

The 'Franco-German duo' and Europe as seen in cartoons (1945–2013)

A thematic publication by the CVCE



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This thematic publication by the CVCE, available at the site cvce.eu, presents a series of analytical texts and some 400 contemporary cartoons that trace the key milestones in Franco-German relations. It illustrates how this special relationship, this marriage of convenience between the French President and the Federal Chancellor, has had a significant influence on the European integration process.

The rapprochement that began in the early years after the Second World War between France and Germany, two countries that had been long-standing enemies, followed a unique path. The image of a 'Franco-German duo' and the pair's actions have proved to be an unending source of inspiration for cartoonists.

Although the Franco-German duo and its ability to act for the organisation of Europe have at times proved fragile, with periods of tension but also of continuity, the relationship between the various West German Chancellors and French Presidents has made an often decisive contribution to the pursuit and revival of European integration.

An ambitious research project

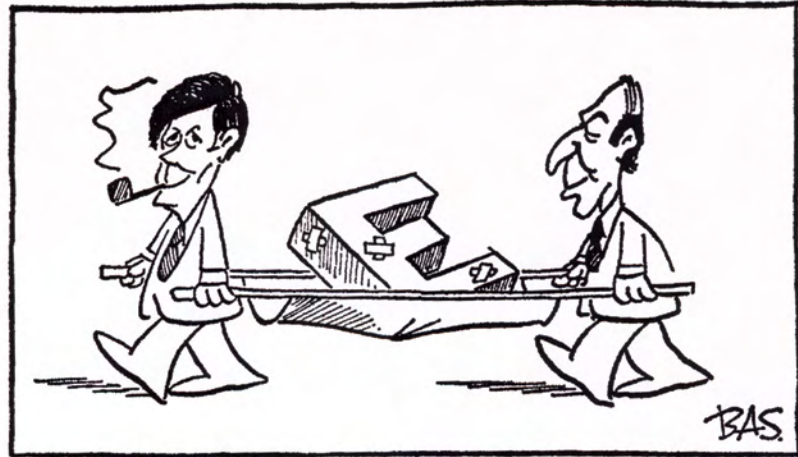
The publication offers a humorous, quirky interpretation of this important historical period in which a united Europe began to take shape, and reflects on more than 50 years of Franco-German cooperation. It is the result of extensive research in the national, regional and satirical press archives in Germany (including the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Die Welt*, *Die Zeit*, the *Westfälische Rundschau*, the *Frankfurter Rundschau* and *Simplicissimus*) and in France (including *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *Libération*, *L'Humanité*, *L'Express*, *France-Soir*, *Paris-Presse-L'intransigeant*, *Le Canard enchaîné*, *Le Cri de la France* and *Action*). This publication also contains press illustrations from the private collections of Walther Fekl, a retired lecturer and researcher from the European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder), and from collections of cartoons held at the *Frankreich-Bibliothek* of the Franco-German Institute in Ludwigsburg.

The aim is to show how press cartoonists from France and Germany have experienced, perceived and illustrated this Franco-German relationship, which has continued to evolve during the turbulent history of European integration. This comparative analysis reflects the convergences and divergences within this unique pairing and demonstrates the ever-changing balance of power within the partnership.

The cartoons also reveal the fact that there is often a discrepancy between official photos and the reality of the Franco-German relationship.



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When distrust turns to friendship — a lengthy process

The publication covers the period from 1945 to 2013. The formation and development of the Franco-German duo can only be clearly understood by examining Franco-German relations in the aftermath of the Second World War and the steps that led to reconciliation between Paris and Bonn. The history of this reconciliation began with a deep distrust by France of post-war Germany and its position of power in Europe. Although the 1963 Élysée Treaty is often seen as the founding instrument of the Franco-German duo, the roots of the relationship go back much further, to the early 1950s, when French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman and German Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer provided the necessary impetus and determination for the two countries to move forward together.

European integration studies in the digital era

The Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe (CVCE) is a documentation and e-research centre for European integration studies. As a public undertaking under the aegis of the Luxembourg Ministry of Higher Education and Research, the CVCE aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the historical, legal, economic and political dimensions of European integration. In the pursuit of its mission, it produces knowledge on the European integration process which it makes available to the research and teaching communities and also the wider public. The CVCE is an innovative and committed player in the field of digital humanities. Its interdisciplinary team explores and adopts methods and tools based on digital technologies for its research and knowledge transfer activities in European integration studies.