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WINSTON CHURCHILL AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

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ABSTRACT

Given Winston Churchill's influence and achievement as a writer, historian, adventurer, soldier, artist, and politician, his participation in the European integration process is crucial to understanding the entire scope of the project in its origins. Churchill was a fundamental voice promoting the Franco-British Union, a promoter of the European Communities, and an active participant of the Congress of Europe, embryo of the Council of Europe. This article analyzes Churchill's view of European integration through his political speeches, in particular

those delivered in Zurich and in The Hague, his ideas about the League of Nations and the United Nations, his understanding of the British Empire, and the special relations between the UK and the USA. His participation in the process of uniting Europe in its early stages provides us with essential information about the original plans for the creation of a united Europe and understanding the traditional British approach to the EU, including the current position of the conservative government led by Cameron.

KEYWORDS

Churchill, British Euroscepticism, European integration, EFTA, the Council of Europe, European cooperation

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of Churchill's contribution to the modern European Union has become an issue, regardless of its historical essence, because of the intentions of the British premier, David Cameron, to call a referendum about British membership in the organization. Winston Churchill has been one of the most important politicians and public figure in the twentieth-century British and European political arena. Hence, his opinion and involvement in the Communitarian affairs is being used by those supporting full membership in the EU, tailored affiliation, and even withdrawal from the European organization. The domestic debates about the British membership tend to use Churchill's involvement in European affairs partially to support the different positions manipulating the whole vision for their own interests. Even in the European arena, Barroso, previous president of the European Commission, has used Churchill, reassuring the British commitment with the European Union, quoting one of his numerous speeches. The main aim of this article is to analyse all of Churchill's work related to the European Union and provide a general approach to his vision about Europe and the British involvement in the process of building the EU. Due to his enormous prestige in the UK and in Europe as a leader of democracy and freedom against common enemies (such as the Nazis or the Soviets), Churchill's opinion is still highly respected and his position enriches the debate about the future of the EU.

The analysis of the role of Winston Churchill in European integration is complicated and his real involvement in the integration process has not been properly analysed. External issues, especially his role as British premier and his active and crucial participation in some of the most important events of world politics in the twentieth century, have overshadowed Churchill's contribution to European Integration. It complicates the analysis of the real relevance of Churchill's involvement in the process creating the current European Union. His relation with European integration was concentrated between the years after WWII and his second term as British Premier in 1951, but his contacts with Jean Monnet date back to the WWI. Churchill was a historian, a writer, a soldier, a painter, adventurer and politician. This outstanding multifaceted activity hides the modest, but important contributions of Churchill in the European building process that awarded him the title of a founding father of the European Union, among other important persons involved in the process, such as Konrad Adenauer (Germany), Joseph Bech (Luxembourg), Johan Willem Beyen (Netherlands), Alcide De Gasperi (Italy), Walter Hallstein (Germany), Sicco Mansholt (Netherlands), Jean Monnet (France), Robert Schuman (France), Paul-Henri Spaak (Belgium), and Altiero Spinelli (Italy). It has

added more confusion to the real role of Churchill in relation to the integration of Europe, as he stands officially in equal terms with the architects of the first European Community.

The main problem for researching the contributions made by Winston Churchill to the current EU is the lack of specialised literature focused on the topic. Of course much has been written about Churchill from different perspectives, including an outstanding number of general biographies, with much work focused on his different activities, his own writings, his own autobiography, and the records of his numerous speeches.

Churchill's work as historian includes several important books, such as his books about the English-speaking peoples, the Second World War,¹ and the (then) world crisis.² His narrative history earned him the Nobel Prize in Literature, but it is strongly linked with the British affairs, hence Churchill's interest obviously was not, at least in its historical approach, focused on European affairs as a whole, but rather with the British involvement in world affairs as a world power and active player in international relations. His work as a historian has been carefully analysed by Maurice Ashley, literary assistant to Winston Churchill and a historian himself.

The writing career of Churchill contains dozens of books on different topics, mostly linked with his living experiences, including novels. His literary career has been analysed by several authors, such as Carter³, Alldritt,⁴ and Rasor.⁵ His painting activity⁶ is less relevant for this research, but still important for understanding Churchill, as he himself clearly pointed out in his work *Painting as a Pastime*. Combs⁷ has published detailed research about Churchill's painting and its influence in his life. His military activity has attracted more attention, mainly in his early days as a young officer serving in the British Empire and his military activity in the Western front during WWI. Authors such as D'Este⁸, Russell,⁹ and Thompson¹⁰ have deeply researched the topic, highlighting his personal bravery, his tactical developments, and his command skills. His life as an adventurer has attracted lots of devotion, thanks to his own writings about the different campaigns

¹ Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. 3 (Houghton Mifflin, 1950).

² Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis*, Vol. 1 (Scribner, 1963).

³ Violet Bonham Carter, *Winston Churchill: An Intimate Portrait* (Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965).

⁴ Keith Alldritt, *Churchill the Writer: His Life as a Man of Letters* (London: Hutchinson, 1992).

⁵ Eugene L. Rasor, *Winston S. Churchill, 1874-1965: A Comprehensive Historiography and Annotated Bibliography*, Vol. 6 (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2000).

⁶ Winston S. Churchill, *Painting as a Pastime* (Rosetta Books, 2014).

⁷ David Coombs, Minnie Churchill, and Winston Churchill, *Sir Winston Churchill: His Life and His Paintings* (Running Press, 2004).

⁸ Carlo D'Este, *Warlord: The Fighting Life of Winston Churchill, from Soldier to Statesman* (Penguin, 2010).

⁹ Douglas Russell, *Winston Churchill: Soldier: The Military Life of a Gentleman at War* (Conway, 2006).

¹⁰ Reginald William Thompson, *Generalissimo Churchill* (Scribner Book Company, 1973).

he took part in, and the myth of a young hero built around the figure of Churchill, as brilliantly pointed out by Cannadine.¹¹

Churchill's extended political career of Churchill has been widely discussed from different perspectives, such as in studies emphasizing his political beliefs from Gilbert¹², Addison,¹³ and Charmley.¹⁴ These three authors, among others, explain the main political ideas of Churchill, but their outstanding works do not include much information about the political beliefs of Churchill in relation to European Integration. The biographies of Churchill are also numerous, including several brilliant works, especially the works published by Gilbert¹⁵ and Roy Jenkins.¹⁶ These well documented books analysed his life deeply, as well as his actions and ideas; but their references to the role of Churchill as a father of Europe are not properly addressed.

The secondary literature about Churchill is voluminous, but is just partially used in this research because Churchill's involvement in European integration is very often treated as a minor issue in his wide-spanning political career. Hence the best approach to understand the thoughts and contributions of Winston Churchill to the European integration are his own speeches, his wide correspondence with other political leaders of his time, his prolific correspondence with his wife, and his participation in different historical events shaping the European Union. Thanks to his literary skills, Churchill mastered the art of writing and delivering speeches, and used their publication as a way to spread his ideas. The great edition of Robert Rhodes¹⁷ includes the most relevant speeches of Churchill's long political career; for example, his famous *we shall never surrender* included in his speech *We Shall Fight on the Beaches* (June 4, 1940) addressed to the House of Commons, and the reference to the Iron Curtain included in his speech *The Sinews of Peace* (March 5, 1946)¹⁸ in Missouri, USA. The main speeches related to European integration are *the United States of Europe* (September 19, 1946) at the University of Zurich, his speech to the Council of Europe (August 17, 1949), and his participation in the debate about the Schuman plan in the House of Commons (27 June 1950). Finally his participation in the Hague Congress (1948) provides us with important complementary information about the real involvement of Winston Churchill in the

¹¹ David Cannadine, *The Aristocratic Adventurer*, Vol. 62 (Penguin, 2005).

¹² Martin Gilbert, *Churchill's Political Philosophy*, Vol. 1980 (Oxford University Press, 1981).

¹³ Paul Addison, "The Political Beliefs of Winston Churchill," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 30 (1980).

¹⁴ John Charmley, *Churchill: the End of Glory: a Political Biography* (Faber & Faber, 2014).

¹⁵ Martin Gilbert, *Churchill: A Life* (Macmillan, 1992).

¹⁶ Roy Jenkins, *Churchill* (Pan Macmillan, 2012).

¹⁷ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches, 1897-1963* (Chelsea House Publications, 1974).

¹⁸ Winston Churchill, "Sinews of Peace (Iron Curtain Speech)," *Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri/ABD* 5 (1946).

European movement and his position about the possible shape of the future organization.

The importance of Winston Churchill in the current relation between United Kingdom and the European Union resides in his role both as an advocate of European Integration and a defender of the British independence and the British nation. He clearly supported the integration in Europe as the best way to avoid conflicts, but his proposal differs substantially from the current shape of the Union. This position is carefully analysed in this article, illuminating the role of Churchill and its country in the European integration affairs.

The combination of the primary sources with a critical analysis of the extensive literature provides this research with clarification of Churchill's ideas about the political and economic integration of Europe and establishes his significant role in the process of uniting Europe.

Numerous examples are given in support of the research, and numerous citations are made to relevant primary source documents. The idea here is to eliminate intermediaries partially involved in the debate about the real involvement of Churchill in the European integration affairs. The approach might raise suspicions about the impartiality of the research of the primary sources, questioning the possibility of merely finding convenient examples to support to support a predetermined idea, ignoring potential sources that would contradict the argument presented. To avoid this, the research has selected sources carefully, guided by relevance rather than a potential backing of the result of the research.

1. CHURCHILL AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

There are multiple direct sources for analysing Churchill's position towards the European integration process. His political activity provides important information for the research on Churchill's approach to the European integration, such as the Declaration of Union between France and UK, adopted by the British government and announced by Churchill in June 1940,¹⁹ his support to the European Defence Community²⁰, Churchill's membership in the European Movement, and his relations with the European Communities in his second term as Prime Minister from 1951 to 1955²¹.

¹⁹ Avi Shlaim, "Prelude to downfall: the British offer of union to France, June 1940," *Journal of Contemporary History* (1974).

²⁰ Brian R. Duchin, "The 'Agonizing Reappraisal': Eisenhower, Dulles, and the European Defense Community," *Diplomatic History* Vol. 16, No. 2 (1992).

²¹ John W. Young, "Churchill's 'no' to Europe: the 'rejection' of European Union by Churchill's post-war government, 1951-1952," *The Historical Journal* Vol. 28, No. 04 (1985).

His public speeches are traditionally the main source used to explain the relation of Churchill with the European Integration; basically just one speech has been quoted constantly to explain Churchill's position, the famous 1946 Zurich speech.²² It has clearly distorted the real position of Churchill towards European Integration, because most of the authors refer exclusively to this speech in order to explain Churchill's ideas related to Europe, as the former president of the European Commission, Barroso did in 2013²³. Nevertheless there are many other direct sources to investigate Churchill's position about European affairs, as important speeches in the Congress of Europe, the opening meeting of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, his interventions as Chairman of the European Movement, international conferences, especially in USA, the mail correspondence with his close collaborators, and his interventions in the House of Commons, especially regarding the debate about the Schuman Plan.²⁴

1.1. EURO-SCEPTIC OR EUROPEAN SUPPORTER?

Churchill has been used as an icon against the European Integration in British politics. UKIP leader Nigel Farage has stressed Churchill's opposition to the European Communities and his commitment to the independence of UK against any supranational intervention²⁵ and scholars have written about the rejection of Churchill to join the European integration process²⁶. However, in contrast, Churchill is included by the European Union as one of its founding fathers²⁷ and used an example of British support to the European Union when the relations between UK and the EU are conflictive.

The apparent contradiction can be clarified through Churchill's own words and his own European political positions. Churchill wrote to his foreign secretary, Anthony Eden, on October 21, 1942: "Hard as it is to say now ... I look forward to a United States of Europe, in which the barriers between the nations will be greatly minimized and unrestricted travel will be possible."²⁸ Clearly he supported the idea of some kind of European Integration as a novelty to prevent conflicts, because these words must be understood in the context of the WWII. Churchill made public

²² Winston S. Churchill, *Never Give In!: Winston Churchill's Speeches* (A&C Black, 2013).

²³ Massimo Gibilaro, "Winston Churchill: A Founder of the European Union," *NewEuropeans.net* (2013).

²⁴ Winston Churchill, "Speech to the House of Commons," *The Official Report, House of Commons (5th Series)* 444 (1947).

²⁵ Richard Hayton, "Towards the Mainstream? UKIP and the 2009 Elections to the European Parliament," *Politics* Vol. 30, No. 1 (2010).

²⁶ John W. Young, *supra* note 21.

²⁷ Desmond Dinan, *Europe Recast: A History of European Union*, Vol. 373 (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

²⁸ Anthony Eden, *The Reckoning: The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965).

his support to the European integration in his Zurich speech of 1946 as he said: "We must build a kind of United States of Europe". His words are clear: he used "we" instead of "they," showing his support and possible participation in the new process uniting Europe.²⁹ At London's Albert Hall, in May 1947, just a few months after his Zurich speech, Churchill spoke as Chairman and Founder of the United Europe Movement to 'present the idea of a United Europe in which our country will play a decisive part..' His support to the novelty of uniting Europe was clear, including UK in the process. Nevertheless the role of UK in the integration was not explained in detail in this occasion beside the reference about sponsoring it. He argued in the same speech that Britain and France should be the, "founder-partners in this movement" and concluded, "Britain will have to play her full part as a member of the European family".³⁰ In May 1948 Churchill said in the opening speech to the Congress of Europe in The Hague, "we cannot aim at anything less than the Union of Europe as a whole, and we look forward with confidence to the day when that Union will be achieved."³¹ With this he again makes clear his support and involvement in the European integration in front of an audience debating about the model of the future integration.³² Nevertheless Churchill did not present clearly his position about the level of British involvement and the way the integration should follow. At a speech, again given for the European Movement at Kingsway Hall, November 1949, Churchill argued:

The British Government have rightly stated that they cannot commit this country to entering any European Union without the agreement of the other members of the British Commonwealth. We all agree with that statement. But no time must be lost in discussing the question with the Dominions and seeking to convince them that their interests as well as ours lie in a United Europe.³³

It expresses again the support of Churchill for European integration, and adds a new element, the inclusion of the former British Empire countries included in the Commonwealth in the process. These declarations, during a long and stable period of time, reject any Eurosceptic sentiment in Churchill and understandably are not referred by those using the iconic force of Churchill against the European Union.

It is evident that Winston S. Churchill supported the process of European integration as he expressed several times during his political life. Hence, the real debate should then be about what kind of Europe he supported, as there were, and

²⁹ Winston Churchill, "Speech to the Academic Youth," *Zürich, Switzerland* (1946).

³⁰ Anthony Montague Browne, *Long Sunset: Memoirs of Winston Churchill's Last Private Secretary* (Cassell, 1995).

³¹ Winston Churchill, *Europe Unites: The Story of the Campaign for European Unity, Including a Full Report of the Congress of Europe Held at The Hague, May, 1948* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1949).

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

still are, different visions about the process uniting Europe and not just a unitary position.

1.2. EUROPE AS UNITED NATIONS

Winston Churchill supported the creation of the League of Nations, even though he complained bitterly about the incapacity of the organization to prevent WWII because of its incapacity to treat defeated Germany fairly. After WWII he promoted the United Nations, a new world organization heir of the League of Nations.³⁴ Obviously international cooperation was a priority for Churchill in order to keep peace and stability, and basic for the international economic development. Both organizations were based on cooperation, rather than integration; it provides an example of Churchill's ideas about international integration. Nevertheless, the UN differed from the League of Nations in several crucial points, as more executive powers to the Security Council and the creation of armed forces provided by the member states to serve as peace-keepers or to repel an aggressor. The Security Council had five permanent members, United States, the Soviet Union, China, France and Britain, plus other countries serving two years terms on it. The veto power of the permanent members over the decisions made by the Security Council express the idea of cooperation rather than integration, as a single member can blockade any decision against its national interest; a de facto way to keep national sovereignty intact. It resembles the actions of France inside the European Communities and the Luxembourg Compromise, 1966, after the empty chair crisis where it was accepted a voting system based on qualified majority accepting the veto of any member state if its national interest was at stake.³⁵ As Churchill was one of the main architects of the UN, we can be sure that his commitment to international cooperation, and even with some sort of integration, was clear, but establishing some safeguards to the national sovereignty that avoid full integration.

Churchill made several statements linking European integration and the new world organization, which, in his view, complemented each other. Churchill's speech in The Hague in 1948 stated: "we must endeavour by patience and faithful service to prepare for the day when there will be an effective world government resting on the main groupings of mankind."³⁶ The reference of main groupings of humankind makes reference to Europe, Asia, and America³⁷ as integral parts of the

³⁴ E. J. Hughes, "Winston Churchill and the Formation of the United Nations Organization," *Journal of Contemporary History* (1974).

³⁵ David Ramiro Troitiño, "De Gaulle and the European Communities," *Proceedings of the Institute for European Studies, Tallinn University of Technology* No. 4 (2008).

³⁶ Winston Churchill, *supra* note 31.

³⁷ Winston Churchill, ed., *The Great Republic: A History of America* (Random House LLC, 2001).

organization. If the UN would be organized by regional unions rather than countries, obviously these regions should be organized in a similar way than the United Nations. Hence, it is likely that Churchill thought of the future European Union as an organization organized as a forum to solve the problems between the member states by peaceful meanings with a regional security council including the most powerful member states with veto rights. This idea is reinforced by Churchill's speech at Harvard University on September 1943: "Let us have a world council and under it regional or continental councils."³⁸ According to these ideas, Europe should work as a regional council integrated as a world council, as a part of the United Nations. Hence the European organization should not lay on political integration rather than an organization based on collaboration between its members. Churchill argued about the necessary leadership of UK and France in the new organization, the only two European members of the Security Council of the UN with veto rights. At London's Albert Hall, in May 1947, speaking in a meeting of the United Europe Movement to "present the idea of a United Europe in which our country will play a decisive part," Churchill claimed that Britain and France should be the "founder-partners in this movement."³⁹ It may suggest that the Security Council of the UN, formed by USA, UK, France, USSR and China represented the major civilizations of the world and the leaders of their respective regional areas.

In October 1948 during a Conservative Mass Meeting at Llandudno, Churchill made clear that Britain held a unique position at the heart of "three majestic circles": the "Empire and Commonwealth", "the English speaking world"⁴⁰ and a "United Europe". It would have made the UK a member of different regional organizations that were part of the United Nations. Obviously in a model following the pattern of integration, it would have been impossible to be part of different regional areas at the same time. For example, the European Coal and Steel Community created a common market with common external borders; these would have prevented the simultaneous membership of different regional organizations simultaneously. Hence, his idea about European integration differed strongly from the path chosen by Europe leading to the current European Union. In the same speech he continued with: "we are the only country which has a great part in every one of them. We stand, in fact, at the very point of junction, and here in this Island at the centre of the seaways and perhaps of the airways also, we have the

³⁸ Winston Churchill, "Speech at Harvard University, 6 September 1943," *Onwards to Victory* (1944).

³⁹ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

⁴⁰ Winston S. Churchill, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples Vol. 1: The Birth of Britain*, Vol. 1 (Rosetta Books, 2013).

opportunity of joining them all together."⁴¹ Besides a British centred point of view in international relations, normal in a politician born in the British Empire, Churchill made clear his position towards the model of integration, because with an organization such as the United Nations, the UK could take part at different regional levels.

Reinforcing the idea of European integration as a regional part of the world organization, Churchill made a speech in Fulton in 1946 declaring himself against Europe becoming a Third Force between America and the USSR and creating a neutral geographical bloc in the context of the international relations.⁴² The idea of the European Communities as a third independent way in the Cold War was applied by the French Republic in its attempt to recover French international prestige and influence in the world affairs.⁴³

1.3. COOPERATION VERSUS INTEGRATION

According to the public positions of Churchill we can only guess what kind of organization he wanted at the European level. He was very ambiguous about it, but we should not forget that at that time a new process of integration started, something never before done in human history, without a clear map road to support or reject. Nevertheless there are some red threads in Churchill's ideas about the European integration that should be respected to the full membership of UK in the organization, and the British were seen by him as a crucial part of the European future as he wrote in a private letter in 1963, just two years before his death: "The future of Europe if Britain were to be excluded is black indeed."⁴⁴

The best source to obtain Churchill's views about the European organization are his interventions in the debate of the House of Commons to discuss a united Europe in June 1950,⁴⁵ because it was a debate about Europe, a discussion related with the model of Europe suitable for UK. Churchill said that he could not "at present" foresee Britain being "a member of a Federal Union of Europe". However, Churchill went on to explain that this was primarily because of Britain's position, "at the centre of the British Empire and Commonwealth", and, "our fraternal association with the United States of America."⁴⁶ Hence Churchill's ideas about the European integration were not linked with federalism, but he was a supporter of the

⁴¹ Winston Churchill, "Speech at a Conservative Mass Meeting, Llandudno, 9 October 1948"; in: Randolph S. Churchill, ed., *Europe Unite-Speeches* (1947).

⁴² Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

⁴³ David Ramiro Troitiño, *supra* note 35.

⁴⁴ David Dutton, *Anthony Eden: A Life and Reputation* (London: Arnold, 1997).

⁴⁵ Christopher Lord, "Sovereign or Confused? The 'Great Debate' about British Entry to the European Community 20 Years On," *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 30, No. 4 (1992).

⁴⁶ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

UK participating in the project for the good of Europe and the UK. The idea of Great Britain participating in different regional organizations, as Europe, transatlantic relations or the Commonwealth, would have been possible in a scenario based on cooperation where the relations with the members of the organization will not be exclusively, as a common market with common external tariffs rather than a free trade area without integration.

Nevertheless Churchill's pragmatism was present in this debate, complaining about the obstructive attitude of the British Labour Government to the European Integration and the Schuman plan, converting the UK as an enemy of Europe. According to Churchill, if the British government persisted in its position, the influence of the UK in Europe would decline. So, even if he did not want the UK as a part of a federal Europe, he was open to negotiations to try to find the best solution for British and European interests. The strategy of the British labour government was to delay as much as possible the European integration and in a way to divert the path from integration to cooperation, earning for the UK European suspicions about the real involvement of the country in the European building process, which arguably still exist today.⁴⁷

Churchill was not against sharing sovereignty as a principle, as he underscored in the House of Common, where he argued:

To win the war we agreed to put our armies under S.H.A.E.F., a great Anglo-American organisation that was for the tactical and limited purposes prescribed. No one would ever have suggested that General Eisenhower should have had the power to say what units of the British Army should be suppressed or disbanded, or how they should be raised or remodelled, or anything like it. All these remained questions within the control of the autonomous sovereign States which were willing to agree to a larger unity for certain well defined functional—I use the "functional" because it is coming into use—functional purposes. Surely, this is one of the points we could have urged, and even have made conditional upon our agreement to any final scheme.⁴⁸

It is again a clear approach to the cooperation theory as the best option to coordinate the common efforts, where autonomous partners are under a common authority taking the decisions by consensus. Churchill's references to functions are linked with the (then) popular theory of integration developed by David Mitrany—namely, functionalism—a liberal tradition based on a positive approach which accepts as a fact that humans are rational and wish peaceful progress, that conflict and disharmony are not endemic to the human condition. Essentially it claims that

⁴⁷ David Ramiro Troitiño, *European Integration: Building Europe* (Nova Publishers, 2013).

⁴⁸ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

the main target of any kind of integration is ending the conflicts of the world through international organizations. The shape of the organization, its name, and other symbols, are not important; what matters is the achievement of the goals. Functionalism stresses the functions of the organization over any other consideration. The priority of the organization should be the human needs or the public welfare of its members, the people, forgetting any kind of ideology because of its tight framework, the results and not the method. It is a technocratic vision: people who know best about any job are the ones who should do it in order to succeed. Technicians have to rule over the areas where their expertise provides them with the wisdom to offer the best solutions to the problems of the people or the members. However, functionalism does not trust politicians because their goal is keeping their power rather than the common good. Mitrany argued that transnational organizations were more effective than national entities, as they were more efficient and hence could solve the problems of the people. This efficiency would transfer the loyalty of the people from the national level to the international one, ending wars and conflicts. The concept of flexibility is very important in this theory, because human needs, and not the creation of a supranational state, are the priority. Thus functionalism can adopt different forms, different names, and different means in order to achieve its target. Mitrany thought that the European Communities were just reproducing the functions of the states in a supranational level, keeping intact the decision making of the states, leading to the domination of the main states over the other members of the organization.⁴⁹

Functionalism is too technocratic; it is mainly based in professionals doing the job, with a minimum involvement of other important actors, such as politicians, diplomats, and mainly citizens. The idea of building a community without counting on the people is very close to a dictatorship of the social elite. But even if its intentions are good, it is impracticable in the present time when democracy has become the main method of organizing European societies. It also has too much faith in humans and in their capacity to act rationally in all the situations.⁵⁰ Churchill's position towards functionalism was friendly but without full support. This approach to integration reflected his pragmatic vision of politics in the international level, and the several occasions when Churchill referred to the United States of Europe fit with the functionalist idea that the denomination of the organization does not matter rather than the functions. Obviously Churchill was not a supporter of the idea of a European Federation, linked with the reproduction of the USA in the

⁴⁹ David Ramiro Troitiño, *supra* note 47.

⁵⁰ David Mitrany, "The Prospect of Integration: Federal or Functional," *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 4, No. 2 (1965).

European level, hence his call to the United States of Europe as early as 1930 in an article in the *Saturday Evening Post*⁵¹ must be understood under the category of functionalism. At the same time the combination of the rejection of politicians involved in the project and the lack of democracy of the future institutions made this approach unacceptable for Churchill's world vision.

During the debate about the British involvement in the Schuman plan, Churchill openly supported the idea of cooperation in Europe, as in his intervention proves:

I would add, to make my answer quite clear to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that if he asked me, 'Would you agree to a supranational authority which has the power to tell Great Britain not to cut any more coal or make any more steel, but to grow tomatoes instead?' I should say, without hesitation, the answer is "No." But why not be there to give the answer?⁵²

His words clearly show his opposition to full integration at the European level, but not full rejection of the process. As he himself points out, the UK should be in negotiations to defend its position towards the model of future Europe. This reference against the strong influence of the Communal authorities over the domestic policies of its members can also be link with the idea of subsidiarity, where the most efficient level of decision making will manage the issues in a common association. Hence, the highest level will just deal with aspects influencing the whole community, leaving to the members the management of domestic issues or the application of the common rules according to the national traditions, as currently the European Union directives do. The idea of subsidiarity is included in the European Union as a main pillar of the integration, respecting the national, regional and local authorities. Perhaps the main difference between Churchill's ideas about subsidiarity and sharing sovereignty and the European Union, is the voting system in the highest level of decision making, unanimity versus majority, or at least some veto capacity for the member states when outvoted and their national interest is at stake. As he clearly made public in the same speech about the Schuman plan in the House of Commons:

Nothing is said about the method of voting. We know nothing about the method by which voting power will be allotted to the different members of any supra-national authority which may be set up. But it is quite certain we should not agree to become members of it—and that we should have every right to disagree—if our great preponderance in coal and steel production did not receive

⁵¹ Lucas Bruyning, "The United States of Europe: An Italian Invention?" *Yearbook of European Studies* 3 (1990).

⁵² Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

full recognition. Then there is the question of the right to terminate such an agreement. That is surely a matter we could have looked at after discussion.⁵³

Obviously Winston Churchill was asking for greater power to the UK in the European organization, as it has in other international organizations, as United Nations. His position of member states having the possibility to withdraw the European organization if it was their national interest is another pillar to the cooperative essence of the new community, following Churchill's ideas.

His opposition to the federal proposal for building Europe was expressed in the House of Commons in his intervention in the debate about the Schuman plan:

Such a tremendous step as the federal union of Europe as something like a United States of Europe is not a matter which rests with us to decide. It is primarily one for the peoples of Europe. In our European Movement we have worked with federalists, and we have always made it clear that, though they are moving along the same road, we are not committed to their conclusions. Personally, I have always deprecated in public our becoming involved at this stage in all the tangles and intricacies of rigid constitution-making, which appeals so strongly to a certain type of mind. I was sorry that the hon. Member for Coventry, East, should have marred an able speech, as he so often does, by a gross misstatement when he says that European Union 'is run and financed by federalists'.⁵⁴

The majority of the European citizens were, and still are, against the idea of a European Federation. Even Altiero Spinelli, a prominent federalist, had a big bang approach to the issue in order to break the popular resistance to the creation of a European Federation; basically the federation should have been done at once, from the top, without the consent of the European people, who afterwards would have to recognize the benign effects of it and support it.⁵⁵ Churchill's delegation of the decision about a European Federation to the European people matched his idea about Europe, without any political cost or political erosion. His opening speech at the Congress of Europe in May 1948, includes this idea presenting the European building process "should be a movement of the people, not parties".⁵⁶

The European Movement included the supporters of European federalism, even if Churchill's opinion was against the inclusion of some kind of constitution or legal document binding the members. Nevertheless, if continental Europe was going to move in the federal integration model direction, Churchill did not want the UK to be a member; but neither did he wish the UK to be an obstacle, instead

⁵³ Winston Churchill, *supra* note 24.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Altiero Spinelli, *Towards the European Union*, Vol. 6 (Florence: European University Institute, 1983).

⁵⁶ Winston Churchill, *supra* note 31.

collaborating with the hypothetical European Federation following his idea of the three magic circles: Europe, the Commonwealth and USA; where UK could be associated with all of them:

I cannot conceive that Britain would be an ordinary member of a Federal Union limited to Europe in any period which can at present be foreseen. We should in my opinion favour and help forward all developments on the Continent which arise naturally from a removal of barriers, from the process of reconciliation, and blessed oblivion of the terrible past, and also from our common dangers in the future and present. Although a hard-and-fast concrete federal constitution for Europe is not within the scope of practical affairs, we should help, sponsor and aid in every possible way the movement towards European unity. We should seek steadfastly for means to become intimately associated with it.⁵⁷

Sponsoring the process would have given the British government the possibility of influencing the development of the integration according to its interest and keep good diplomatic relations with the states involved in the process, a basic movement in a gradually more global world where the independent European states were losing its predominance in the international relations.

Hence, the most likely theoretical approach to Churchill's vision about Europe is Intergovernmentalism. This theory is based on agreements between States supporting coordination as the way to solve conflicts between the members of the organization because the states are accepted as the last recipients of sovereignty. Churchill was not against the transfer of loyalty as a principle, as he himself proclaimed in his last speech about Europe at London's Central Hall, Westminster in July 1957⁵⁸; some four months after six founding nations established the European Economic Community by signing the Treaty of Rome: "The Conservative and Liberal Parties declare that national sovereignty is not inviolable, and that it may be resolutely diminished for the sake of all the men in all the lands finding their way home together."⁵⁹ But he wanted to include veto powers for the member states, following the model of United Nations, if the decisions of the European organization were going to harm the UK. This power in reality means a strong brake for the autonomous decision making of the organization.

Moravcsik, supporter of Intergovernmentalism, highlights that cooperation between states is possible only when they share some common interest or common values. The basis of the European integration should be agreements between states and good faith in their relations. The common institutions should be just common

⁵⁷ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

forums at which to negotiate and solve different problems.⁶⁰ It perfectly fits Churchill's idea of building Europe based on common principles, such as freedom or human rights, in opposition to the Communist area dominated by the USSR.

Nevertheless, Churchill did not radically rejected the British involvement in the European integration process based on integration, as he declared at the European Assembly in July 1949, where he addressed the intergovernmental-federal debate by suggesting that all possibilities be explored. On the other hand, in a 29 November 1951 Cabinet memorandum, Churchill affirmed that Britain should not become an "integral part of European integration" as it would "forfeit our insular or commonwealth-wide character."⁶¹ Obviously he was open to the debate and some kind of compromise to reach a satisfactory solution for all the parts involved in the process, as he expressed in the House of Commons:

The French Foreign Minister, M. Schuman, declared in the French Parliament this week that, 'Without Britain there can be no Europe.' This is entirely true. But our friends on the Continent need have no misgivings. Britain is an integral part of Europe, and we mean to play our part in the revival of her prosperity and greatness.⁶²

In Churchill's head, there was no doubt of the European necessity of the UK to succeed and the British necessity of involvement in a process of peace and prosperity. Hence, negotiation was the solution. When the British government rejected the invitation to participate in the ECSC Churchill bitterly attacked the British government for isolating the country and not even presenting their ideas about Europe. The British absence from the Messina conference held in June 1955 leading to the creation of the EEC, the current European Union, occurred under the premiership of Anthony Eden, Churchill's successor in Downing Street since April 1955, because Churchill's health conditions were deteriorating, incapacitating him from intensive daily political activity.

His last year affected by sickness entailed some references to the European integration. In August 1961, Churchill wrote to his constituency Chairman: "I think that the Government are right to apply to join the European Economic Community ...," and in 1963 he wrote in a private letter: "The future of Europe if Britain were to be excluded is black indeed."⁶³ However, he warned: "If, on the other hand, the European trade community were to be permanently restricted to the six nations, the results might be worse than if nothing were done at all – worse for them as well

⁶⁰ Andrew Moravcsik, "Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach," *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 31, No. 4 (1993).

⁶¹ Wendell R. Mauter, "Churchill and the Unification of Europe," *Historian* Vol. 61, No. 1 (1998).

⁶² Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

⁶³ Anthony Montague Browne, *supra* note 30.

as for us. It would tend not to unite Europe but to divide it – and not only in the economic field.”⁶⁴

These words reinforce Churchill’s support for European integration and the British involvement in the process, just leaving open the questions about what kind of Europe was desired by him and the British capacity to effectively negotiate with its European partners and the flexibility of the European Communities to accept the British singularity.

2. CHURCHILL’S MODEL OF EUROPE

Two European organizations reflect the vision of Churchill about a united Europe because of his direct involvement in its creation: the Council of Europe, and, because it follows his statements in British politics and it was implemented by his closer collaborator Harold Macmillan, the European Free Trade Organization. Both organization provide us with a global vision of Churchill’s proposals for uniting Europe as an integral part of a world organization. NATO is the third pillar of his idea about Europe, including defence.

The Council of Europe is the result of the Congress of Europe, where Churchill made the opening speech in The Hague in 1948. He proposed a European “Charter” and “Court” of Human Rights, assuring in his opening speech: “We aim at the eventual participation of all the peoples throughout the continent whose society and way of life are in accord with the Charter of Human Rights.”⁶⁵ The meeting was a milestone in European integration, where people all over Europe met to discuss the possibilities of a European organization. The meeting was presided over by Winston Churchill and brought representatives from different countries and different ideas about how to build a joint Europe. The participants were politicians, intellectuals, and major representatives of the European culture who took three main positions towards European integration: the unionist, the federalist, and the supporters of Pan-Europe.

The unionists were under the moral leadership of Winston Churchill and entailed mainly Anglo-Saxon and Nordic people who were keen supporters of European cooperation among states. According to their ideas, any European organization could work based just on agreements between governments. The decision-making could still be in the hands of the member states, adding economic cooperation based on free trade agreements, not on a common market. The federalists supported a European federation similar to the United States of America.

⁶⁴ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

They wanted to build a European State integrating economy and politics. Their main leader in the Congress was Altiero Spinelli, an important figure in the further European Communities where he was Commissioner of the European Commission and afterwards an important leader of the European Parliament. The third group, the supporters of pan-Europe, had a middle approach, between federalist and unionist, suggesting a Confederation of European states deeper than the cooperation of the unionists, but far from the federal idea of one European state.

The Council of Europe is an organization outside of the European Union and based on common general principles, as defence of human rights, democracy and cultural understanding. It was created in 1949 by the Treaty of London, reassuring the prominent role of UK in its foundation, including ten members, Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom; five out of the six original members of the European Communities took part in this European initiative. Currently it has 47 member states. The institutional framework of the Council of Europe was organized based on three main institutions, a Committee of Ministers, a Parliamentary Assembly and a Secretary General, very similar to the institutions of the European Coal and Steel Community.⁶⁶ But the main difference resides in the power of the common decisions, not binding in the case of the Council of Europe in opposition to the supremacy of the communitarian law over the national legal systems in the European Union; a model based on cooperation versus a system based on integration.

The EFTA was somehow a British answer to the creation of the European Common Market by the treaty of Rome in 1957, establishing the European Economic Community in 1958 by the member states of the European Coal and Steel Community. The main force leading to the Treaty of Stockholm in 1960 was UK and its Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, who was a political protégé of Churchill. He served as Foreign Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer under Churchill's successor and close political ally, Sir Anthony Eden. When Eden resigned because of the Suez Crisis in 1957, Macmillan succeeded him as Prime Minister and led the conversations for the new European organization, the EFTA, following the pattern already established by his mentor.⁶⁷

Winston Churchill had become a defender of free trade in his early political career when the British economic model was under discussion, and also supported it as a valid model for Europe as a way to foster trade and economic development

⁶⁶ Frederick L. Schuman, "The Council of Europe," *American Political Science Review* Vol. 45, No. 03 (1951).

⁶⁷ Harold Evans, *Downing Street Diary: The Macmillan Years, 1957-1963* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1981).

to achieve social stability and peace. The EFTA followed the ideas of Churchill with a free trade area without common external customs, as the EEC, allowing the Imperial Preference system of the Commonwealth to continue. The EFTA worked well economically, fostering trade between the members from 3.22 to 7.5 billion euro between 1959 and 1967, similar to the growth rate in the EEC.⁶⁸ The EFTA mostly included industrial production and excluded agricultural products and maritime trade. It was based on cooperation against the EEC model of integration, which eventually followed a model closer to cooperation through a the decision making based on unanimity, but was open to future integrationist reforms, as the Single European Act in 1986, that really created the European market. The EFTA excluded similar future actions and lost its importance with the British, Danish and Irish membership to the EEC in 1972; eventually the remaining members were absorbed by the European Union with the creation of the European Economic Area.⁶⁹

The third organization representing Churchill's approach to Europe is NATO. His involvement in European military association dates back to 1950, when Churchill called for the creation of a European Army "... under a unified command, and in which we should all bear a worthy and honourable part."⁷⁰ Just one year after the creation of NATO, he presented a motion to the European Assembly creating a European Army, which was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the European Council. The proposal expressed the defensive essence of the new military association, the creation of a common leadership through a European minister of defence under the supervision of the member states, democracy and freedom as principal common values, active collaboration with USA and Canada (NATO) and integration as a regional force in the United Nations.⁷¹

Nevertheless the French proposed another path for military collaboration between western European States based on integration rather than the collaborationist proposal of Churchill. The European Defence Community included the original members of the ECSC, and hence excluded the UK. A treaty was signed in 1952 but it never came into force, as the French National Assembly rejected the idea due fears about national sovereignty and the strong opposition of de Gaul and the French Communist. Churchill's proposal included national divisions, such as the EDC, under the command of a civilian in the European level following the SHAEF

⁶⁸ Norman D. Aitken, "The Effect of the EEC and EFTA on European Trade: A Temporal Cross-Section Analysis," *The American Economic Review* (1973).

⁶⁹ Thomas Pedersen, *European Union and the EFTA Countries. Enlargement and Integration* (Pinter, 1994).

⁷⁰ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

⁷¹ Clarence C. Walton, "Background for the European Defense Community," *Political Science Quarterly* (1953).

model, rather than common institutions as in the alternative proposal, and the member states' governments controlling all the process against the French proposal including several supranational elements.⁷² After the French National Assembly rejection, NATO, an organization supported by Churchill and following his ideas about regional cooperation based on major principles, became the centre of the European defence system, including currently all the member states of the European Union with the exception of Austria, Ireland, Finland and Sweden. Hence, Churchill's ideas succeeded this time at the European level over other proposals.

Churchill's idea(s) about European Integration were thus a combination of the Council of Europe, based on political and cultural values such as the major principles of democracy or human rights, the EFTA, based economic relations, and NATO, based on military relations. The British government took a leading position in the three organizations, but France, Germany, the Benelux, and Italy followed a different approach with the ECSC and the EEC. Nevertheless Churchill argued against the development of the European integration without the involvement of UK, a consequence of the British lack of interest for integration models and the lack of flexibility of the European Communities to negotiate the British proposals and reach a compromise. In his speech to the House of Commons during the debate about the Schuman plan, Churchill affirmed that:

The absence of Britain deranges the balance of Europe. I am all for a reconciliation between France and Germany, and for receiving Germany back into the European family, but this implies, as I have always insisted, that Britain and France should in the main act together so as to be able to deal on even terms with Germany, which is so much stronger than France alone. Without Britain, the coal and steel pool in Western Europe must naturally tend to be dominated by Germany, who will be the most powerful member.⁷³

This idea was already mentioned in 1946 when Churchill visited Holland: "the cornerstone of the new organization would be Anglo-French friendship."⁷⁴ So, the participation of the UK in the European integration process was needed in order to keep the organization balanced. This debate is currently important again, as Germany is taking the undisputable leadership of the European Union with a depressed France and a reluctant Cameron after an initial political French domination in the European Communities, followed by an equal tandem between Mitterrand and Kohl. Obviously Churchill's vision is linked with his state centered organization approach, because another way to decrease Germany's influence in

⁷² Josef L. Kunz, "Treaty Establishing the European Defense Community," *American Journal of International Law* (1953).

⁷³ Winston Churchill and Robert Rhodes James, *supra* note 17.

⁷⁴ Martin Gilbert, *supra* note 15.

the EU would be to increase the level of integration and hence decrease the power of the member states of the organization. In a Cabinet memorandum of November 29, 1951, already back as British Prime Minister, Churchill said that the UK should not become "an integral part of European integration,"⁷⁵ leaving open the participation of the UK in the process from another perspective different than full membership.

In the debate about Schuman plan, Churchill asked rhetorically, 'what association should Britain have with the Federal Union of Europe if such a thing should come to pass in the course of time?' The word association provides us with an important hint about Churchill's ideas regarding the relation of the UK to European integration. Once the British proposals for a united Europe were not adopted by the main continental powers, France and Germany, Churchill wanted to associate the UK with the integration process without full membership, saying 'there is the question of whether there could be two grades of members of such a body—full members and associate.' An idea expressed in the early stages of the debate about the future European organization: "If at first all the States of Europe are not willing or able to join the Union, we must nevertheless proceed to assemble and combine those who will and those who can."⁷⁶ This opens the possibility of a multi-speed Europe, which currently seems to be working in the European Union, with the UK keeping its national currency outside of the Eurozone, control over its borders outside the Schengen area, and not adopting the Social Policy of the European Union.⁷⁷ The incapacity of both areas to compromise influenced Churchill's diplomatic inactivity regarding European integration affairs, after his return to Downing Street in 1951.

CONCLUSIONS

The current debate in the UK about the position of the country in the European Union, and its degree of commitment to the communitarian rules, is strongly linked with Churchill's ideas about the relation of the United Kingdom to European organization. Even though the historical conditions are not the same, Churchill's contributions are in many cases still absolutely relevant, and hence can contribute productively to the current debate.

⁷⁵ John W. Young, *supra* note 21.

⁷⁶ Winston Churchill, *supra* note 24.

⁷⁷ David Ramiro Troitiño, "Margaret Thatcher and the EU," *Baltic Journal of European Studies* No. 6 (2009).

British Eurosceptics, such as Nigel Farage,⁷⁸ use Churchill to gain popular support against European integration; the European Union looks for his support to bring closer to Europe the always recalcitrant and suspicious British, as the then president of the European Commission, Barroso, pointed out.⁷⁹ The lack of any other British personality linked to the creation of the European Union and the immense power of Churchill over the British and world imagination, led to his nomination as a founding father of Europe.

Churchill was an Europeanist beyond a doubt, as this research has demonstrated; however, his model of Europe differed from the current European Union. Currently there are two main sides in the European debate, to be for or against the EU; but there were other options in the early stages of the integration, and Churchill was the main advocate of a third way. Nevertheless, Churchill's attitudes towards a united Europe cannot be understood without the historical context of his time and his well-known pragmatism and flexibility in adapting his views to the social necessities.

Hence, the use of Churchill by the Eurosceptics is made possible by a partial use of history, usually citing quotes from Churchill without contextualizing them and using them as absolute truths. Even those supporting a special British association with the European integration use Churchill for their political purposes when Churchill repeated in numerous occasions his will to commit the UK fully in the process. Just as in political circumstances such as the Cold War, the intention to keep influence over the former members of the British Empire and the federal approach made Churchill support a special relation of the UK to the European Communities. Hence, it was a pragmatic approach rather than a dogmatic position.

However, in a way the inclusion of Churchill in the list of founding fathers of the European Union lacks respect to some of Churchill's own proposals. It is a clear attempt to include the UK through this iconic figure in the European building process based on integration. He was a supporter of Europe, but his ideas did not always fully match with the current European Union.

The main arguments supported by David Cameron are also linked with the traditional British attitude towards the European Union defined by Winston Churchill or his close associates. First of all, the current British Premier is trying to negotiate with his European colleagues a special relation of the UK inside the EU. Churchill always advocated for direct negotiations with the European partners. Even if the possibility of agreement was reduced, direct contacts build bridges and establish

⁷⁸ Massimo Gibilaro, *supra* note 23: 3–6.

⁷⁹ Anthony Giddens, "Un continent turbulent i podereós: quin és el futur d'Europa?" [A turbulent and powerful continent: what is the future of Europe?], *Eines per a l'esquerra nacional* Vol. 20, No. 20 (2014).

common understandings, facilitating the relations between Europe and UK. On the other hand, Churchill advised against unilateral decisions because the voice of UK would be lost in the global perspective. David Cameron is following this approach; his possibilities to negotiate the British membership are reduced well beyond cosmetic reforms, but he is actively visiting his colleagues all over Europe to present his vision about the involvement of UK in the European affairs. Another common approach is related with the special and unique situation of the UK in Europe as a consequence of its insularity, imperial past, the special relation with USA, and the particularities of its society organization, in many cases far from the continental system. This special treatment was proposed already by Churchill, but at that time the UK had alternative options that currently seem utopian.

Historically, the British government has been a world leader pursuing free trade. Churchill was a main figure in the British debate between free trade and protectionism, and his ideas shaped the current British dominant vision related with free market, free trade area, and minimum regulation to the market forces.⁸⁰ The main claim of the conservative government of David Cameron follows this directive: more market and fewer regulations for Europe. His main complaint is about the interventionism of the European institutions in British affairs, pretending the predominance of the British Parliament over the decisions of Brussels and fewer obstacles to trade increasing the economic relations between the member states. Free trade and free economic relations between European states are a clear influence of Churchill on the current British position over the European affairs. Hence, David Cameron and the current debate about the model of British membership are shaped in many aspects by Churchill's vision of Europe.

Churchill's position should enrich the debate about the future of the European Union rather than being used as a pawn in partisan fights. As the historical context of Europe has dramatically changed since Churchill's times, we cannot know precisely what his position today would be towards integration; however, we can still learn from his visionary actions, his open mind to new creative solutions, his pragmatism, and his capacity to dialogue in search of building a better world.

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