse keizerrijk (1806-1813)* (Amsterdam: Bataafsche Leeuw, 2000), 41-42.

measure forbade them to trade with a very important trading partner, the United Kingdom. For example, over 6,000 people protested in the port of Rotterdam against the French troops who were controlling this system.<sup>9</sup> It was therefore not rare that Dutch trades actively tried to evade the Continental System by trying to smuggle goods across the British Channel. His work shows a clear break with the narrative from before 2000. Pro-French sentiment was perhaps not as common as Klein, for example, thought it was. Instead, the Dutch were actively resisting French influences.

Secondly, historian Bart Verheijen shows in his book *Nederland onder Napoleon* that the Dutch indeed hated the French way of integrating them.<sup>10</sup> There was indeed a strong pro-France sentiment during the first few years of Louis Bonaparte's reign, but every time the French government implemented new measures to stimulate Dutch integration within the empire, discontent grew among the population. In fact, the French became nationally known as the general enemy among the Dutch during the last couple of years in the Napoleonic era. By deepening the findings of Joor, Verheijen shows that Dutch citizens needed to pay heavy taxes in order to fund the French armies.<sup>11</sup> Because the Netherlands were seen as part of the French empire, winning the war against Great Britain and their allies was seen as essential for the Dutch citizens. Meanwhile, Verheijen noticed that the Dutch had always had more English ties, both economically and culturally, than they had with the French.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, resistance against these heavy taxes and the French in general became more common and more intense as the years went by.

But there is also critique on these more recent works. As historian Martijn van der Burg noticed in 2021, both Verheijen and Joor make strong arguments on how the resistance against French integration was organized and performed in the Netherlands.<sup>13</sup> But neither of these works show exactly how the French empire governed the Dutch state. They also fail to show how French administrators, or even Louis Bonaparte himself, tried to integrate the Netherlands. Although Verheijen and Joor do mention the Continental System and other minor measures, they fail to critically study them.<sup>14</sup> Van der Burg therefore pleads for a more international study that needs to focus more on the way Napoleonic France tried to integrate the Netherlands, and other European client states.

### **International historiography**

Simultaneously, there was also a more international movement within historiography, starting in the 1990s. As Europe became much more integrated through the Treaty of Maastricht, which was concluded in 1992, historians started to look for other cases throughout history where the European countries started to integrate with each other. One of the first studies that started to look at the French way of integrating all of the French territories in Europe is *Napoleon's Integration of Europe* written by historian Stuart Woolf in 1990. According to her, there should be more attention towards the areas outside of the central governance.<sup>15</sup> The European parts that Napoleon wanted to integrate, such as the Netherlands, often responded differently than other regions, such as the German states, that were being integrated. Historians were already studying their own regional responses, but there was a lack of comparative study. While Woolf does identify some problems that Napoleon had when he tried to

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<sup>9</sup> Joor, *De adelaar en het lam*, 263-264.

<sup>10</sup> Bart Verheijen, *Nederland onder Napoleon: partijstrijd en natievorming 1801-1813* (Uitgeverij Vantilt, 2017), 256.

<sup>11</sup> Verheijen, *Nederland onder Napoleon*, 151-153.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>13</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*, 14.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Stuart Woolf, *Napoleon's Integration of Europe* (Paris: Routledge, 1990), 125-127.

integrate Europe, his work is mainly aimed at encouraging historians to focus more on this topic.<sup>16</sup> Academics should study the role of the central French government in the integration of the European territories in combination with local response, like the Dutch example, according to Woolf.

One of the historians who was directly influenced by Woolf's work was Michael Broers. In his two works *Europe Under Napoleon* and *Europe After Napoleon* he focused a lot on cultural imperialism, as the European territories under Napoleon were culturally very diverse.<sup>17</sup> Like Woolf suggested, Broers started to look at how Napoleon integrated different European regions in combination with local responses. Therefore, Broers saw the French empire as three parts. First, there is the inner part, consisting of regions which share the same French culture.<sup>18</sup> Secondly, there is the outer empire, consisting of regions that have an acceptable culture, according to the French. Then there were intermediate zones which were mostly left alone. In his chapter about French integration of Italy, which he published later as an article, Broers noted that the French administrators in Italy often saw their own culture as superior in comparison to the Italian one.<sup>19</sup> Therefore the Italian parts did not belong to the inner part, yet. Most Italians were seen as lesser citizens, because the Italians did not have the same norms and values as the French. There was a lack of national pride, or fraternity as the French called it. Therefore, the French were not interested in collecting and preserving Italian history and culture.<sup>20</sup> In order to integrate the Italian territories into the inner part, the administrators only had eyes for replacing the Italian culture with their own. They implemented this strategy all across Europe, and although it made sure these areas were integrated successfully, it often resulted in uprisings.<sup>21</sup>

Almost all recent academic works now use the three zones theory, including the cultural imperialism part.<sup>22</sup> This included historian Steven Englund, who further studied the subject. In his article, written in 2008, he applies this system not just to the Italian territories, but to the other European regions too. Englund noticed that regions across Europe reacted very differently to the French integration.<sup>23</sup> Most of the population in French controlled Germany supported Napoleon in this progress. This part of the population agreed that a strong France was their only chance at beating England, as they thought that England had unfairly profited from the riches of the European continent. On top of that, the German parts that were not dependent on international trade, strongly benefited from the Continental System as it improved their local economies. The same goes for Napoleonic Spain, where the population only supported the Napoleonic measures in order to be protected from poverty, despair and war.<sup>24</sup> The integration of Spain into the French empire was therefore relatively easy, as Englund noticed. The same goes for Belgium, where the population already spoke French. Therefore, this region was integrated quite quickly into the empire. By providing multiple examples across Europe, Englund showed that the success of French integration really depended on the mentality and background of the population. Regions that economically benefited from the French, like Spain, easily accepted their integration within the empire. On top of that, the regions that saw Great Britain as their enemy also wanted to be part of France.

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<sup>16</sup> Woolf, *Napoleon's Integration of Europe*, 236.

<sup>17</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*, 8.

<sup>18</sup> Mike Broers, *Europe Under Napoleon, 1799-1815* (London: Hodder Arnold, 1996), 181.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Broers, 'Cultural Imperialism in a European Context? Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Napoleonic Italy', *Past & Present*, no. 170 (2001): 177.

<sup>20</sup> Broers, 'Cultural Imperialism in a European Context?', 178.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 178-180.

<sup>22</sup> Steven Englund, 'Monstre Sacré: The Question of Cultural Imperialism and the Napoleonic Empire', *The Historical Journal* 51, no. 1 (March 2008): 219.

<sup>23</sup> Englund, 'Monstre Sacré', 221.

<sup>24</sup> Englund, 'Monstre Sacré', 222-223.

Yet, trans-regional studies were still rare. One of the few transregional studies is the work of Katherine Aaslestad. In her chapter, she studies the Napoleonic integration of the Netherlands, Denmark and Northwest Germany as a whole. According to her, the Continental System, which was Napoleon's measure to integrate the European economies, had such a devastating effect on these regions that a large section of their population was severely impoverished at the end of the war.<sup>25</sup> Most importantly, the effects of the French integration were the same in all of these regions. Important economic resources, such as coal but also bread or other kinds of food, became very rare as these resources were essential for the expansion of Napoleon's army. This growth of the military also resulted in higher taxes, which were already high.<sup>26</sup> On top of that, all these three regions were dependent on maritime trade. The national historiography of the Netherlands showed the damages the Continental System did on their maritime economy, however because it was only limited to one nation it did not demonstrate that other maritime regions had the same problems. Just like in Rotterdam, discontent in the harbor cities across Denmark, Northwest Germany and the Netherlands were very common.<sup>27</sup> However, by comparing the three regions Aaslestad showed that economic integration under Napoleon resulted in a dramatic economic crisis in these maritime regions.

More recently, Dutch historian Martijn van der Burg also studied the Netherlands and Northwest Germany as a whole, like Aaslestad did. However, instead of focusing on the responses, Van der Burg focused on how these regions were integrated into the empire. According to him, legal systems in these regions were changed to the French counterpart and the Dutch and German language was replaced by the French as the administrative language.<sup>28</sup> But these ambitious measures resulted in a chaotic progress of integration. Although most important administrators were replaced with French ones, the remaining Dutch and German employers had to learn French in a matter of months. On top of that, the French always preferred to divide their country in big districts in order to create more political stability.<sup>29</sup> However, the Netherlands and Germany had a long history of decentralized politics and small districts. Therefore, Napoleon had to reshape the borders within these regions, leading to the creation or replacement of local institutions in order to create a number of big districts. More importantly, cultural imperialism also played a big part in the chaotic progress of integration. Experienced French administrators thought that they could easily administrate the Dutch or German regions, as they had more experience with the, supposedly, best administrative system in Europe, the French one. However, the political culture was different in every region they administered. Therefore, conflicts between French and local administrators were very common. These conflicts made a big impression among the population, resulting in a growing hatred towards the French.<sup>30</sup> Overall, Van der Burg concluded that transregional integration resulted in a chaotic progress without one clear method of integration, because every region had their own political or cultural background, which was impossible to fit into the French system, like Napoleon tried. Yet, just like the national historiography, these transregional studies also focus more on the results on the French integration of the European territories than on the way they are integrated. Therefore, a transregional study on the way how these territories are integrated is necessary.

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<sup>25</sup> Katherine Aaslestad, "Lost Neutrality and Economic Warfare. Napoleonic Warfare in Northern Europe, 1795–1815", in *War in an Age of Revolution, 1775–1815*, by Roger Chickering and Stig Förster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 394.

<sup>26</sup> Aaslestad, "Lost Neutrality and Economic Warfare. Napoleonic Warfare in Northern Europe, 1795–1815", 390.

<sup>27</sup> Aaslestad, "Lost Neutrality and Economic Warfare. Napoleonic Warfare in Northern Europe, 1795–1815", 390-391.

<sup>28</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*, 74-78.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>30</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*, 106-107.



## European Union historiography

While historiography of integration under Napoleon is quite elaborate, the historiography of European integration by the EU is not. One of the first academics who started to study this topic was Alan Milward, a British economic historian. In his book *The European Rescue of the Nation State* written in 1992, Milward argues that integration by the European Union, or its predecessor the European Community, will either cause the downfall of European nation states, or will make them stronger than ever.<sup>31</sup> Integration could take away all the political, economic power away from these states as the EU will slowly start to make these decisions in Brussel for all of the members of the EU. For example, whereas nation states used to take measures to stimulate the national or regional economy, they could potentially be forced to follow EU measures in the name of integration.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, Milward argues that if the state only gives away a small part of their powers then it would be beneficial for all members of the EU.<sup>33</sup> For smaller countries, such as the Netherlands, it is their only chance to survive both economically and militarily. As every member profits from each other, it creates a system of dependent countries. This makes war between them impossible.<sup>34</sup>

Especially this last statement of European integration being essential for the survival for the European countries would become the accepted narrative within the historiography. However, when the Treaty of Maastricht was formalized in 1992, academics started to focus more on other narratives about the integration of Europe. One of these academics is political scientist Joseph Grieco. In his paper about this treaty, Grieco noticed that the Treaty of Maastricht showed that the members of the European Community trusted each other well enough to create and strengthen a transregional institution with enough power to replace national institutions.<sup>35</sup> The Treaty was more than a way of survival, as Milward mentioned. European states actually embraced transregional cooperation, instead of being each other's competitor. As Grieco noticed, France and Italy were now pushing for transregional institutions in order to profit from the leading European economy, Germany.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, Germany could profit from the cooperation of France and Italy, thus creating the need for more advanced cooperation and transregional institutions.

However, more recent publications have also started to look more into the cultural side of European integration. For example, the political scientists Michael Lewis-Beck and Daniel Morey stated in 2007 that the Treaty of Maastricht was decided by every European region, as most countries decided to vote based on regional considerations.<sup>37</sup> Every region voted according to their economic, historical and cultural background, thus creating an image of which regions were likely to support European integration. For example, unemployed French people were less likely to vote in favor of the Treaty than French farmers. Their work also showed that the French population had a cultural history of self-interest, instead of European interest.<sup>38</sup> Majority of the voters decided to support or reject the Treaty based on what their political party decided to vote for. Because the French population never cared much for European cooperation, especially with their enemy Germany, they never informed

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<sup>31</sup> Alan S. Milward, George Brennan, and Federico Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (University of California Press, 1992), 2-4.

<sup>32</sup> Milward, Brennan, and Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 343.

<sup>34</sup> Milward, Brennan, and Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, 343.

<sup>35</sup> Joseph M. Grieco, 'The Maastricht Treaty, Economic and Monetary Union and the Neo-Realist Research Programme', *Review of International Studies* 21, no. 1 (1995), 28.

<sup>36</sup> Grieco, 'The Maastricht Treaty, Economic and Monetary Union and the Neo-Realist Research Programme', 39.

<sup>37</sup> Michael S. Lewis-Beck and Daniel S. Morey, 'The French "Petit Oui": The Maastricht Treaty and the French Voting Agenda', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 38, no. 1 (2007): 69.

<sup>38</sup> Lewis-Beck and Morey, 'The French "Petit Oui"', 76-79.

themselves about the benefits or downsides of the Treaty of Maastricht. It was either France versus Europe or France versus Germany within an European community.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, the nationalist part of the population voted against the Treaty of Maastricht, in order to protect French sovereignty and to show that France could resist an European community. On the other hand, the other part of the population who were in favor of the Treaty, wanted to show that France was no longer a country that did not care about European cooperation. Thus Lewis-Beck and Morey concluded that culture played a huge part in the decision for European integration.

Inspired by this cultural approach, Bill Davies and Morten Rasmussen noted in 2012 that the more Europe becomes integrated, the higher the levels of unwillingness among the member states.<sup>40</sup> For example, the Treaty of Maastricht revealed that certain national court houses were not willing to submit to a European law. Countries such as Germany did not want to share the same law with member states that were not as democratic, in their eyes, as the German political system was.<sup>41</sup> As the Germans were very proud of their relatively new democratic system, they were less happy with the thought of sharing one, superior, European law with less democratic countries like Spain and Portugal. The German press were, considering their past, worried by the lack of basic rights protection within this European law. This resulted in a large discontent among the German population. But, as Davies and Rasmussen noted, these rejections were fundamental for the progress of European integration.<sup>42</sup> By rejecting or altering European bills, nations could show their discontent to certain parts of these laws. This resulted in changes in order to try to satisfy all the European member states. European integration was not shaped by one country, but it was a slow progress of cooperation and rejection in order to create a law that was acceptable for all members.

Yet, an economic approach is clearly missed in this historiography. Because of the many political scientists who studied the Treaty of Maastricht, and European integration in general, the subject is now being studied from a more political angle. Only recently are academics focusing on a new narrative, a cultural one. This shows that European integration is not simply done, as every region has their own cultural background. Therefore every region has a different opinion on integration, leading to acceptance or rejection of European laws. However, the economic side of this integration has not been studied as much as it should have been.

Thus, according to academics Napoleon had quite some trouble integrating the non-French parts of his empire. Economic integration resulted in the devastation of maritime economies, while different political cultures resulted in conflicts with the different administrators. But both the local and the transregional historiography shows that studies on how the European territories are integrated within the France empire are rare. The integration of Europe by the European Union did have the same sort of cultural problems, considering the different member states that joined the EU. However, there has not been much written about economic problems Therefore, this thesis will answer this question: how did Napoleon economically integrate Europe, between 1804 and 1814, and how does his approach differ from the way the EU economically integrated Europe, stated by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992?

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>40</sup> Bill Davies and Morten Rasmussen, 'Towards a New History of European Law', *Contemporary European History* 21 (1 August 2012), 308.

<sup>41</sup> Davies and Rasmussen, 'Towards a New History of European Law', 311-314.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 315.

## Conceptual Framework

It is essential for this thesis that the concept of integration is clearly defined. Because the way of integrating the European states has changed dramatically over time, there needs to be one definition that can fit the time of Napoleon and the EU. It refers to the process of nations coming together in order to form a more united structure. These European members created a shared institution, like the European Union for example, through cooperation. However, this definition is quite vague and above all not applicable in the case of Napoleon, because he forced integration upon his European subjects. Therefore, it is necessary to come up with a more defined and historical definition of integration. According to Tigran Yepremyan, an expert on Napoleonic history, integration during this time could be described by three definitions.<sup>43</sup> First of all, there is military integration, which is the cooperation between different nations or regions in order to defeat a common enemy. Secondly, there is cultural integration. This means that cultures of foreign regions would meld together with the primary culture in order to create a sense of unification. Finally, and most importantly, there is economic integration. This means that there should be a certain structure that protects the, in this case, European market from foreign goods.<sup>44</sup> On top of that, regions within this market should cooperate together in order to create a strong economy, which would decrease its vulnerability for foreign intervention. In conclusion, this thesis will use Yepremyan's definition of integration by combining these three elements. Therefore, integration can be described as nations cooperating in order to create a sense of unity and to protect their region from foreign intervention. This can be achieved through economic, cultural or military measures.

The definition of economic integration, according to Yepremyan, will be at the center of this thesis. Although cultural and, in the case of Napoleon, military integration will play a role in this research, the main focus will be on the economic aspect. Thus, this thesis will focus on the integration of the European market by lowering the barriers between the different states and regions within the continent, as Yepremyan describes this definition of integration.<sup>45</sup> The increase of trade, the introduction of European economic institutions and the protection of the European market from foreign products, will thus be some examples within the conceptual framework that will be at the centre in this thesis.

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<sup>43</sup> Tigran Yepremyan, 'Napoleonic paradigm of European integration: theory and history', *Napoleonica. La Revue* 39, no. 1 (2021), 47-49.

<sup>44</sup> Yepremyan, 'Napoleonic paradigm of European integration', 49.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 48-50.

## Methodology

In order to answer the research question, this thesis will mostly focus on three primary sources. It will study qualitative and written sources. It should be noted that this thesis will not make use of any quantitative methods. This is because of two reasons. First of all, there is no certain level of integration. Although the EU is currently developing a tool in order to analyze the different levels of integration through the European Union, this tool would be impossible to implement on integration in the 19th century. Secondly, the concept of integration has changed drastically between Napoleon and the 20th century. For example, integration during Napoleon meant that the Dutch ships would be integrated within the French fleet. Nowadays, integration means the use of one single currency throughout Europe. It is therefore impossible to use quantitative methods or sources. Instead, laws and decrees that are improving the integration of the European regions, which will be the main focus of this thesis, only consist of written information. Therefore, these qualitative sources will indicate the integration measures that have been implemented by the two actors. There are two types of sources that will be used throughout this thesis.

First of all, the use of the Berlin Decree is essential to this study. Issued by Napoleon on November 21, 1806, this source shows how he tried to integrate the different European subjects.<sup>46</sup> This source gives valuable insights into the efforts that France took in order to blockade Great Britain and to mobilize and integrate the allied regions within Europe. On top of that, this source shows the foundation of the Continental System. This system aimed, among other things, to improve the continental trade through countries such as France and the German states. This system also led towards the integration of its members. There are three zones in the Continental System, thus three subchapters in the first chapter. In the first subchapter, regions that participated in the System without being a part of Napoleon's empire or his vassal states will be studied. The regions that will be studied in the second chapter were part of the System and belonged to Napoleon's empire but were not considered to be truly French. Finally, this thesis will study regions that were considered to be French, without belonging to France as we know it today. It is also important to note that there are other decrees that further strengthened the System, the Milan Decree being the biggest. These primary sources will not be of much use. The reason behind this is simple. First of all, both of these decrees are set a couple of years after the Berlin Decree. Because the Continental System fell in 1814, just 4 years after the last decree, the newest decrees did not have the same effect as the Berlin Decree. Secondly, the Berlin Decree laid the foundations of the integration, whereas the two other decrees only add minor changes to the Continental System. Therefore the Berlin Decree is very important in order to understand how France integrated their European territories. However, the Decree is also a very limited primary source, consisting only of a few pages with the rules of the Continental System. On top of that, regions that were not part of the French Empire were not forced to introduce all of these laws. It is therefore important to study eyewitness accounts during the Napoleonic times in order to study the real contributions of Napoleon to the process of economic integration. These primary sources will be various accounts, ranging from officials working under Napoleon to locals and even the family of Napoleon himself. It should be noticed that these sources can not be considered to be the most trustworthy. The motivations behind the creation of these primary sources are not often known. For example, Napoleonic administrators might have sketched a better image about the process of European integration in order to please Napoleon or to save their own job. However, most of these sources are the only eyewitness accounts that are available regarding this subject.

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<sup>46</sup> Napoleon Bonaparte, 'The Berlin Decree. November 21, 1806.', Pub. L. No. XIII, Correspondance de Napoleon I (1806).

The third primary source will be the Treaty of Maastricht. Concluded in 1992, this treaty is especially known as introducing the first European currency, the Euro. Just like in the first chapter, this chapter will consist of three subchapters. First of all, the countries with a minimal approach will be studied. Secondly, Italy will be studied as it had a unique approach to the process of integration. Italy has been a second-level player, which is a country that only contributed to the process of integration within the existing frameworks. Due to the limited amount of addition in terms of laws and measures, it is challenging to find and study the exact contributions to the Treaty of Maastricht. However, second-level players were essential to the creation of new elements within existing, but are not mentioned in the primary source. Besides Italy, there are no other countries that can be sorted within this group purely based on the Treaty. Finally, the last chapter will discuss the two countries that were essential to the EU and the creation of the primary source. The reason why the Treaty of Maastricht has been chosen, instead of other European Union treaties, is simple. The Treaty has been essential in the integration of Europe. It officially established the economic and political union, thus creating the EU.<sup>47</sup> It also gives important insights into a level of coordinated foreign policy. The Treaty aims to improve the coordination between the member states in order to achieve one common approach to international issues, like trading agreements. While there are other treaties that are important to the integration of Europe, like for example the Treaty of Lisbon, none of them established the basis system of how the EU economically operates, as the Treaty of Maastricht did. For example, the Treaty of Lisbon only introduced reforms and institutional changes that further enhanced the measures that the Treaty of Maastricht established. Older treaties are also not suitable for this thesis, as it seeks to compare the EU with Napoleon. Since the Treaty of Maastricht was the first treaty by the EU, it is perfect for this study.

However, there are some limits to this comparative analysis. First of all, both of these sources are official governmental treaties concerning multiple different European regions. Therefore, it fails to take a certain cultural aspect into account. For example, the Dutch resisted Napoleon's integration measures because he blocked their maritime sector. Because naval trade was very important to Dutch culture, further integration was deemed as very complicated. The same situation is also applicable on the Treaty of Maastricht, which had a slightly different version that was only applied to Denmark, because of their different culture. In order to solve this problem, and because the limited scale of this thesis makes it impossible to focus on every single region, this study will only focus on the integration measures as stated by the two primary sources. Besides that, there is another reason why this thesis will only use two primary sources. Both of them establish the measures that France and the EU took to integrate their regions. There are no other primary sources that are describing these measures in an official way, like both of these decrees do. On top of that, this thesis will only use two regions throughout the analysis in order to prevent comparing regions with entirely different cultural backgrounds.

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<sup>47</sup> 'Treaty on European Union', 191 OJ C § (1992).

## Chapter 1: The Continental System

### The Berlin Decree

Declared in 1806 by Napoleon, the Continental System was initially nothing more than a trade barrier between continental Europe and the British Isles. This system, which was created by a series of laws, also known as the Berlin Decree, lasted from 1806 until 1814. During its heyday, every continental European country, besides Portugal and the Ottoman empire, were members of this system. An analysis of the original Berlin Decree shows that there are almost no signs of evidence that this system resulted in the integration of the European economies.<sup>48</sup> For example, one of the main points states that all commerce and correspondence with the islands are forbidden. On top of that, the goods that originate from Great Britain are also considered lawful prizes, which means these goods are officially declared as spoils of war. This seems to affect the war effort more than stimulate European cooperation. Out of the eleven laws that are stated in the Berlin Decree, eight of them state that Great Britain is blockaded and their property should be seized when it is located on France controlled terrain.<sup>49</sup> None of these laws are stating anything that can be related towards European integration.

Even the motivation behind the Continental System does not show any evidence that Napoleon wanted to integrate the economies of his empire and his allies. According to the Berlin Decree, England does not acknowledge the system of international law.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, the only goal of the island nation is to gain more power and wealth at the expense of the non-English people. This form of barbarism, as Napoleon called it, threatens the existence of people all around the world. Thus the Continental System was introduced in order to protect against the British economic policies. This is also being confirmed by Yepremyan, as he mentioned that the idea behind this system was not to integrate the economies but rather to protect France.<sup>51</sup> The manufacturers from France should compete

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<sup>48</sup> Napoleon Bonaparte, 'The Berlin Decree'. November 21, 1806., Pub. L. No. XIII, Correspondance de Napoleon I (1806).

<sup>49</sup> Bonaparte, The Berlin Decree. November 21, 1806.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Yepremyan, 'Napoleonic paradigm of European integration', 47.

with the ones from Prussia, for example, instead of their British counterparts. The British economic system, in combination with their industrialized society, had such an advantage over the continental market that their products had a better quality, quantity and were cheaper. But the Prussian goods were considered to be equal, which made competition with the French goods fairer and better for the French market. The Decree was thus more meant to be a protectionist measure than a measure of integration. Yet, there is one important factor within the Berlin Decree that led towards European integration. The Decree was enacted in Spain, Italy, France and the Netherlands.<sup>52</sup> This means that most of Western Europe now had the same trade policy in common, as they were forced to trade within the Continent. The French vassal states had to cooperate with France in order to create an effective blockade. On top of that, by forcing the members of the Continental System to blockade Great Britain, they were pressured to trade more with France and the other continental states in order to replace the British goods in their economy. On paper, this could lead towards European integration. Yet, this theory can only be backed up by witness reports from the different regions and secondary sources.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Berlin Decree played, on paper, an important role in the integration of the European economies. Although it was meant as a protectionist measure to improve the French economy, it also resulted in one European economic policy and possibly the creation of an European market, as the regions were forced to trade within continental Europe. However, the effectiveness of the Decree was different in every part of the System, as not all regions were under the direct influence of Napoleon. Therefore, it is essential to study the different members of the System in order to see the process of integration.

## **Intermediate Zones**

The Intermediate Zones within the Continental System consisted of the most outer parts of the French Empire and out of the countries who were not part of the empire but still joined the system. For example, Russia, Scandinavia and the Austrian Empire all took part in the Continental System and were part of this zone. However, as they were not part of the French Empire, they were not forced to execute the Berlin Decree. This meant that the states within the Intermediate Zones were able to reject the Continental System at any time, resulting in an unstable system. For example, before the System there was a thriving trade sector in the Baltics that profited from their connections with British merchants. But when they were forced to end all contacts with Great Britain, as the Berlin Decree dictated, this local economy completely collapsed. The merchants could not sell their goods, which often consisted of grain, in France because of the protectionist laws. On top of that, their products were very common in the neighboring countries, leading to a sharp decrease in economic activity. In general, maritime trade in Russia decreased by over 75 percent.<sup>53</sup> As historian Hugh Ragsdale noted, the Russian economy was already self-sustaining in providing the people with the most essential goods. Because of its size and the relatively low population, there was more than enough food, wood and other essentials, which made trade less important. Merchants were struggling in most of the

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<sup>52</sup> Bonaparte, The Berlin Decree. November 21, 1806.

<sup>53</sup> Hugh Ragsdale, 'A Continental System in 1801: Paul I and Bonaparte', *The Journal of Modern History* 42, no. 1 (1970), 86.

Western coastal cities, resulting in less interest in the sector. On top of that, the merchants also began to blame France for their loss of profits.<sup>54</sup>

However, reports made by Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, minister of Foreign Affairs under Napoleon, show that there were several French attempts to integrate the Russian economy, despite the decline of maritime trade and the Russian discontent.<sup>55</sup> Already in 1805, Talleyrand showed serious interest in Russian politics and their economy. Through his own investigation, he managed to highlight key economic centres, mostly ports, and managed to gain insights into the local politics. Plans had been made to develop Russian ports in order to facilitate an increased trade with the French Empire. However, the French faced several important problems. First of all, Russia only imported French luxury goods. Coffee, sugar, wine and indigo were amongst these goods. On the other hand, Russia provided France with products like masts and grain. Due to the fact that there was only demand for French luxury goods in Russia, France could not expand their trade. There was a limited import of coffee and sugar, as trading between the French colonies and the mainland had become dangerous during the Napoleonic wars. While the demand for luxury goods kept rising, there was simply no opportunity to increase the supply. Thus, the French-Russian trade could not be increased, which explains why Napoleon could not integrate the Russian economy.<sup>56</sup>

Secondly, the French lacked connections and opportunities to trade in Russia.<sup>57</sup> Even before the Napoleonic Wars, the French used Dutch, English and German merchants for their trade with Russia. These were the countries that had invested in the Russian trade sector. The merchants could speak Russian and were aware of the Russian traditions. This made trading with Russia much easier and cheaper. However, the French had less knowledge of the country. In 1802, which is the only year of peace in Europe during the Napoleonic era, only five out of the 986 trade ships that arrived in the most important Russian ports were French.<sup>58</sup> In comparison, 477 were British. On top of that, 1802 was the best year of Franco-Russian economic relations, as Tchpudinov stated. This shows the lack of French interest in the Russian market. In contrast, the Dutch, English and German merchants had been trading in Russia for centuries. The Hanseatic merchants in particular had a rich history with the Russian trading sector, as several trading cities in the Russian empire were once part of the Hanse. On top of that, England had always dominated European maritime trade. It had a much bigger navy and merchant fleet than the French. This resulted in the defeat of the French navy in 1805.<sup>59</sup> French merchants were no longer protected by their own fleet and because the British navy had bases all around the English Channel and the North Sea, traveling to Russia by sea had become almost impossible. Trade by land was still a possibility, but it took a long time to travel from Paris to Moscow. Economic integration and cooperation was therefore almost impossible, the distance between the two countries was simply too large.

Thus, France was not able to integrate the Russian economy, due to their failed attempts. As Talleyrand-Périgord stated in his reports, the French-Russian relationship slowly fell apart immediately after Russia joined the Continental System.<sup>60</sup> According to his reports, the Russian

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<sup>54</sup> Ragsdale, 'A Continental System in 1801', 86-87.

<sup>55</sup> Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, *Correspondance diplomatique de Talleyrand: Le ministère de Talleyrand sous le directoire* (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et cie, 1891), 244-250.

<sup>56</sup> Talleyrand-Périgord, *Correspondance diplomatique de Talleyrand*, 248-250.

<sup>57</sup> Alexandre Tchoudinov, 'Russia and the Continental System: Trends in Russian Historiography', in *Revisiting Napoleon's Continental System: Local, Regional and European Experiences*, ed. Katherine B. Aaslestad and Johan Joor, War, Culture and Society, 1750-1850 (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 57-58.

<sup>58</sup> Tchoudinov, 'Russia and the Continental System', 57.

<sup>59</sup> Silvia Marzagalli, 'The Continental System: A View from the Sea', in *Revisiting Napoleon's Continental System: Local, Regional and European Experiences*, ed. Katherine B. Aaslestad and Johan Joor, War, Culture and Society, 1750-1850 (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 84.

<sup>60</sup> Talleyrand-Périgord, *Correspondance diplomatique de Talleyrand*, 247-249.



administration was very eager to support the Continental System at first, quickly agreeing to Napoleon's economic policies. But when the Russian emperor realized that the French lacked the ability to integrate the Russian economy, this positive sentiment quickly disappeared and turned into distrust. Secondary sources confirm that the Russian emperor quickly began to secretly allow British merchants in order to prevent the Russian economy from declining and to prevent further French attempts to integrate Russia.<sup>61</sup> The same can be noticed in the report of Talleyrand-Périgord. His writing about the Russians is quite positive in the first year of the Russian participation in the System, while his sentiment quickly changes in the period after Russia allowed British merchants.<sup>62</sup> He calls the Russian emperor incompetent, just like the rest of his administration. According to him, Russia wanted to destroy the ideals of the French revolution by defeating Napoleon. The permission of the British in Russian territories was only the first step in doing so. The situation became out of control, as Talleyrand-Périgord even started to write about a future war with the country.<sup>63</sup> Eventually, Russia decided to leave the Continental System in 1810, due to the decline of their economy and the discontent with the French.<sup>64</sup> Because of this, Napoleon felt forced to invade Russia, in order to save the Continental System. However, this invasion proved to be disastrous and ultimately even caused the downfall of the French Empire, only 3 years after the invasion of Russia.<sup>65</sup>

Then there is the case of Scandinavia, in particular Denmark. After a pre-emptive strike on Copenhagen by the Royal Navy resulting in the seizure of the Danish fleet, Denmark was forced to join the French system to receive their protection.<sup>66</sup> The newly created hatred among the Danish population for Great Britain, ensured enough support in the country to become a loyal ally of France. In return, Napoleon promised to compensate Denmark for their losses. Immediately after, the trade between Great Britain and Denmark collapsed, due to the ongoing embargo. The Continental System proved to be disastrous for the Danish economy.<sup>67</sup> Most of the industries were not used to compete with German or French goods, due to the strict protectionism in Denmark. But the British goods that were imported out of necessity, had to be replaced. When the market opened, many Danish manufacturers lost the competition. Their products were either too expensive or lacked quality in comparison with their French or German counterparts. Due to the lack of industrialisation and natural resources, only a handful of Danish industries managed to survive the Continental System. The Danish population were more interested in buying foreign and cheaper goods than buying locally produced goods. On top of that, the export of rural and forest goods to Great Britain had been one of the most important factors behind Denmark's successful economy before the war.<sup>68</sup>

However, after the collapse of the Danish-British trade, there was no demand for these kinds of goods. Unlike Great Britain, France and Germany all had easy access to rural and forest goods. Without any significant trading partner, Danish merchants soon turned towards privateering and smuggling in order to at least gain some money, as the diary made by the Danish sailor Niels Martin Nielsen has proven.<sup>69</sup> Neutral trade ships, which were mostly American, carrying British goods

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<sup>61</sup> Tchoudinov, 'Russia and the Continental System', 58.

<sup>62</sup> Talleyrand-Périgord, *Correspondance diplomatique de Talleyrand*, 246-249.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>64</sup> Tchoudinov, 'Russia and the Continental System', 60.

<sup>65</sup> Ellis, 'The Continental System', 33.

<sup>66</sup> Ole Feldbæk, 'Denmark in the Napoleonic Wars: A Foreign Policy Survey', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1 June 2001, 94.

<sup>67</sup> Feldbæk, 'Denmark in the Napoleonic Wars', 96-97.

<sup>68</sup> Jann M. Witt, 'Smuggling and Blockade-Running during the Anglo-Danish War from 1807 to 1814', in *Revisiting Napoleon's Continental System: Local, Regional and European Experiences*, ed. Katherine B. Aaslestad and Johan Joor, War, Culture and Society, 1750-1850 (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 159.

<sup>69</sup> Niels Martin Nielsen, *Særdeles Hændelser og mærkelige Tildragelser med en dansk Sømand i et Tidsrum af 18 Aar, fra 1798 til 1816, skrevet af himself* (Copenhagen, 1821), 48-60.

massively shipped their goods to Danish ports. The Danish port of Altona played an important part in the smuggling. From this port it was only a 15 minute walk to Hamburg, one of the most important trading centers in Western Europe.<sup>70</sup> Due to the short distance and the lack of border control, Danish merchants, like Nielsen, began to smuggle British goods into Germany, where they would make a significant profit due to the rarity of the goods. The profits were so good that merchants soon began to privateer British trading vessels for a living. Furthermore, Nielsen revealed that his motivations to become a smuggler were mostly related to the lack of alternative sources of income.<sup>71</sup> His reports showed that his economic situation, after Denmark joined the Continental System, decreased rapidly. But Nielsen also revealed the importance of patriotism for the Danish smugglers. According to his personal viewpoint, Denmark was already indirectly occupied by the French through the Continental System.<sup>72</sup> By becoming a smuggler, Nielsen wanted to gain some sort of income while also resisting the French influence in his country, preventing it from becoming a part of Napoleon's empire. It was mostly due to this combination, and the use of special privateer vessels built by the government, that privateering became a huge economic success. Although it was secretly allowed by the Danish government, the privateering and smuggling were considered illegal out of fear of French repercussions. Therefore, Denmark was unable to tax this growing economic activity. In fact, it only cost the government extra money, due to the fact that they had to build ships for the privateers and had to invest in new ways of smuggling to prevent being caught by French officials.<sup>73</sup> This slowly led towards Denmark becoming bankrupt in 1813, just one year before the end of the Continental System.<sup>74</sup> It could no longer afford a strong army or a rebuilding of the navy. Therefore, it became more dependent on France for their own security, instead of being able to protect themselves. In fact, the economic troubles that were created by the Continental System even led towards the loss of Norway. Denmark had become a minor kingdom, instead of a regional major power.

There seems to be no sign in the available literature for any sign of French economic aid, or any evidence that France wanted to integrate the Danish economy. While this thesis does not know the reason behind this lack of evidence, it could be due to a number of reasons. First of all, the Battle of Copenhagen made sure that Denmark had almost no significant navy anymore.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, Denmark could not provide France with any additional maritime support in order to improve the blockade. Smuggling had become a serious issue in the Danish economy and it was really easy to smuggle British goods from Danish harbors into Germany and France.<sup>76</sup> If Napoleon wanted to integrate Denmark, it needed to put an end to the smuggling. However, as seen before, the French navy did not have the means to protect the Danish coastline from privateers and smugglers, mostly out of fear for the British navy. Another reason why Napoleon did not want to integrate the Danish economy is the lack of importance. Unlike Russia, the Danish economy was mostly dependent on foreign trade. It did not have access to goods that had any significant value.<sup>77</sup> Its most significant export goods were wool, grain and wood. But since France and Germany had more advanced industrial manufacturers, their goods were cheaper and had a better quality.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the outer parts of the Continental System were not integrated at all. At first, both Denmark and Russia were seen as loyal participants within the system. Yet, when it became clear that their economies were declining and that France was not willing to aid

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<sup>70</sup> Marzagalli, 'The Continental System', 91.

<sup>71</sup> Martin Nielsen, *Særdeles Hændelser og mærkelige Tildragelser med en dansk Sømand i et Tidsrum af 18 Aar, fra 1798 til 1816, skrevet af himself*, 55.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 48-60.

<sup>73</sup> Witt, 'Smuggling and Blockade-Running during the Anglo-Danish War from 1807 to 1814', 164-165.

<sup>74</sup> Feldbæk, 'Denmark in the Napoleonic Wars', 89.

<sup>75</sup> Feldbæk, 'Denmark in the Napoleonic Wars', 94.

<sup>76</sup> Witt, 'Smuggling and Blockade-Running during the Anglo-Danish War from 1807 to 1814', 158-160.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 159-160.

them, they quickly changed their perception. Napoleon did try to integrate the Russian economy, but failed to do so. The Danish economy was mostly ignored, as it was seen as too weak. This failed integration policy resulted in Russia leaving the System, which sparked the French invasion and the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Denmark, on the other hand, became a paradise for smugglers, resulting in their bankruptcy and the weakening of the Continental System.

## Outer Empire

The Outer Empire consisted of states that did not have French culture, but were nevertheless seen as important to Napoleon and his empire. The Netherlands and the Westphalian states of Germany were all seen as states within the Outer Empire. Unlike Russia and Denmark, both countries were officially part of the French Empire and had to accept and execute the Berlin Decree. Furthermore, they were forced to cooperate with the French, as their former political structure had been removed and been replaced with a French one. The case of the Netherlands is a complicated one. After the Batavian Revolution in 1795, the Netherlands had become an unofficial vassal state of France. However, after Napoleon became emperor, he actively eliminated the revolutionaries in France and in his vassal states, including the ones in the Netherlands. Therefore, he turned it into a kingdom, crowning his own brother Louis 1 as king. This decision marked the start of the Dutch integration within the empire. Louis quickly enacted a series of laws in order to prevent British trade, as the Berlin Decree dictated that all commerce with Great Britain were forbidden.<sup>78</sup> By creating a national police force and customs office, Dutch officials were now able to control their borders and prevent smuggling. Furthermore, as these two departments were organized in the same way as the French, cooperation between the two countries was made easier.<sup>79</sup> While these measures were effective for further integration within the French Empire, it was not good enough for Napoleon. Dutch merchants were still trading with their British counterparts despite the Berlin Decree. As trade was one of the most important parts of the Dutch income, most merchants simply risked the possible punishment. However, the many non-merchants who worked in the trading sector were hit even harder. Dock workers and ship manufacturers were very discontent with the Continental System, leading to a series of protests in harbor cities.<sup>80</sup>

In general, the Dutch were very displeased with the French integration measures. Protest or other sorts of resistance against integration were therefore very common. For example, Dutch officials made sure that the Dutch language would remain the official administrators language, otherwise striking would be inevitable. King Louis was aware of the Dutch discontent for the Continental System and the integration into the French Empire, according to his own memoir.<sup>81</sup> Therefore he turned a blind eye to smugglers and protesters. This was more out of necessity, as the French could not provide the Dutch with the much needed colonial goods that were necessary to keep the country running. As he, according to his own work, genuinely cared for his people, Louis felt like he had no choice but to disobey Napoleon.<sup>82</sup> Yet, the smuggled goods were not just kept within the Netherlands.

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<sup>78</sup> Bonaparte, *The Berlin Decree*. November 21, 1806.

<sup>79</sup> Johan Joor, 'Significance and Consequences of the Continental System for Napoleonic Holland, Especially for Amsterdam', in *Revisiting Napoleon's Continental System: Local, Regional and European Experiences*, ed. Katherine B. Aaslestad and Johan Joor (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 259–76.

<sup>80</sup> Joor, *De adelaar en het lam*, 263-264.

<sup>81</sup> Louis Bonaparte, *Documents historiques et réflexions sur le gouvernement de la Hollande* (Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mavor, et Jones, 1820), 273.

<sup>82</sup> Bonaparte, *Documents historiques et réflexions sur le gouvernement de la Hollande*, 273-274.

Through the Rhine and other rivers, Dutch merchants quickly began to sell the goods with their German counterparts.<sup>83</sup> Eager to pay as their access to colonial goods was made impossible due to the Continental System, German merchants paid at least double then they did before the introduction of the System. Smuggling became such a serious problem for the Continental System that Napoleon closed all Dutch ports for neutral ships.<sup>84</sup> However, as the British controlled much of the North Sea, allied ships were a rare sighting in the Netherlands. As a result of this the Dutch economy drastically declined, especially in the big cities. In an attempt to save the Dutch economy, Louis tried to reopen the ports but was blocked by an angry Napoleon.<sup>85</sup> According to Napoleon's viewpoint, only true integration into the French empire could save the Dutch economy without risking the Continental System. Therefore the Berlin Decree was further enforced, as it formed the fundamental law that was being used as a starting point for an increased economic integration.<sup>86</sup> But Louis proved to be unable to carry out this enforcement as he wanted to aid his people instead of aiding France. In order to maintain the System and stop the smuggling, Napoleon had no choice but to take matters in his own hands.<sup>87</sup>

When the Netherlands were annexed by France, in 1810, the efforts to integrate the country were significantly increased.<sup>88</sup> Now under direct control by Napoleon and his government, the country was facing much more strict control than under Louis and implemented several new reforms. First of all, French troops were now constantly stationed around the coastline in order to prevent smuggling. On top of that the Dutch customs office, which was crucial in the attempt to maintain the Continental System, was united with the French customs, thus creating an international border control. United, the office was more effective in preventing illegal smuggling and the entry of British goods in the European economy. This was not the only economic institution that was united with their French counterpart and the Netherlands began to use the same metric system as France in order to simplify their cooperation and trade. Secondly, the French quickly invested in faster transportation routes towards the Netherlands.<sup>89</sup> This was done, not just in order to improve French-Dutch trade, but also in order to improve communications between the two, as most communications were still done by post. By investing into new and better roads, Napoleon wanted to improve his power in the Netherlands and stimulate the French economic influence in his new province. Thirdly, France invested in the Dutch agricultural sector, instead of investing in the industrialization of their economy.<sup>90</sup> By doing so, the Netherlands could slowly take over the French agricultural sector. The newly available French workers were therefore able to either work in the French industry or become soldiers. The latter option was especially important, as the French army faced a number of defeats in Russia. By importing Dutch agricultural goods, which were relatively cheap and easily transported, France provided an important part of the Dutch income, while also increasing their own army.

However, Napoleon was far more interested in maintaining the Continental System in the Netherlands than he was in the economic integration of the Netherlands.<sup>91</sup> According to him, the Netherlands could provide for themselves, without French economic cooperation. As the Dutch

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<sup>83</sup> Robert Mark Spaulding, 'Rhine River Commerce and the Continental System', in *Revisiting Napoleon's Continental System: Local, Regional and European Experiences*, ed. Katherine B. Aaslestad and Johan Joor (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 118-119.

<sup>84</sup> Joor, 'Significance and Consequences of the Continental System for Napoleonic Holland, Especially for Amsterdam', 261.

<sup>85</sup> Bonaparte, *Documents historiques et réflexions sur le gouvernement de la Hollande*, 273-274.

<sup>86</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*, 63.

<sup>87</sup> Bonaparte, *Documents historiques et réflexions sur le gouvernement de la Hollande*, 360-363.

<sup>88</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*, 55.

<sup>89</sup> Joor, 'Significance and Consequences of the Continental System for Napoleonic Holland, Especially for Amsterdam', 270.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

merchants were considered to be extremely rich, Napoleon thought that they were willing to give up their income for the Dutch economy.<sup>92</sup> However, most merchants were in favor of the British and the old republic system, as most of their income was earned with maritime trade. On top of that, the Dutch institutions, like their universities and administration, were considered to be of excellent quality and able to run the Dutch economy by themselves. Therefore, they did not have to be replaced with French institutions.<sup>93</sup> This part of integration was thus never executed, as it was not deemed as necessary. Dutch institutions did not need to use the French language and their way of running the economy did not need to be modeled after the French system. The Netherlands were such an independent country that they needed to be gradually integrated.<sup>94</sup> On the other hand, the Continental System was crucial in his war against Great Britain and was therefore his priority. Economic integration could be implemented after the war was won. With the use of the Dutch colonies, the French empire would have been able to become self-providing and increase their import of colonial goods. However, during the war, these colonies were unable to be reached and integrated. Thus, even if Napoleon wanted to integrate the Dutch economy, he simply did not have the time to do this during the war. On top of that, it would have been more efficient to integrate the Netherlands after the war.

In 1795, during the War of the First Coalition, several years before the reign of Napoleon as emperor, France was able to annex the Left Bank of the Rhine, also known as the Rhineland. This area, which consisted of important cities like Trier, Aachen and Mainz, was known as an important trading route from the coast towards countries like Austria, France and Germany. However, due to the political instability during the First French Republic and the fact that the annexation was not internationally recognized, France was not able to implement any integration measures prior to 1801.<sup>95</sup> Before that, the region governed themselves without much French involvement. There was only limited trade, which was almost on the same level as before the annexation, and the taxes were not collected by French officials but by their German counterparts. In other words, France was missing out on the opportunity to increase their income and their influence on an important European trading route. Thus, when Napoleon came to power, he quickly started to introduce integration measures. First of all, Napoleon implemented some new French institutions that made it easier to integrate the Rhenish economy.<sup>96</sup> As the Rhineland was one of the most industrialized areas within the French Empire, it was quite important that the Rhenish industries were able to easily sell their products within the French market, especially because industrial goods were getting scarce due to the Continental System. By introducing the French metric system and other trading institutions, as they did in the Netherlands, the Rhenish manufacturers were able to sell their products to French controlled regions, more easily than before.

But perhaps the most important French institution that helped to integrate the Rhenish economy is the *Octroi*.<sup>97</sup> This system drastically reformed the economic administration of the Rhine and, more importantly, integrated the economy of the region into the French economy. The *Octroi* consisted of two parts. First of all, it was decided that all revenue of the tolls at the river had to be invested in infrastructural improvements around the Rhine.<sup>98</sup> By creating new paths towards the

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<sup>92</sup> Verheijen, *Nederland onder Napoleon*, 196-201.

<sup>93</sup> Burg, *Napoleonic Governance in the Netherlands and Northwest Germany*, 54.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>95</sup> Michael Rowe, 'Between Empire and Home Town: Napoleonic Rule on the Rhine, 1799-1814', *The Historical Journal* 42, no. 3 (1999), 646.

<sup>96</sup> Michael Rowe, 'France, Prussia, or Germany? The Napoleonic Wars and Shifting Allegiances in the Rhineland', *Central European History* 39, no. 4 (2006), 629.

<sup>97</sup> Robert Mark Spaulding, 'Revolutionary France and the Transformation of the Rhine', *Central European History* 44, no. 2 (2011), 207.

<sup>98</sup> Spaulding, 'Revolutionary France and the Transformation of the Rhine', 216.

rivertowns, the transportation of goods was made easier, cheaper and faster. Instead of transporting goods to Northern Germany and the Netherlands by land, French merchants were now able to use the Rhine in order to sell their goods in a cheaper way. Furthermore, the quality of the river was also improved. In order to facilitate the transport of more goods, ships were becoming bigger and heavier. By using toll revenue to widen and deepen the river, the transportation route was used by more and heavier ships, leading to additional income. Secondly, this system would be administered by both France and the Holy Roman Empire. They were the only ones who had the power to determine in which parts the investments were necessary.<sup>99</sup> However, in 1806, the Holy Roman Empire had become a French vassal state, known as the Confederation of the Rhine. This meant that the representatives from this vassal state also had French interests, instead of representing the interests of the German people. Therefore, Napoleon had complete control over the entire economy of the Rhineland. He got to decide which parts around the Rhine were of value to France, leading towards more investments in that particular area. While this sounds like an unfair treatment of the region, the people of the Rhineland were mostly very content with these measures.<sup>100</sup>

There is a reason why the integration of the Rhineland went so smoothly, especially in comparison with the other regions. First of all, the Berlin Decree had sealed off most of the north-south trade.<sup>101</sup> Therefore most of the merchants in the Rhineland were economically dependent on the trade with their French counterparts.<sup>102</sup> As there was almost no goods coming from the Netherlands towards Germany across the Rhine, toll income drastically decreased in the latter years of French rule. The Netherlands could also not import products from Great Britain, as the Decree stated.<sup>103</sup> Thus, it could not trade these British goods through the Rhineland. With upstream toll revenues in francs going from 1,386,585 in 1807 to 294,833 in 1813, most Rhenish trading towns lost a significant part of their incomes.<sup>104</sup> Unlike in other parts within the Continental System, France did actually provide the inhabitants of the Rhineland with a substitute for their loss of income. By investing in their regional economies, rather than investing in the trade sector, the Rhineland was able to improve and expand its own industry. The extraction of coal was significantly increased, through France support. On top of that, British coal was almost impossible to import due to the Berlin Decree, which resulted in a large demand for coal from the industries in the Netherlands and North Germany. This resulted in the rise of the downstream toll revenues from 1,094,932 francs in 1806 to 1,649,685 in 1812.<sup>105</sup>

Another reason why the integration of the Rhineland went relatively smoothly is because most Rhinelanders were strongly in favor of Enlightenment idealism.<sup>106</sup> As the area is close to France, most inhabitants of the Rhineland got in touch with these enlightened ideas relatively early. Therefore, they had been able to accept the Enlightenment quickly after the French Revolution. Napoleon builded upon this support by introducing ideas, such as chosen civil servants within the administration of the Rhineland. This Enlightenment form of bureaucracy was extremely popular with the local population.<sup>107</sup> For the first time ever, they felt like they had some say in choosing who would rule the area that they lived in. On top of that, most local communities were now governed by locals, instead of randomly selected administrators. This increase of political transparency and trust lead to more

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>100</sup> Michael Rowe, 'Between Empire and Home Town: Napoleonic Rule on the Rhine, 1799-1814', *The Historical Journal* 42, no. 3 (1999), 663-664.

<sup>101</sup> Bonaparte, The Berlin Decree. November 21, 1806.

<sup>102</sup> Rowe, 'Between Empire and Home Town', 664.

<sup>103</sup> Bonaparte, The Berlin Decree. November 21, 1806.

<sup>104</sup> Spaulding, 'Rhine River Commerce and the Continental System', 119.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>106</sup> Rowe, 'Between Empire and Home Town', 656.

<sup>107</sup> Rowe, 'France, Prussia, or Germany?', 614.

faith in the French way of politics. Therefore, the common population was convinced that the Rhineland would only benefit from further integration. Furthermore, the most influential part of the Rhenish population, the nobility, accepted the integration of the Rhineland as it combined both their economic interests as their support for the ideology of the Enlightenment.<sup>108</sup> This new system, that was introduced by Napoleon, was resulting in a highly efficient bureaucracy, which meant that their incomes were rising and their costs were declining. As the nobility had the means and power to influence the rest of the area, support of the French became more common than not. The Rhenish inhabitants were therefore in support of integration into the French empire.

Thus, this paper can conclude that there were serious and successful attempts at integrating the economies of the Outer Empire zones. Although Napoleon was less interested in the integration of the Dutch economy, he did invest in their agricultural sector in order to make their economy more compatible with the industrializing French society. The Rhineland also received new economic investments, as the French introduced the *Octroi* system. However, the attempts in the Netherlands faced heavy resistance, leading to a slow integration process. In the Rhineland, people were more dependent on France, which resulted in a smooth economic integration. Yet, both areas were only integrated because of their value to the French economy, and not because of their sympathy for the French.

## **Inner Empire**

The Inner Empire was definitely the most important part of the Empire. Consisting of states that had the same cultural background or spoke the same language, like Belgium, the northern parts of Italy and mainland France. Often, these states only experienced a limited amount of measures, as their institutions were already very similar to their French counterparts. Nevertheless, the population within the Inner Empire were meant to be fully French, resulting in the replacement of their own culture, alongside massive investments in order to shape their economy to be more compatible with French demands. After being ruled by Austria for a decade, the Southern Netherlands were annexed by France in 1795. Just four years before the reign of Napoleon, this area, which consisted of contemporary Belgium and Luxembourg, was taken from Austria after the War of the First Coalition. Yet, just like with the Rhineland, integration was not the main priority for Revolutionary France.<sup>109</sup> It was therefore not until Napoleon that Belgium was incorporated within the empire as he was greatly in favor of an integrated Belgium. French was already widely spoken among the Belgian population, leading to easy communication between Napoleon and the local administrators and thus a smooth integration process.

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<sup>108</sup> Rowe, 'Between Empire and Home Town', 664.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 646.

More importantly, Napoleon himself was convinced that Antwerp and the region around the harbor town had to be used as a weapon against Great Britain.<sup>110</sup> Its location was perfect, as you needed to pass the Dutch province of Zeeland in order to reach the harbor. This would have been a dangerous route for the Royal Navy, making Antwerp one of the most safe harbors within the French Empire. It received a number of investments in order to become a manufacturer for the imperial navy. This was necessary due to the fact that Great Britain tried to invade the area around Antwerp in order to establish a military base in continental Europe. Although the invasion ultimately failed, the British were able to conquer the Dutch province of Zeeland for a short amount of time, revealing the French weakness for a naval invasion. If Antwerp would host a part of the French fleet, it would have been able to quickly defend the coastline of the Benelux and northern France. This would lead to a loss of British ships, since the French navy would have been able to retreat much quicker. By using the port of Antwerp as an example, it shows the importance for the integration of Belgium. Even Napoleon himself was determined to fully integrate the region, due to economic and military reasons.<sup>111</sup>

As Belgium was seen as a French region, instead of a vassal or annexed state, it benefited greatly from the French economic situation.<sup>112</sup> It did not have to pay any toll in order to export their goods to the French market, as it used to do during the Austrian times. Belgian merchants and entrepreneurs were now able to sell their products to the French public, resulting in a huge increase of demand. As internal trade became free, the economy of Belgium quickly increased<sup>113</sup>. The location of the most important trading towns was also excellent. Cities like Liège and Antwerp were easily reachable through the rivers. On top of that, most of the Belgian upper-class knew the French language, which made the establishment of economic connections in mainland France easier. The Dutch language, which was spoken in most of the northern provinces, including in Antwerp, was quickly abolished and replaced with the French language in order to “Frenchify” Belgium.<sup>114</sup> Quickly, French became the language of the rich, as it was necessary to speak it in order to trade or have a job in the local administration. Yet, the poor were not taken seriously. Only Belgians who were able to afford serious education were able to learn French. The people who worked in the countryside and did not know how to speak, write or read French were ignored and left alone. Napoleon only invested in French speaking colleges and universities, mostly due to the fact that the attending French-speaking students would contribute to the French economy. As the countryside often only provided for the local community, it did not have much economic value for the entire empire. This clearly shows that the integration of Belgium was mostly economically driven.

Whereas most members of the Continental System faced economic decline due to the blockade, Belgium actually profited significantly from the system, as Belgian trade reports made in the Napoleonic times have shown.<sup>115</sup> Cities like Ghent and Antwerp had invested in the industrialization of their textile sector, becoming one of the first regions in mainland Europe that were using mechanized textile production. Protected from British competition, these industries were very rare in Europe, resulting in a massive demand for their products. As there were almost no competitors, the Belgian industries were able to expand without any economic risks. For example, the textile

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<sup>110</sup> Hilde Greefs, ‘Choices and Opportunities amid Economic Warfare: Strategic Decisions of the Business Elite in the Young Harbour Town of Antwerp during the Napoleonic Era’, in *Revisiting Napoleon’s Continental System: Local, Regional and European Experiences*, ed. Katherine B. Aaslestad and Johan Joor (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 224-225.

<sup>111</sup> Alexander Grab, *Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe*, 2003rd edition (New York: Red Globe Press, 2003), 79-80.

<sup>112</sup> Greefs, ‘Choices and Opportunities amid Economic Warfare’, 225.

<sup>113</sup> ‘Notarial Records Antwerp, N 1164, Charles Rutgeerts, Nr. 275 (19 October 1812)’ (Antwerp, 19 October 1812), State Archives, Antwerp.

<sup>114</sup> Grab, *Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe*, 80.

<sup>115</sup> ‘Notarial Records Antwerp, N 1164, Charles Rutgeerts, Nr. 275 (19 October 1812)’.



industry grew from having 1300 workers in 1806 to 12,000 in 1816.<sup>116</sup> Simultaneously, coal mines in other parts of Belgium were being developed with French financial aid, due to the massive demand for coal in France and Germany.<sup>117</sup> In fact, the Belgian mines made up for almost half of the entire coal production in the French Empire, resulting in Belgium becoming the second most important supplier after the Rhineland. This industrial power had to be further integrated into France, as Napoleon realized. During the first years of Napoleonic rule, Belgium had mostly provided France with natural resources, like coal, and textile products. The dynamic between the two states resembled the dynamic between a colony and their overlord, with France being the producer of manufactured goods and Belgium being the provider of the raw materials. However, due to the French investments, this dynamic quickly began to change. The French government began to manufacture weapons, like guns and cannons, in cities like Liège.<sup>118</sup> Not only was it cheaper to produce weapons in Belgium, as it was close to the coal and iron mines, it also turned Belgium into one of the most important producers for the imperial army and navy. The textile industries in Ghent were making uniforms for the army and the dockyards in Antwerp were building ships for the navy, as the city archives mentioned.<sup>119</sup> As the reports made in 1812 have shown, the economy of Antwerp was being saved by the French after the creation of the Continental System. While the trading sector drastically decreased, Napoleon invested in the industrial sector.<sup>120</sup> This sector was essential for the improvement of the French military. New maritime defensive structures were being built in order to protect the French coastlines. On top of that, Antwerp also played an important role in the attempt to increase the French navy, as is stated in the city reports. This shows the trust that the French had in the Belgium population. They saw the Belgians as French citizens, resulting in the level of trust and integration between the two states. It also shows that Belgium had become an integrated colony, providing France with the goods and services that Napoleon needed.

The integration of Italy was considered to be crucial for the success of the Continental System.<sup>121</sup> Before the Napoleonic wars, Great Britain had a great economic presence in the region. Around eight percent of its entire European export was sent to Italy. Again it was especially industrial and colonial goods that were being sold in the region, while importing raw silk and wine. Ports in Venice, Rome, Genoa and Naples were major trading hubs in the Mediterranean and were very popular for merchants on their way to the Atlantic or the Middle East. On top of that, the Italian coastlines, excluding those in Sicily and Sardinia which were never part of the Continental System, were long and thus vulnerable for smugglers or illegal British merchants. In other words, without the control of Italy, British goods would have found their way into Europe very simply. However, in general, the economic situation of the Italian regions was very poor.<sup>122</sup> From the 1720s, Italy was facing a period of slow economic decline, which made it easier for the French to implement their economic measures, as the situation could only improve. Yet, Italian resistance was certainly present, especially in the Papal States.<sup>123</sup> As the import of colonial goods was essential for modernizing their economy, the Pope tried to fight back

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<sup>116</sup> Grab, *Napoleon and the Transformation of Europe*, 80.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 81-82.

<sup>119</sup> 'Notarial Records Antwerp, N 1164, Charles Rutgeerts, Nr. 275 (19 October 1812)'.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Alexander Grab, 'The Kingdom of Italy and the Continental Blockade', in *Revisiting Napoleon's Continental System: Local, Regional and European Experiences*, ed. Katherine B. Aaslestad and Johan Joor (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015), 98.

<sup>122</sup> Mark Dincecco and Giovanni Federico, 'Napoleon in Italy: A Legacy of Institutional Reform?', in *The Crucible of Revolutionary and Napoleonic Warfare and European Transitions to Modern Economic Growth*, by Patrick O'Brien, Library of Economic History 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 142.

<sup>123</sup> Grab, 'The Kingdom of Italy and the Continental Blockade', 99.

against French control. In 1810, four years after the proclamation of the Berlin Decree, the entire Italian mainland was under control of the French.

But the French integration of the northern parts of Italy, mainly the region of Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto, already started in 1806 and it went very smoothly. This region was even defined as the crown jewel of Napoleon's conquests.<sup>124</sup> It was more urbanized than the rest of the peninsula and was thus more economically valuable. More importantly, the culture in the north resembled the ideas of the French enlightenment, according to Napoleon himself.<sup>125</sup> In one of his letters to the French administrators in Milan, he noticed that the Italians were far more intellectually developed than anywhere else in his empire. Municipal autonomy, with chosen mayors, were already very common in this region, unlike in the south of Italy. Therefore, it was no surprise that many inhabitants of the northern regions were very content with Napoleon's integration of Italy. Resistance against integration was very rare, especially in the upper classes of Italian society<sup>126</sup>. These upper classes, consisting of landowners, merchants and intellectuals were considered to be very capable, as they shared the same cultural values as the French. Unlike in other regions throughout Europe, many intellectual Italians from the northern regions were giving positions of authority.<sup>127</sup> Instead of being replaced with their French counterparts, these intellectuals became ministers, officers or received other titles of political significance. On top of that, they were even brought over from Italy to other regions within the French Empire in order to spread the French-Italian culture and, thus, increase the effectiveness of the integration. This shows that Napoleon valued cultural similarities intensively.<sup>128</sup> Yet, there was one group within this upper class that was not considered trustworthy. Merchants were seen as vulnerable to British influence, and were therefore a risk for Italian economic integration.

As seen before, the maritime trade in Italy drastically declined, leading towards an economic crisis in many port cities.<sup>129</sup> Cities like Genoa and Trieste, which were considered to be among the most important port cities in Europe before the war, were now facing bankruptcy. However, in order to save the Italian economy, France actively traded with the region. Between 1807 and 1810, the import increased with 18% and the export with 28%. In fact, France was accountable for more than half of all Italian imports and exports. This shows that Napoleon wanted to sustain the Italian economy, mostly in order to prevent British smuggling.<sup>130</sup> However, this strategy failed. Smuggling had become the most important economic activity in the port cities, mostly due to the despair of the inhabitants. On top of that, illegal trafficking of goods was much more common in Italy than in other European states before the Napoleonic wars. Italian merchants already had networks which made it easier to expand the smuggling across the borders into other European states. In order to end this illegal activity, and to further stimulate Italian integration, Napoleon soon allowed the French customs to protect the Italian borders, according to his letter to the Italian administration.<sup>131</sup> On top of that, he introduced the same laws and punishments as were already common in France. Napoleon also sent a small part of the French army and the secret police to the Viceroy of Italy, the stepson of Napoleon, in order to catch illegal activity such as smuggling, but also to keep an eye on the merchant class. The

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<sup>124</sup> Ambrogio A. Caiani, 'Collaborators, Collaboration, and the Problems of Empire in Napoleonic Italy, the Oppizzoni Affair, 1805–1807', *The Historical Journal* 60, no. 2 (2017), 386.

<sup>125</sup> Napoleon Bonaparte, *Napoleon Bonaparte: correspondance generale, No. 10224, Milan 18 prairial an XIII 5 juin 1805.*, 15 no.10224 (Paris: Fondation Napoleon, 2004), 386-388.

<sup>126</sup> Caiani, 'Collaborators, Collaboration, and the Problems of Empire in Napoleonic Italy, the Oppizzoni Affair, 1805–1807', 387.

<sup>127</sup> Bonaparte, *Napoleon Bonaparte: correspondance generale, No. 10224, Milan 18 prairial an XIII 5 juin 1805.*

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Dincecco and Federico, 'Napoleon in Italy: A Legacy of Institutional Reform?', 150-151.

<sup>130</sup> Grab, 'The Kingdom of Italy and the Continental Blockade', 103.

<sup>131</sup> Napoleon Bonaparte, *Napoleon Bonaparte: correspondance generale, À Eugène, vice-roi d'Italie, No. 10224, Milan, 18 prairial an XIII [7 juin 1805]*, 15 10224 (Paris: Fondation Napoleon, 2004), 5.

chance to get caught drastically increased, as did the punishment for the smugglers that were caught. Thus, smuggling decreased, leading to more economic integration as the Italian people became more dependent on French goods, just like Napoleon intended.<sup>132</sup>

It was not just the trading sector that led towards economic integration. Other sectors within the Italian economy also contributed. First of all, the agricultural sector played a key role. As the French had abolished the many small Italian states and replaced it with two vassal kingdoms, most of the internal trade barriers ceased to exist.<sup>133</sup> This resulted in a massive increase of income for the Italian farmers. However, as the French wanted to save the Italian economy through exporting their products to the Italian peninsula, most farmers were worried that their local products would be replaced with the cheaper French counterparts. Therefore, farmers began to modernize and increase their methods in order to maximize their profits and lower the price of their goods. When, in 1810, there was a huge shortage of grain in France, Napoleon ordered to import huge amounts of grain from Italy.<sup>134</sup> In fact, the Italian grain was the only foreign agricultural product that was allowed to be bought in such a huge amount. This method remained through the years, as France tried to decrease their dependence on their own farmers, mostly as they were conscripted for the war. Slowly, the Italian regions became an agricultural addition to the French, showing how much the agricultural sector had been integrated within the French Empire.

Secondly, the Italian industries also played an important role. Napoleon had ordered to build new roads within Italy and even across the Alps, in order to improve the movement of his troops.<sup>135</sup> Industrial goods, such as silk, were now much easier to be exported to Germany, Switzerland and France. Besides, the Italian silk was considered to be of excellent quality, and was known all throughout Europe. Yet, silk was not as popular in the rest of Europe as it had been in Great Britain. More importantly, the silk production in France was already sufficient and did not need the Italian competition.<sup>136</sup> In order to face this competition, Napoleon supported French silk by adding new protectionist measures, leading to a sharp decrease in the profits of the Italian silk producers. The Italian industrialists were therefore forced to adapt in order to survive.<sup>137</sup> Instead of focusing on the end products, like silk, they switched towards the production of raw materials. Due to the massive demand for colonial goods in France, Italian industrialists started to focus on creating substitutables for these products. For example, as sugarcanes could no longer be imported, these industrialists started to grow sugar beets to replace the sugar. They tried the same with other colonial goods, like cocoa and coffee. Although most of these adaptations failed, it shows that the Italian industries were fully dependent on French demand, creating new products just in order to deliver to France and secure their income.

Thus, this paper can conclude that the inner empire was very integrated with France. The culture, or language, of Italy and Belgium were shared with the French, resulting in less resistance among the local population. On top of that, less institutions had to be replaced or introduced, which meant that Napoleon could focus more on the economic part of the integration. Both of the regions had significant economic value for France. Belgium became the armsmith of the Empire, mostly due to French investments in the coal mines and other industries. On the other hand, Italy became the food supplier of France, exporting major amounts of grain. Their industries were replaced by their French

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 2-4.

<sup>133</sup> Dincecco and Federico, 'Napoleon in Italy: A Legacy of Institutional Reform?', 152.

<sup>134</sup> Grab, 'The Kingdom of Italy and the Continental Blockade', 107.

<sup>135</sup> Dincecco and Federico, 'Napoleon in Italy: A Legacy of Institutional Reform?', 152.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 151.

counterparts, resulting in the deliverance of raw materials to the French Empire. Both areas were fully integrated because of their cultural similarities and their economic value.

## **Conclusion**

Although the Berlin Decree itself does not show any evidence that suggests that the Continental System led towards European economic integration, the different cases in Europe prove otherwise. The process of economic integration was mostly driven by cultural similarities and economic value to the French Empire. The Intermediate Zones, which were not controlled by France and did not share the same laws, were mostly left alone. Due to the lack of economic value, distance between these regions and France, lack of cultural similarities and disloyalty towards Napoleon, these regions were not economically integrated. Although there were some attempts made, the challenges for integration were too big. The regions in the Outer Empire were less different compared to Denmark and Russia. On top of that, the Outer Empire was easier to reach, mainly due to the French investments in infrastructure. These regions were integrated up to a certain point, as French institutions were introduced. Also, the Outer Empire had important economic value to France, like the industrial capabilities of the Rhineland. However, the integration definitely faced resistance, as their economy faced decline due to the Blockade and due to the French influence in their own region. Finally, the Inner Empire was the most successfully integrated into France. Due to their cultural similarities with the French, Napoleon faced almost zero resistance against his integration measures. Both Italy and Belgium became part of his empire, providing arms and food for the French population and its military. Any cultural differences were quickly abolished, like the Dutch language in Belgium, creating unity within the Inner Empire. Overall, it can be concluded that Napoleon only fully integrated regions that were both of economic significance and had, almost, the same cultural background. Besides, it was mostly in order to increase his war efforts that he integrated his Inner Empire regions. Therefore, economic integration was not used as a measure to increase cooperation in Europe, but it was a tactic in order to weaken Great Britain and strengthen the First French Empire.

## Chapter 2: The European Union

### The Treaty of Maastricht

Concluded in 1992 between the twelve members of the European Communities, the Treaty of Maastricht is regarded as the foundation treaty for the European Union. Signed by Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany in the Dutch city of Maastricht, the treaty introduced new laws and institutions. The treaty had one goal, further integration of the European continent.<sup>138</sup> Therefore, it was decided that this process would consist of three stages. The First Stage is a rather simple one. It merely dictated that the countries who signed the Treaty would participate in further economic integration in order to create a single European market. Secondly, there was the Second Stage, which includes the European Economic Area and the European Exchange Rate Mechanism.<sup>139</sup> This meant that the members of the EU, alongside Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, would all form one single internal market. Governed by the same laws, this meant that there was now freedom of goods, persons, service and capital between all EU members. On top of that, countries that did not accept the Euro were now able to join the ERM, resulting in a stable exchange rate with the new European currency. Finally, the Third Stage included the introduction of the Euro and the European Economic Monetary Union.<sup>140</sup> On top of that, an European Central Bank was created in order to regulate the Euro and the economies of the EU. According to the Treaty, the EU members who accepted the Third Stage would all have the same currency, share the same financial agency, the ECB, and participate in economic policies in order to progressively integrate the economies of the EU.

Unlike the Berlin Decree, the motivation behind this treaty shows clearly why European integration was of such importance to the members of the EC. During the 1980s and the early 1990s, it was made clear that the United States and Japan had become the most important economies in the world.<sup>141</sup> The European economies were losing their position within the world economic system, while states, like China and Brazil, were on track to surpass Italy and France. In sum, the major European countries feared that they would lose their economic importance and thus their power. In order to save their position, it was decided that cooperation would be the only chance for a bright economic future. With the removal of national barriers for goods, the increase of trading between the European countries could provide them with an extra economic boost that was necessary to protect their position against the upcoming countries. Secondly, European integration was deemed as necessary because there was a lot of suspicion between the European major powers, especially between France and (West) Germany.<sup>142</sup> Many feared that inevitable unified Germany, as happened in 1991, would once again lead towards a war in Europe. Destroying the progress of peace and slow economic integration in the case of eventual war, the major powers had to either trust Germany or come up with a different solution. Furthermore, a simple trade agreement, like the EC would be easy to control by Germany, as they had the most important economic capabilities.<sup>143</sup> However, if the EC would increase their level of integration then the other countries could improve their own economic position, while also creating a Germany that would have been dependent on cooperation in order to

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<sup>138</sup> Treaty on European Union, 4.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-20.

<sup>141</sup> Michael J. Baun, 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics: Germany, France, and European Integration', *Political Science Quarterly* 110, no. 4 (1995), 608.

<sup>142</sup> Baun, 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics', 609.

<sup>143</sup> Treaty on European Union, 4.

improve the German economy. This mechanism would allow nations like France to be able to control Germany and prevent another war.

On top of that, some objectives were set, by the EU, that were supposed to be achieved through this treaty. First of all, this treaty was supposed to achieve economic progress within all members.<sup>144</sup> Through the use of one single European currency and the abolishment of internal frontiers, member states were encouraged to cooperate and aid each other with their economic progress. With the introduction of the new coin, trade was supposed to be easier and more efficient, resulting in increased profits. Secondly, one of the main objectives of the treaty was the creation of a common foreign policy.<sup>145</sup> By creating a single foreign policy, it would have been easier for the EU to create trade agreements with foreign countries, like the US and China. These treaties would have been far more efficient and rewarding for all members of the EU. Instead of the pursment of individual agenda's, the EU could now negotiate as one structure, removing conflicts of interest and thus improving their economy.

Thus, the Treaty of Maastricht can be seen as essential to European economic integration. By setting up the three stages, it clearly showed the road that the EU was walking on. This would eventually lead towards a very integrated European economy. Motivated by the fear of losing their influence in the world system, and the fear of German dominance, the European powers came to an agreement that cooperation would be the only solution in order to prevent being sidelined and lose the stability in the continent. Therefore, a few objectives were, which stimulated cooperation and economic growth within and between all EU members. Unlike the Berlin Decree, the Treaty of Maastricht was fully focused on the integration of Europe, instead of the French interests.

## Minimal Integration

Denmark has always seemed to be the odd one out, being a small nation that has never accepted the Euro. Despite this, it was, and still is, an influential country in the EU. According to the Treaty of Maastricht, Denmark had the right to refuse any sort of participation in the Third Stage of European integration.<sup>146</sup> This third stage would be the introduction of the Euro, replacing the old national currencies with one European one, and the creation of a common monetary policy. However, Denmark had always been a minimalist member within the European Communities. The Danish population was told by their politicians that the EC would be nothing but a customs union with some additional rules to support and encourage economic improvements.<sup>147</sup> This so-called 'foot-dragging' policy aimed mostly at profiting from the benefits, while blocking any form of further commitment to the EC. By keeping a low profile, Denmark profited enormously from the free-trade and the agricultural agreements between the members of the EC. Yet, there were no institutional cooperations between Denmark and the other members.<sup>148</sup> The Danish representatives rejected every attempt of federalism within the EC. Naturally, this conservative policy was extremely popular among the Danish population. Without any new political or cultural changes, they still experienced strong economic improvements.

Therefore, it was no surprise that the Danish people first had to vote in order to accept the integration measures.<sup>149</sup> As stated in the Treaty, and in the Danish constitution, a referendum was

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<sup>144</sup> Treaty on European Union, 4.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>147</sup> Finn Laursen, 'The Maastricht Treaty: Implications for the Nordic Countries', *Cooperation and Conflict* 28, no. 2 (1993), 120.

<sup>148</sup> Nikolaj Petersen, 'Denmark and the European Union 1985-96: A Two-Level Analysis', *Cooperation and Conflict* 31, no. 2 (1996), 190.

<sup>149</sup> Treaty on European Union, 89.

needed in order for Denmark to participate in further European integration. What was surprising was the outcome of the referendum.<sup>150</sup> Even though all political parties were in favor of the treaty, a small majority of the Danish population voted against further integration. Most people claimed that they were too afraid of Denmark losing its independence, others feared the loss of the Danish cultural identity with the introduction of the Euro. In general, they mostly voted against the Treaty to prevent loss of political autonomy. Although most of the voters admitted that they had limited knowledge about the Treaty, it did show that the Danish population was not very enthusiastic about further integration.<sup>151</sup> With 50.7% of all votes against the Treaty, the Danish government had to negotiate a solution that was both beneficial for their own population as well as for the process of integration. Backed by Great Britain, which wanted all the EC members to agree on the treaty, Denmark submitted a few demands against the Third Stage and demanded the improvement of the internal market.<sup>152</sup> A few months before the agreement on the Treaty of Maastricht, the members of the EC gathered together to discuss the Danish demands. Surprisingly, the members decided quickly that it was necessary to accept these demands to prevent further delay in the process of European integration. It was agreed that, as long as Denmark fully supported the first two stages of economic integration, they could refuse the Third Stage.

Thus, the Treaty stated that Denmark had the right to opt out of several articles concerning the creation of the monetary union.<sup>153</sup> This meant that, for example, Denmark was not forced to be part of the Governing Council of the European Central Bank. On top of that, it had the right to keep their current currency instead of replacing it with the Euro. It has to be stated that article 109, which is the most important article that Denmark had refused, is mostly about economic institutional changes to the member states. Not surprisingly, this article is the only economic article that Denmark refused to sign. As seen during the referendum, the Danish people were mostly concerned with the loss of their own institutions, which is considered to be a part of their own culture and identity.<sup>154</sup> Other articles regarding economic integration were accepted by Denmark. By opting out of article 109, the Danish government created an exchange rate system between the Danish Krone and the Euro.<sup>155</sup> Furthermore, the other members of the EU had agreed that a certain price stability between the different states would be of key importance to further integration. If most members had approximately the same level of inflation, then trading goods would be equally spread between the different states. This would encourage trade, thus increasing integration. However, as Denmark opted out of this article, it had no right to participate in this system.<sup>156</sup> There was no price stability between Denmark and the other members of the EU, creating a more unequal distribution of trade within Europe. Initially, this seems to discourage European integration.

Since 1993, Denmark has been a member of the EU, although it chooses to participate less in economic integration than other members. Some historians, like Nikolaj Petersen, have stated that Denmark is being penalized by the decision to opt out of the EMU, the European Monetary Union.<sup>157</sup> The EU was not defending the exchange rate of the Danish Krone, which could result in heavy fluctuations between both currencies. This makes trade and economic cooperation between members of the EU and Denmark challenging in times of economic instability. Furthermore, Denmark can not participate in any form of decision making regarding the Eurozone, while it has limited participation in this zone. In other words, the EU can make any decision about their currency and other economic

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<sup>150</sup> Laursen, 'The Maastricht Treaty', 129.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>152</sup> Petersen, 'Denmark and the European Union 1985-96', 201.

<sup>153</sup> Treaty on European Union, 89.

<sup>154</sup> Laursen, 'The Maastricht Treaty', 129.

<sup>155</sup> Treaty on European Union, 15.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>157</sup> Petersen, 'Denmark and the European Union 1985-96', 204.

institutions without any Danish say. These decisions would heavily affect Denmark, as it has to constantly react to the EU in order to have a beneficial exchange rate compared to the EU. When the introduction of the Euro came closer and closer, the Danish government became unsure about the decision to reject further economic integration.<sup>158</sup> In 1998, the Danish prime minister argued that a referendum had to be held with the question if Denmark should join the EMU and introduce the Euro. According to him, it was essential for the survival of the Danish economy, which was extremely dependent on trade with the EU. European integration had proven to be a huge economic success and the introduction of the Euro was predicted to bring even more benefits to this process. On top of that, Finland and Sweden had also become members of the EU. This resulted in more integration between the Nordic countries, including Denmark, and continental Europe. The Nordic way of governance, which was part of the Danish identity, had slowly been replaced by the European way of governance without much trouble.<sup>159</sup> Although Sweden also decided to opt out of the EMU and the Euro, due to the same fears as Denmark, it showed that European economic integration had a bright future.

It is exactly this process that is the most important Danish attribution to European integration, it could even be seen as essential in the future of the EU. By showing the other European countries that a small nation, like Denmark, could participate in the EU while also keeping part of their own national identity by opting out of the EMU, it showed that it was possible to balance national identity with European integration. As Denmark is not the only country that struggled to answer if the Euro would threaten their own culture, it proved that other countries did not need to choose between further integration or retaining their own identity.<sup>160</sup> As of 2024, there are seven countries, including Denmark, who choose to not be a part of the EMU while participating in the European Union, thus increasing European integration. Without the Danish demands to opt out, this system might not have existed, which would have led towards less countries joining the EU. Even with Denmark's minimalist approach to integration, it still delivered a key contribution to the expansion of the Union.

Another country that was able to demand the right to opt out of certain articles in the Treaty of Maastricht without losing its influence on the process of European economic integration is Great Britain. Like Denmark, Great Britain also did not want to lose its own currency or its economic independence. As the Treaty of Maastricht states, the United Kingdom was not included in the articles, mostly article 109, regarding the Euro and the EMU.<sup>161</sup> On top of that, there are almost three pages in the Treaty regarding the British's rights to refuse further integration, thus staying at the Second Stage of European integration. These pages include having no rights to participate in the ECB, no financial aid from the ECB and the right to have its own monetary policy.<sup>162</sup> In other words, Great Britain had almost zero say in the economy of the EU. Contradictory, the British economy was already 'Europeanized' even before the Treaty of Maastricht and a single currency would have stabilized and improved their economy even more, according to some economists.<sup>163</sup> Most British businesses were already prepared to switch towards the Euro and encouraged the government to join the EMU. Furthermore, they wanted Great Britain to compete with the best economies of the world. Unlike Denmark, which had a less ambitious economy, British economists were convinced that the new European system would save their economy at least thirteen billion pounds.<sup>164</sup> Yet, the Treaty

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<sup>158</sup> Lykke Friis, 'The Battle Over Denmark: Denmark and the European Union', *Scandinavian Studies* 74, no. 3 (2002), 384.

<sup>159</sup> Friis, 'The Battle Over Denmark', 388.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 388-390.

<sup>161</sup> Treaty on European Union, 88-89.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 87-89.

<sup>163</sup> Mark Aspinwall, 'Odd Man out: Rethinking British Policy on European Monetary Integration', *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 3 (2003), 359.

<sup>164</sup> Aspinwall, 'Odd Man Out', 359.



explicitly states that the United Kingdom shall have complete control of their own monetary policy, without any influence from the EU.<sup>165</sup> If the British economy and their business holders would have profited from the Euro, then it begs the question what led to the rejection of the Third Stage.

Although most historians and economists do not agree about the definitive reason behind the rejection of the EMU by the British, some of them do note that it had more to do with cultural differences than economic insecurity. One of them, IR specialist Robert Cooper, stated that Great Britain did not want to participate in the monetary union as it was not made for and by the British.<sup>166</sup> France and Germany, with the Benelux countries, had always been in favor of the EMU, even before the Treaty of Maastricht. Therefore, France and Germany decided to set up the plans to create this system. Due to the speculative future of the EMU and the fact that it was an idea set in continental Europe, the British government decided not to spend much attention on it. As Cooper describes it, the UK was busy facing real problems, rather than philosophize the Europe of the future.<sup>167</sup> But when the EMU became reality in the years before the Treaty of Maastricht, it basically represented everything that the British government did not want. The monetary union included French-German economic norms and values, which were also common in the Benelux. For example, their economies were much more focused on free-trade in Europe, while Great Britain was more skeptical about the future of Europe as an economic market. But by then it was too late, as the UK was never part of all the preparations, the other members never seriously considered the British counterarguments against the EMU.

This conflict between the UK and the continental members was one of the reasons behind the troubled relation between Great Britain and the EU. For example, when the EU banned British beef in 1996, out of fear for the spread of a disease, the British population and government saw it as an attack on the British economy.<sup>168</sup> Meanwhile, the Treaty of Maastricht, which was signed by the UK, states that the EU has the right to ban certain products in case they are a risk to their population.<sup>169</sup> Yet, the British felt attacked and feared that their sovereignty was at stake. Therefore, Prime Minister John Major declared a policy of non-cooperation with the Union, which almost lasted a whole year. This aggressive political reaction was necessary mainly because EU criticism was very popular among the British population. This shows the fragile balance between Great Britain and the European Union. What started as an attempt to protect the European population from diseases had resulted in a political war between the two parties.<sup>170</sup> Yet, this example shows how much the British economy was integrated in the EU. The ability of the Union to ban goods, or allow them, reveals the amount of power that this European agency had on the British economy. This is because the First and Second Stage of European integration already contributed a lot to the integration of Europe. These minimalist stages were both signed by Great Britain and Denmark, making them the only two out of the original participants of the Treaty of Maastricht that never accepted the Third Stage.<sup>171</sup>

This minimalist approach to European integration was not the only contribution of Great Britain to this process. In fact, the British government had always pushed for the enlargement of the EC, even before the Treaty of Maastricht.<sup>172</sup> Ironically, this wish is stated in the Treaty at the very back of the document.<sup>173</sup> In a very small declaration, it states that the EU could potentially be

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<sup>165</sup> Treaty on European Union, 87-89.

<sup>166</sup> Robert Cooper, 'Britain and Europe', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 88, no. 6 (2012), 1196.

<sup>167</sup> Cooper, 'Britain and Europe', 1196.

<sup>168</sup> Aspinwall, 'Odd Man Out', 347.

<sup>169</sup> Treaty on European Union, 5-7.

<sup>170</sup> Aspinwall, 'Odd Man Out', 347.

<sup>171</sup> Laursen, 'The Maastricht Treaty', 120.

<sup>172</sup> Cooper, 'Britain and Europe', 1197.

<sup>173</sup> Treaty on European Union, 101.

enlarged, but an election has to take place first. The fact that the key contribution of the UK towards European integration is stated in just a few sentences at the back of the Treaty shows clearly that Great Britain had little influence in the process of integrating Europe. The British government had several motivations behind the enlargement of the EU. One of them being the fact that a large Union would result in less influential France and Germany.<sup>174</sup> On top of that, through actively pushing for the enlargement of the EU, the UK had the possibility to improve relations with the minor powers in continental Europe, thus increasing its own influence in both the Union and in the continent itself. But more importantly, Great Britain wanted to share its liberal policies with the rest of Europe. By including countries in Central or Eastern Europe, the EU could provide the economic boost that was necessary to increase political and financial stability to the region. These countries, including former communist states like Hungary and Poland, were culturally and economically contained from the West. However, the UK felt that including these countries in the process of European integration would reinstate the relations between East and West.<sup>175</sup> Together with Germany, which profited enormously from its neighboring countries joining the EU, the UK actively lobbied for enlargement. By offering aid to the potential members in order to fulfill the requirements in order to join, Great Britain started the process of integrating the economies of Eastern Europe before they even had the chance to join the EU. The enlargement of the EU in 2004, with seven former communist countries joining, is seen as one of the most important steps in the process of integrating the European economies. Only thirteen years after the fall of the Eastern Bloc, there was no longer a separation between Western and Eastern Europe. Therefore, this has been one of the most important British contributions to European economic integration.

Both Denmark and Great Britain had a similar approach to economic integration. Both rejected the Third Stage, opting out of the Euro and the EMU. Ironically, their minimalist method to this process led to the enlargement of the EU, thus integrating even more European countries. As for Denmark, the population rejected further integration out of fear for the loss of their own identity. In order to still be able to be part of the Union, Denmark decided to demand the right to opt out of the Third Stage, resulting in a system where they would keep their own economic institutions. This paved the way for other European countries who struggled with the same problem, as seven countries are now using the Danish system. While there was more support for the Euro and the EMU in Great Britain among the population, the government still decided to opt out of this stage. Due to the troubled relations between the UK and the EU, combined with the lack of influence in the creation of the EMU, it was decided that participating in the Third Stage was not worth the risk. However, the British government did actively push for the enlargement of the EU, creating a bridge between Eastern and Western Europe. Thus, both countries made key contributions to the integration of Europe by enlarging the EU.

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<sup>174</sup> Cooper, 'Britain and Europe', 1197.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 1197.

## Second-level Integration

As the country which had been fined the most by the European commission during the 1980s, Italy had a troubling relationship with the process of European integration.<sup>176</sup> It was often unable to comply with the rules that were set by the other members of the European Community. On top of that, the Italian government did not have the means to focus on further European integration. As they were the only reliable military partner of the US in the Mediterranean Sea, the Italian office of Foreign Affairs was often too occupied with the situation in this area during the final years of the Cold War. Furthermore, their national political situation was complicated. With around 40% of the people voting for the communist party, there was only little support for further integration with capitalist Western Europe.<sup>177</sup> Between 1987 and 1989, only three years before the Treaty, Italy experienced the fall of three cabinets, resulting in political instability and slow political activities. With the Italian government paralyzed, state spendings started to grow significantly without actually improving the Italian economy. Early plans for political and economic integration were therefore never taken seriously. Especially with the bad shape of Italy's economy, the government could not afford to participate in these plans. The introduction of, potentially, cheaper and better products from Western Europe in the Italian market could have been devastating to the country. Instead of focusing on possible solutions, the Italian politicians quickly rejected any involvement with these early plans.

Yet, after another failed government in 1989, new elections were held, providing the stability that Italy needed in order to finally participate in the progress of European integration. The communist party was losing popularity and Giulio Andreotti, the former minister of foreign affairs, was chosen as the prime minister. Furthermore, there was a non-binding referendum on the increased powers of the EC. Surprisingly, 88% of all Italians voted yes, despite the political instability and the support for communism. Thus, European integration was seen as extremely important for the Italian population.<sup>178</sup> Many felt that the communist and Eastern European approach to their economic situation failed miserably. On top of that the political situation was in favor of more Western inspired political parties, which were supporting European integration. Cooperation with Western Europe had proven to be successful, according to the Italian population. The NATO and the European Communities were all regarded as a success, protecting Italy from military aggression and stimulating the Italian industries.<sup>179</sup> On the other hand, the Eastern bloc was not regarded to be that powerful anymore. This resulted in many Italians realizing that cooperation and integration with Western Europe would be the best choice.

However, the Italian government noticed the popular support too late, as they only surveyed it in 1989. The main framework of the Treaty of Maastricht was already set up, mostly by France and Germany.<sup>180</sup> Italy's contribution to the Treaty was therefore already going to be very limited. But with the support of the population, they had to ensure that they did contribute to the process of integration. On top of that, the Italian political culture, consisting of elements like federalism and democracy, perfectly fitted into the European idea of economic integration combined with a political union.<sup>181</sup> Yet, in the run-up to the Treaty, the idea of a political union was slowly fading away. Instead the focus was diverted to a monetary union, together with a single European currency. This was a disastrous decision for the Italian government. The Treaty of Maastricht had clear rules, which were directly

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<sup>176</sup> Antonio Varsori, 'The Andreotti Governments and the Maastricht Treaty: Between European Hopes and Domestic Constraints', *Journal of European Integration History* 19 (1 January 2013), 26.

<sup>177</sup> Varsori, 'The Andreotti Governments and the Maastricht Treaty', 25-26.

<sup>178</sup> Jeffrey A Frieden, 'Making Commitments: France and Italy in the European Monetary System, 1979-1985', in *The Political Economy Of European Monetary Unification*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2001), 43-45.

<sup>179</sup> Frieden, 'Making Commitments', 44.

<sup>180</sup> Treaty on European Union, 1-4.

<sup>181</sup> Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, 'Italy and Europe: A Fruitful Interaction', *Daedalus* 130, no. 2 (2001), 24.

taken from the French-German framework, on when a country could participate in the EMU and take the Euro as their currency.<sup>182</sup> For example, countries could not have a bigger debt than 60% of their GDP and their budget deficits could not be bigger than 3%. Before Italy signed the Treaty of Maastricht, its economy was in a terrible shape. With a debt containing more than 100% of the Italian GDP, on top of a currency which was devalued by 40% and massive budget deficits.<sup>183</sup> Therefore, it had no right to accept the Euro as their currency. Yet, support for European economic integration was so high, as seen in the referendum of 1989, that the Italian government had no right to reject the Treaty and the progress of integration.

As the Treaty stated, countries had until 1998 to comply with these regulations, as the Third Stage of European integration would start at the beginning of 1999.<sup>184</sup> But, without any regulations on the internal market, international competition from other states within the EU could have been disastrous for the Italian economy, possibly even leading to bankruptcy.<sup>185</sup> It had no experience with an open market economy, as most economic sectors were based upon their own regional traditions. Italian manufacturers, with exception from the major companies, were mostly exporting to their own region, decreasing competitions in the national economy. The Treaty, however, forbids the harm of other economies that are competing within this system of open market.<sup>186</sup> Therefore, Italy had to oppose the details of the French-German framework, while still fully supporting the economic integration and protecting their own economy. By adding layers of protection for national governments in order to buy time to reshape their economy towards an European open market, Andreotti hoped to change the French-German plans. Among these protection measures is the European Investment Bank, regulating European investments into national economies. But, the most important layer was the introduction of the European central bank.<sup>187</sup> This bank, also known as the ECB, had the task to implement the monetary policy of the EU, while also managing the financial reserves of the member states.<sup>188</sup> In other words, with the aid of the ECB, Italy could bypass its own national politics, which caused the terrible state of their economy in order to prepare for the Third Stage of economic integration. Furthermore, the ECB would aid national institutions with improving their economies through investments and providing consultancy for financial legislation. By adding this financial institution to the plans of the Treaty, Italy also contributed to the process of European integration. With all member states, apart from the nations that opted out of the Third Stage, sharing one central bank, financial cooperation would be much easier. Out of fear of being cut out of the EMU, which would have made Italy's economic situation even worse, Italy also started to act as a negotiator between the other member states.<sup>189</sup> The idea behind this strategy was simple, if Italy successfully negotiated the Treaty it would show the other members that Italy had such a political value to the process of European integration that it could not be cut out of the EMU. It was therefore that all early copies of the Treaty and the final version itself were sent to Rome, in order for the Italian diplomats and lawyers to study.<sup>190</sup> This strategy proved to be so successful, that the Treaty of Maastricht states that every further European treaty regarding integration had to be sent to Italian officials.

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<sup>182</sup> Treaty on European Union, 19-22.

<sup>183</sup> Willem Buiters et al., 'Excessive Deficits: Sense and Nonsense in the Treaty of Maastricht', *Economic Policy* 8, no. 16 (1993), 63-66.

<sup>184</sup> Treaty on European Union, 20.

<sup>185</sup> Padoa-Schioppa, 'Italy and Europe', 41-42.

<sup>186</sup> Treaty on European Union, 80.

<sup>187</sup> Padoa-Schioppa, 'Italy and Europe', 27.

<sup>188</sup> Treaty on European Union, 69.

<sup>189</sup> Padoa-Schioppa, 'Italy and Europe', 28.

<sup>190</sup> Treaty on European Union, 63.

Thus, Italy is the main example of second-level players, countries that have only contributed within the existing frameworks of the Treaty of Maastricht. While the country faced economic and political struggles, the Italian people still believed that European cooperation was essential. Yet, the Italian situation was so bad that they technically could not join the EMU and use the Euro as their own currency. Afraid of losing their last lifebuoy, the Italian government sought to increase their efforts in the process of integration. By adding new elements that could protect national economies, such as the ECB, they could protect their own financial situation while also encouraging further integration. While working within the created rules and laws, Italy still managed to contribute to the process of European economic integration.

### **Core of European Integration**

One of the biggest supporters of European integration was France. Even before the Treaty, the French government strongly believed that the creation of an European federal system would be the only solution to the geopolitical problems that the continent faced at the end of the Cold War.<sup>191</sup> During the 1980s it was just a matter of time before Germany reunified, which could potentially lead towards the rise of extreme nationalism or even another war. Given the French-German history, France was afraid that an united Germany would once again try to dominate Europe, whether in a military or economic way. On top of that, the French government was afraid that an unified Germany would result in less French influence in Europe. West Germany had strong economic relations with much, if not all, of Western Europe, just as East Germany had strong economic relations with Eastern Europe. An unified Germany would mean that the country was in the right position to become the economic center of

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<sup>191</sup> Baun, 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics', 609.

Europe.<sup>192</sup> France would eventually be sidelined in the progress of European economic integration. Thus, the French government had two choices, either the unification had to be delayed so France could improve its position within Europe, or it had to actively push for an integrated Europe where member states could balance each other. Attempts to postpone the unification failed, although France did reinstate its relations with the neighbors of East Germany, increasing their political power in the continent. Thus it was decided that new steps in the process of European integration would be the only way to control the problem of German unification. More importantly, the economy of Germany needed to be controlled and checked, so any proof of remilitarisation could be easily checked by the EU. This resulted in France actively lobbying for the creation of the EMU, which would integrate all member states into one open economy, controlled by an European financial agency.<sup>193</sup> On the other hand, Germany was actively pushing for a more political focused EU. By creating a political union, decision making would have been more centralized, resulting in a smooth process of integration.

The Treaty of Maastricht was considered to be a French victory. According to the Treaty, a political union was by no means an objective, thus it was not discussed by the members of the EU.<sup>194</sup> Furthermore, the power of the European Parliament was severely decreased and was now only limited to the EU's foreign and security policies.<sup>195</sup> This meant that the EU had no political power over the economies of the European member states. This power was only in the hands of the EBC and the EMU. This was one of the biggest demands of France, it did not want to lose its political sovereignty to an agency that was partly controlled by Germany. Yet, only 51% of the French population voted yes to the Treaty of Maastricht after the referendum of 1992.<sup>196</sup> Although the Treaty did not obligate France to hold a referendum, it had to be accepted by either a voting in the parliament or through a vote by the population.<sup>197</sup> Especially after the shocking result of the Danish referendum, the French president Mitterand wanted to show Europe that France was able to unite for the future of Europe. On top of that, if the French referendum had been a huge success, it would have shown the members of the EU that France was ready for their leadership role within the Union. The opposite turned out to be true. France would be, almost literally, divided in half between those who supported the Treaty and those who did not. One of the main reasons behind the division within the French population was the economic part of the Treaty. A huge part of the Treaty of Maastricht was focused on the integration of Europe from an international perspective.<sup>198</sup> The Euro and the EMU, for example, were introduced in order to make it easier for the members to trade with each other. On top of that, the introduction of other economic institutions, such as the ECB, was also more focused on international integration. In sum, European integration as stated in the Treaty of Maastricht was mostly a process between states. The common people would have been mainly left alone, apart from the introduction of the new currency. Therefore, most of the French population was not as interested in the Treaty and the process of European integration.<sup>199</sup> When the referendum was announced, suddenly the French people had to invest time in the topic, studying the effects of the Treaty on their country and on their own situation. This is exactly why France was so divided. The lower levels of the population were naturally more concerned with their own economic situation, as they either had a lower salary or less opportunities to develop themselves. Farmers and workers, for example, were most afraid that their work would be taken away due to the Treaty.<sup>200</sup> This can be explained by the fact that the Treaty of Maastricht states

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 609.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 611.

<sup>194</sup> Treaty on European Union, 4.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>196</sup> Lewis-Beck and Morey, 'The French "Petit Oui"', 65.

<sup>197</sup> Treaty on European Union, 90.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 1-3.

<sup>199</sup> Lewis-Beck and Morey, 'The French "Petit Oui"', 66-68.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 68.

that goods are to be imported and exported without any eliminations.<sup>201</sup> From now on agricultural goods could come into France without any restrictions, making them cheaper than ever before. As most of the smaller farmers were more focused on the local market, they could not afford that the European goods would substitute their products. The same can be said about the workers, they feared that they would be easier to be replaced by workers from other European countries. On the other hand, the wealthiest part of the population was strongly in favor of the Treaty.<sup>202</sup> For instance, around 70% of the people who worked in management voted yes during the referendum. They expected that their companies would significantly benefit from the integration of the European companies. Without any restrictions, companies were now able to easily expand their business in other member states, resulting in a significant increase in their income. Thus, support among the French was clearly dependent on how the Treaty would affect their personal economic situation rather than how it would affect Europe or their own country.

However, despite this very narrow victory, France approved the Treaty.<sup>203</sup> Due to the unstable support from the population, as seen in the referendums across Europe, it was decided that the EU would mostly stick to the process that was set up by the Treaty of Maastricht. European federalism, a long wish of French politicians, was no longer seen as possible. Instead, the process of integration was shifted towards enlargement and stimulating the European economies, on top of realizing the objectives set in Maastricht. Both Germany and France were now actively working together to support Europe and the Union. As France set out new ideas regarding the improvement of the monetary union, which were backed up by Germany. Economic decisions regarding the EU were now easier, and thus faster, to make due to the implementation of these new French rules. Their new cooperation, after years of tension between the states, was made possible during the debates in Maastricht.<sup>204</sup> In the end, Germany accepted the French demand for an even stronger EMU that would be more efficient in improving the economic power of Europe. On the other hand, France would aid Germany in the creation of a new form of political union within the EU. This cooperation turned out to be quite fruitful. This French-German tandem created several new institutions, laws and reforms, giving the EU a new boost in the uncertain political situation after the Cold War.

Germany and France are two sides of the same coin, regarding their approach on European integration. Where France was trying to remain an important economic power, Germany had slowly become the economic center of Europe.<sup>205</sup> German monetary policy was dominating the continent in the 1980s, especially due to the importance of its industrial centers and its location between West and Eastern Europe. The French plans for a common European monetary system was therefore seen as unnecessary and as a threat to their economic independence. German financial institutions, such as the Bundesbank, and politicians were strongly opposed to this idea, creating high tensions between France and Germany. Especially considering the fact that West Germany was about to unite with East Germany, which would make it an even bigger economic powerhouse, further pushing France to the sidelines of European politics. Due to this fragile political balance in Western Europe, the German government decided to agree with the wishes of France to look into the creation of an European monetary union. In order to dispel fears about the German unification, the German chancellor Kohl

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<sup>201</sup> Treaty on European Union, 5.

<sup>202</sup> Lewis-Beck and Morey, 'The French "Petit Oui"', 68.

<sup>203</sup> Treaty on European Union, 1.

<sup>204</sup> Baun, 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics', 616-617.

<sup>205</sup> Baun, 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics', 608.

felt that cooperation, especially with France, would be the only way to ensure political stability.<sup>206</sup> Agreeing with the monetary union was therefore more of a sacrifice for the Germans in order to secure their unification and restore political stability in the Western Europe. It had less to do with the actual belief in the system. Yet, Germany wanted to have some form of control over the monetary union, thus focusing on creating the system.

But, Germany wanted more than just a monetary union. By focusing on more political integration within the EU, economic decision making would be improved. On top of that, a political union would be very similar to current German political traditions, with every state having their own political power within the national government.<sup>207</sup> A system of political union within the EU would have worked the same as in Germany, according to their politicians. An European parliament, with national parties representing their own country would be very similar to their German counterpart. Not only was a political union more similar to their own political culture, it also would have resulted in further economic integration. More cooperation in terms of foreign policy and an increase of European laws were sought by Germany to stimulate unity within the EU. As their economy was already the biggest, a political union would have protected this position as every member of the Union would have been able to expand their economy within the same set of rules.<sup>208</sup> If the EU was able to create a common foreign policy, then policies would be made that were beneficial for all members. Trade with other regions would have been regulated by the EU, controlling which products could be exported and which not. As Germany had the most diverse economy, it was no secret that they would be dominating this political union. Finally, political union was used as a counter offer for German national politics. If the monetary union would result in the loss of the Deutsche Mark, which it did, an important piece of German culture would be lost. However, by introducing a political union which resembled the federalist system, the German government also made sure that a piece of their culture would become European and therefore guaranteed to last.

As stated before, the German demand for a more intensive political union was denied.<sup>209</sup> Yet, the Treaty did note that a political union was something that should be achieved sooner rather than later.<sup>210</sup> Most members of the EU were convinced by the German arguments that a political union would strongly benefit Europe, and more specifically, the European economy. On top of that, they decided to agree on this topic if the German government agreed to the opt-out options with Denmark and Great Britain.<sup>211</sup> Although the Treaty of Maastricht would be too soon for further political integration, they did decide that the Treaty should be used as a starting point. By agreeing on this final act of social and economic cohesion, they agreed to research potential possibilities regarding the political union.<sup>212</sup> The future of the EU, and thus further economic integration, was set. Due to the German demands, political integration no longer seemed as a step too far. However, in the treaties that followed political integration came closer than ever. One of the highlights in creating a political union was the Treaty of Lisbon in 2008, creating the European council in the same way as Germany imagined in the 1990s.

Another demand from the German government was the guaranteed safety of the integration of the European economies. The West European Union, also known as the WEU, was a military organization founded in 1954. Its members included the Benelux, France, Italy but also the United

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid., 611.

<sup>207</sup> Simon Bulmer and William E. Paterson, 'Germany and the European Union: From "tamed Power" to Normalized Power?', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 86, no. 5 (2010), 1061.

<sup>208</sup> Bulmer and Paterson, 'Germany and the European Union', 1067.

<sup>209</sup> Treaty on European Union, 60.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>211</sup> Baun, 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics', 621.

<sup>212</sup> Treaty on European Union, 95.



Kingdom and West Germany. Yet, the organization had lost much of its power prior to 1992. But Germany wanted to guarantee the safety of the European consumers as well as the safety of the industrial sector. By revitalizing the WEU, the members of the EU could integrate their security forces, as well as their border protection organizations. This German proposal was initially met with fear, due to the history of Germany and its military power. Yet, France still agreed to revitalize the WEU. As relations in Europe were restored, the proposal was seen as a sign of friendship.<sup>213</sup> On top of that, Germany would deliver the most, as it had the biggest military capabilities in 1992. Therefore it was decided within the Treaty of Maastricht, that the members of the WEU would develop a genuine European defense system, which would make them able to secure their economies from foreign threats.<sup>214</sup> Through peacekeeping, especially in Eastern Europe, the members of the WEU were trying to bring stability and peace to these regions. The idea behind it was that a peaceful and stable country would form a perfect market for European goods and services, therefore improving the European economy. On top of that, by bringing peace and stability towards Eastern Europe, they could reshape the regions towards a Western model. This would bring this region closer to participating in the EU, thus increasing further integration.<sup>215</sup>

Therefore this thesis can conclude that Germany and France were essential to the integration of the European economies. What began as rivalry between the two countries, with France fearing another war, turned towards the two countries becoming the motor behind European economic integration. Even after the Treaty of Maastricht, both countries delivered key contributions towards this progress. France strongly pushed for the monetary union, trying to regain its political power in the European continent. Germany, on the other hand, was becoming the economic superpower of Europe after their unification. Therefore it was not too pleased with giving up their economic independence. Yet, in return for further integration, protecting their position as the economic center of Europe, they still agreed to participate with the EMU and the Treaty of Maastricht. Thus both countries sought to integrate Europe, creating an effective political tandem which resulted in much of the basis of the EU that we know today.

## Conclusion

While European economic integration under Napoleon seems to differ quite a lot in comparison with the approach of the EU, it does share some important similarities. Perhaps one of the most important ones is the importance of trade for the integration of European economics. While Napoleon's approach failed, for several reasons, he did succeed in increasing the trade between France and his vassal states. Especially the regions that were considered to be in the Outer or Inner Empire were, forced or not, changing their economies in order to become complementary to Paris. For example, Belgium started to become more industrialized in order to deliver military goods to the French empire. Both states profited extremely from this situation. The same goes for other regions, such as Northern Italy and the Netherlands. By creating the Continental System, Napoleon forced his vassals to complement their economies in order to win the war and make France the center of Europe. In a way, although the System eventually failed, he did manage to integrate the states in the Inner Empire through the use of trade. The EU also realized the importance of trade for economic integration. The introduction of the Euro and the EMU had only one main goal, making trade between the member

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<sup>213</sup> Baun, 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics', 618-619.

<sup>214</sup> Treaty on European Union, 105

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 105-107.

states easier than ever before. Having one single European currency meant that products in all of the EU could be bought with the same coins, eliminating the need for multiple economic institutions relating to the European currencies. This made trade easier and cheaper.

European integration also brings the loss of national identities. Great Britain and Denmark effectively demanded the right to opt out of further economic integration within the EU. Out of fear, the Danish people voted to resist the use of the Euro, as the Danish Krone was considered to be an important part of their culture. The same can be said for Great Britain. Although many economists wanted to participate in the Third Stage of integration, the British government did not want to lose its own currency. More importantly, the Euro and the EMU were created by the French-German political tandem. British economic values and traditions were not considered. Participating in this new system would have resulted in a loss of these parts of British culture. We see the same in Napoleonic Europe. The Dutch language in the northern part of Belgium was forced to be replaced by the French, in order to smoothen the process of integration. Although no evidence shows any sign of resistance against this order, it did result in the lack of economic development of people who did not have the chance to learn French. In the Netherlands, Napoleon tried to get rid of parts of the Dutch national identity too. Through the Continental Blockade, the Dutch were unable to participate in their beloved maritime trade, which had been an important part of Dutch culture. On top of that, French administrators were taking over the Dutch governance and there was even a French king, resulting in the end of an almost 300-year old republic. States that did share certain elements of French culture and identity were mainly left alone regarding this aspect of integration. Italian and Rhenish administrators were considered to share a part of the French identity and could stay or even be transferred to other places in the French empire, aiding the French with sharing their identity. This shows the importance of culture to economic integration in Europe, an aspect that has not been researched often enough.

One of the major differences between Napoleon's approach and the progress of the EU is the top-down policy of the French Empire in comparison with the cooperation with the EU members. Napoleon dictated every decision that was made in regards with his Continental System, as the Berlin Degree shows. Due to the militaristic character of Napoleon's integration of Europe, most regions had no say in how this process should operate. Administrators and other jobs that were responsible for the integration of his empire were often held by the French, or people with the same ideas, and they all shared their loyalty to their emperor. Regions that tried to resist any form of integration were invaded, as seen in Russia and the Netherlands. Contradictory, the European economic integration by the EU is a complicated political game between all its member states. Measures to integrate their economies, like the ones that are stated within the Treaty of Maastricht are not just dictated by one single person but are being negotiated for years. For example, the fact that the Treaty states anything about a political union only happened due to the concessions made by the French government because the German government made concessions as well. Even countries with limited political influence, like Italy, still managed to add new elements to the Treaty of Maastricht, contributing to the process of European economic integration. Countries and regions that were part of Napoleon's Continental System did not have this power.

The lessons that can be taken from both cases can be used in the future of the EU. Nowadays, it seems inevitable that Europe will integrate their economies even more. Yet, by looking at how the Continental System and the Treaty of Maastricht have contributed to the process, we can learn what to do and what not to do in the future of European integration. However, this thesis has not studied every region and state that has made a contribution to the process. On top of that, it also has not studied every single contribution that Napoleon and the EU has made towards European integration. This means that further research remains necessary in order to get a complete image on the different contributions that were made to bring the European economies together. This could reveal new information, gaining more knowledge about European integration. This can be helpful for the future

of the EU, especially nowadays with nationalism on the rise. How the past contributors have dealt with cultural differences can be extremely helpful for the future of European integration.

It is therefore obvious why Euroscepticism is such a huge problem. As this thesis has concluded, the contribution of Napoleon and the EU to the process of European economic integration have not always led to an improved national state. Brexit can be explained by the lack of influence that Great Britain had in the Treaty and the creation of Europe. The case of Napoleon showed how common resistance was in the regions where cultural identities were taken away in order to smoothen the process. Banning overseas trade led to smuggling and protests, resisting further measures of integration. This thesis has taught us that taking away certain political and economic aspects of national cultures can lead to protests. The rights to opt-out of the Third Stage were only demanded because Denmark and Great Britain wanted to retain their independence and their own way of governing their economy. The future of Europe and their economic integration remains unsure. Anti-integration sentiments and euroscepticism are on the rise again, but the process of European integration seems to be always ongoing. Even in times of war or political instability, the European countries seem to unite. One can only guess how European economic integration will look like in the next 200 years.

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