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**Project title: A Transnational History of the Cercle Pinay, 1952-1991**

## **1. Research project**

### **1.1 Historical background**

The *Cercle Pinay*, usually called the *Cercle* by its illustrious members,<sup>1</sup> was one of the most influential, secretive and exclusive political clubs in the West during the Cold War and one of the most significant – yet least researched – groups engaged in transnational anti-communism.<sup>2</sup> The regular meetings of the *Cercle* held around the world have brought together high-ranking politicians, diplomats, businessmen such as industrialists, bankers, publishers and editors, as well as military officers and (often former) intelligence agents from various Western countries.

The *Cercle* was founded in 1952/1953 by the French statesman *Antoine Pinay* and his close associate, the international lawyer *Jean Violet*. At the time, Pinay was Prime Minister and Minister of Finance; later that decade he served as the first Minister for Economic Affairs and Finance under President De Gaulle. Violet is a lesser known and quite shadowy figure who would nonetheless play an important role behind the scenes during much of the Cold War era.<sup>3</sup> He worked for the French foreign intelligence service SDECE (Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage) from the early 1950s until 1970,<sup>4</sup> and in the 1960s he also became a paid agent of the German foreign intelligence service BND (Bundesnachrichtendienst).<sup>5</sup> The long-serving Chancellor of West Germany, *Konrad Adenauer*, and the prominent Bavarian politician and federal minister, *Franz Josef Strauss*, acted as co-founders of the *Cercle*. Pinay and Adenauer, the first Chairmen, appointed Violet Secretary-General and entrusted him with the organization of the *Cercle*.<sup>6</sup>

The promotion of post-war reconciliation between the historic rivals France and Germany after World War II was one of the first major objectives. The personal friendships established in the *Cercle* led to secret meetings of Pinay, Adenauer and Strauss, with Violet acting as the go-between, paving the way for de Gaulle's own encounters with Adenauer and the Franco-

<sup>1</sup> Other names used historically include *Cercle Violet* and *Pesenti Group*. In internal communication, members referred to it often simply as “the group”.

<sup>2</sup> If not indicated otherwise, the following account is based on a preliminary evaluation of a few hundred archival documents about the *Cercle*, mainly from the Papers of Julian Amery at Churchill Archives Centre and the Brian Crozier Papers as well as the Monique Garnier-Lançon Papers at Hoover Institution Archives.

<sup>3</sup> On Violet see Grossmann, *Winning the Cold War*.

<sup>4</sup> Faligot and Krop, *French Secret Service*, pp. 151-156, 248; Crozier, *Free Agent*, pp. 191f.

<sup>5</sup> Contributions to State Protection: *Cercle*, Confidential Note for Dr. Waltner from Hans Langemann, 7 March 1980, published in: *Der Spiegel*, No. 37, 13 September 1982, pp. 28-31. This document is one of the so-called Langemann Papers. *Hans Langemann*, who was the Director of the Bavarian *Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz* (State Office for the Protection of the Constitution), had been receiving reports on the *Cercle* from *Hans Christoph Schenk Freiherr von Stauffenberg* in exchange for intelligence. Stauffenberg, a former agent of the BND, ran a private intelligence service closely connected to the CSU and the CDU and participated in *Cercle* meetings. Langemann repeated the information obtained from Stauffenberg in a series of intelligence reports, which were delivered to either Gerold Tandler, Bavarian Interior Minister, or to Dr. Georg Waltner, Tandler's Private Secretary. In 1982, Langemann leaked a number of documents to the German far-left magazine *konkret*, some of which were reproduced in *Der Spiegel*. There is no doubt that the Langemann Papers are authentic. On the private intelligence service closely connected to the CSU/CDU see the recently completed dissertation by Waske, *Nach Lektüre vernichten*.

<sup>6</sup> Pinay resigned as Chairman in 1980 and made way for the British aristocrat and politician Julian Amery, who presided over the *Cercle* until 1994.

German Elysée Treaty of 1963. The *Cercle*'s founding vision encompassed the integration of a Christian-Catholic Europe, an aspiration reflected in the *Cercle*'s personal membership and the countries represented at the periodical meetings in its early years. The *Cercle*'s guests ranged from founding fathers of the European Union such as French statesmen *Robert Schuman* and *Jean Monnet* to the Catholic pretender to the Austrian throne, Archduke *Otto von Habsburg*. The Germans and Frenchmen were soon joined by high-ranking, mostly Christian Democratic politicians (many of them ministers in their national governments) from Italy, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg – the other founding countries of the European Economic Community (EEC) created in 1957 by the Treaty of Rome.<sup>7</sup> The predominantly Christian Democratic and Catholic background of its early members left a longstanding mark on the *Cercle*'s identity and activities.

In 1969, the *Cercle*'s founding Franco-German axis was shaken when the political pendulum reversed direction: Willy Brandt of the SPD (Social Democratic Party) became German Chancellor, and General de Gaulle was ousted from power in France. These new pressures forced the *Cercle* to reinvent itself and to expand beyond the original six Christian Democratic nations to include a wider gathering of conservative leaders from Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, and, notably, the United States. With the addition of members from these countries, the number of participants at *Cercle* meetings, until then strictly limited to twenty, expanded to some 25 to 30 members.<sup>8</sup> Neutral Switzerland was now represented too, for example by *Fred Luchsinger*, the editor-in-chief of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. Swiss businessman *Robert Zoelly* later even served as the Treasurer, transferring the *Cercle*'s funds to a UBS account at the Zollikon branch office.

In the 1970s, the *Cercle* evolved into a truly transatlantic organization, following the objective of a strong alliance between Europe and the United States and the establishment or tightening of elite transatlantic networks. High-ranking American personalities thus began attending *Cercle* meetings, such as *David Rockefeller* and *Henry Kissinger*. The expanded outreach only strengthened the *Cercle*'s other key focus, indeed obsession: anti-communism. The leaders of the group formed a network of associated organizations and increasingly considered strategies to target public opinion and attack both the Soviet Union and the perceived “leftist” governments or opposition movements in Europe and the Third World. In doing so, the *Cercle* adapted to two factors that had increasingly swayed Western policymaking from the 1960s on: the emergence of think tanks, and the growing power of the press and public opinion.<sup>9</sup> *Cercle* meetings now took place twice a year – one in Europe (frequently in Germany) and one in Washington DC.

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<sup>7</sup> While failing to mention the *Cercle*, Wolfram Kaiser has shown that the formal and informal network-type cooperation among European Christian democrats played a crucial role in the integration of the “core Europe” of the six founding member states of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) created in 1951 and the EEC, and especially fostered Franco-German reconciliation. Kaiser even concludes that “the European Christian democrats in the early post-war period largely exercised political leadership through networks”. See Kaiser, *Informal Politics and the Creation of the European Community*. It seems that the Geneva Circle, which existed from 1948 to 1952/1955, was in many respects a model and precursor of the *Cercle*. On the Geneva Circle, and generally on the role of Christian Democracy in early European integration, see also Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union*. Participation in the *Cercle* was not however strictly limited to these six “core Europe” countries. One of the principal *Cercle* members in that era was *Manuel Prado*, President of Peru from 1939 to 1945 and from 1956 to 1962. In the first decade after World War II, and from 1962 until his death in 1967, he lived in exile in Paris.

<sup>8</sup> The reinvention of the *Cercle* following the crisis of 1969 apparently follows the framework of Mark Bevir and R.A.W. Rhodes, who propose that change in networks occurs when actors face “dilemmas” that unsettle “traditions”. See Bevir and Rhodes, *Decentred Theory*.

<sup>9</sup> See for example Conze, *Zwischen Staatenwelt und Gesellschaftswelt*.

At the end of the 1970s, the *Cercle* had become a confidential forum for influential personalities and the policy advisors of the heads of state to hold off the record discussions of current affairs and the desired action to be taken. This high-level discussion of policy would then be implemented by individual *Cercle* members influencing their governments, legislatures, parties and public opinion. As French *Cercle* member *Monique Garnier-Lançon* summed up the *Cercle*'s function in her invitation to the banker *Jean-Maxime Leveque* in 1983: "The leaders of the free world can now examine the very grave problems which we face in order to determine together possible solutions and then to try to implement them, each in their respective sphere."<sup>10</sup>

## 1.2 Current state of research

Despite its longevity and highly influential members like *David Rockefeller*, *Paul Volcker*, *Franz Josef Strauss*, *Otto von Habsburg* or *Giulio Andreotti*, to name but a few, the *Cercle* is virtually nonexistent in academic research to this day. Likely, this is because it was barely tangible for the traditional historiography of the Cold War due to its secret and transnational character. The earliest account of the *Cercle* was written by the French journalist *Pierre Péan*.<sup>11</sup> Extensive, though often speculative and not always correct, information was collected by the Institute for the Study of Globalization and Covert Politics.<sup>12</sup> However, there are, as of yet, very few studies of the *Cercle* that are based on primary sources and meet basic academic standards. *Johannes Grossmann* provides a very brief introduction to the *Cercle* up to the late 1970s in an article on Christian anticommunist organizations in Western Europe after World War II,<sup>13</sup> and *David Teacher* compiled a detailed book on the main characters in the *Cercle* and the organizations they were associated with.<sup>14</sup> Teacher, who worked as a translator at the European Union, is not a professional scholar. In the late 1980s, he published pioneering articles on „The Pinay Circle“ in *Lobster* magazine, whose findings are admittedly outdated. He then wrote the book *Rogue Agents* in 1993, which was first published 15 years later online in an updated version. Teacher reveals little about the *Cercle* itself, and some of his conclusions are speculative and not backed up by primary sources. On the other hand, he provides an extremely valuable account of some of the characters participating in the *Cercle* and on the transnational network of organizations in which these protagonists were active. His account is based on numerous internal documents and publications of these groups as well as a vast amount of literature in six different languages.

## 1.3 Research agenda, question and method

The ambition of this research project is to write a history of the *Cercle* as a transnational network<sup>15</sup>, which led to personal contacts as well as a transfer of political and economic ideas

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<sup>10</sup> Translation from French by the applicant. Letter from *Monique Garnier-Lançon* to *Jean-Maxime Leveque*, 3 November 1983, *Monique Garnier-Lançon Papers*, Box 32, Folder 3, Hoover Institution Archives.

<sup>11</sup> *Péan*, *Enquête sur l'affaire des avions renifleurs*.

<sup>12</sup> *Van der Reijden*, *Le Cercle and the Struggle for the European Continent*.

<sup>13</sup> *Grossmann*, *Ein Europa der "Hintergründigen"*, pp. 330-336.

<sup>14</sup> *Teacher*, *Rogue Agents*.

<sup>15</sup> I understand a political network, in the words of *Kaiser, Leucht and Gehler*, as "a set of actors not merely engaged in any kind of social communication, but forms of cooperation geared towards shaping the political organization of social life" (*Transnational Networks in European Integration Governance*, p. 10). On the use of the term "political network" by historians see *Schulz*, *Netzwerke und Normen in der internationalen Geschichte*.

– particularly anti-communism – between conservative elites of Western nations during the Cold War. Through a historical analysis of archival documents (see section 4) and, as a supplement, interviews with former members of the *Cercle* (several are still alive),<sup>16</sup> the membership, funding, organization, and historical significance of the *Cercle* will be examined: Who were the members of the *Cercle*? How was access to the *Cercle* regimented? How was the *Cercle* structured and organized? Which power relations existed inside the *Cercle* and who set the agenda? How did the *Cercle* change and evolve over the four decades that constitute the period of investigation?

The *Cercle* was what Pierre-Yves Saunier defined as the transnational: “a structured space of interconnections and relationships which cut across what we are inclined to see as separated and autonomous spatial, social and cultural planes [...]”<sup>17</sup> An object of study that is transnational to its core requires a transnational approach. As Luc van Dongen, Stéphanie Roulin and Giles Scott-Smith put it in an edited volume mapping out the field of transnational anti-communism during the Cold War, the sphere of anti-communist organizations is in many ways “the perfect laboratory for applying a transnational historical approach”.<sup>18</sup> Such an approach rejects the interpretation that anti-communist activities were directed and controlled by governments. Instead, it lays the focus on “the role of non-state actors and their interactions, both between themselves and with elements of the state”.

Introduced into the field of International Relations as early as the beginning of the 1970s,<sup>19</sup> the concept of transnationality took hold in historiography in the 1990s, in the context of initial moves into international and global history.<sup>20</sup> However, to this day no systematical examination exists of the political Right as a transnational movement.<sup>21</sup> This state of research led van Dongen, Roulin and Scott-Smith to conclude as late as 2014 that “most transnational historical studies have examined the emancipatory causes of the Left, with the linkages of the Right being under-theorized”.<sup>22</sup> The outlined history of the *Cercle* will therefore make a valuable contribution to the nascent field of the transnational history of the political Right since World War II.<sup>23</sup>

Transnational history is interested in the influence of trans-border connections “whether through individuals, non-national identities, and non-state actors, or in terms of objectives

<sup>16</sup> For an introduction into Oral History as a historical method see for instance Abrams, *Oral History Theory*; Obertreis (ed), *Oral History*; Perks and Thomson (eds), *Oral History Reader*; Charlton, Myers and Sharpless (eds), *Handbook of Oral History*. An extensive guide to publications on oral history method and theory can be found in Yow, *Recording Oral History*. See further Welzer, *Das kommunikative Gedächtnis*; and Welzer, *Die Medialität des menschlichen Gedächtnisses*.

<sup>17</sup> Saunier, *Going Transnational*, p. 127.

<sup>18</sup> Van Dongen, Roulin and Scott-Smith, *Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War*, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> The two articles by Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, both titled *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, are considered the pioneering texts.

<sup>20</sup> With the Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History, editors Pierre-Yves Saunier and Akira Irye provide a major handbook marking out the field. For a useful overview see further Budde, Conrad and Janz (eds), *Transnationale Geschichte*; Irye, *Global and Transnational History*; Williams, Hadfield, Rofe (eds), *International History and International Relations*, pp. 20-30.

<sup>21</sup> See Irye and Mitter, *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right*, p. ix-x.

<sup>22</sup> Van Dongen, Roulin and Scott-Smith, *Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War*, p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Useful contributions to the field include, besides the already introduced work of Kaiser, the edited volume by Durham and Power (eds), *New Perspectives on the Transnational Right*. Two articles within this volume are particularly relevant in the context of the proposed research project. See Power, *Transnational, Conservative, Catholic, and Anti-Communist*; Durham and Power, *Transnational Conservatism*. Further, Andrea Mammone examines the circulations of ideas, tactics, personnel and material of right-wing national movements in Europe through a transnational lens. See e.g. Mammone, *The Transnational Reaction to 1968*.

shared by people and communities regardless of their nationality”.<sup>24</sup> A transnational approach therefore allows to break up the national paradigm and nation-state focus and emphasize instead exchanges, links, circulations and connections between nations and societies. In this vein the *Cercle* can be analyzed as an “interactional community” that Saunier identified as a main characteristic of “circulatory regimes”, and which “can be used as resources for action by every member of these communities”.<sup>25</sup> Which elite groups of different Western societies were connected in the *Cercle*? How did the *Cercle* facilitate the dissemination and circulation of ideas, understood as “broader outlines of policy”<sup>26</sup>, between European nations and (after 1970) the United States? Which political and economic actors used the *Cercle* as a resource for action? And what were those actions?

A transnational approach, however, does by no means imply that the national level and nation-state politics become irrelevant. Transnational history has a strong interest in describing the interdependencies, or even intermingling, of transnational and national levels of activity. A transnational history of the *Cercle* will therefore examine how, and in which cases, the network was able to influence and shape politics and policy on the national level, for example by individual members influencing national governments, legislatures, parties and public opinion after a particular political action was determined at a *Cercle* meeting. But since the relation between the transnational *Cercle* and national political institutions was certainly not hierarchical, I will also have to ask whether some national governments for their part have tried to exploit the *Cercle* and use it as an institution through which to exert influence.

An especially interesting case in this regard, and one that will require the attention of the planned research project, are the activities of the government of South Africa, which (according to the current state of research) was the only country that ever sent an official delegation to *Cercle* meetings.<sup>27</sup> The official South African delegations, which have been arranged by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in Pretoria from at least the late 1970s onwards, were largely composed of Ambassadors to the major *Cercle* countries (Great Britain, the United States, France and Germany), accompanied by senior officials from the DFA, and Foreign Minister *Pik Botha* at times attended as a guest. The connection between the *Cercle* and the South African government had already been initiated in the first half of the 1970s, when *Cercle* leaders had cooperated with the South African Department of Information on a vast secret propaganda program to improve the image of South Africa and the apartheid regime. By the 1980s, the South African government had also become a major source of funds for the *Cercle* until South Africa’s “Third Force” (international covert intelligence) operations were shut down in 1992 following secret negotiations between Premier de Klerk and ANC leader Nelson Mandela. Besides contributing to the *Cercle*’s coffers, the South African government also donated a five-day stay in South Africa to each *Cercle* member in 1988. Did the apartheid regime consider this informal diplomacy as a substitute, at a time when it was increasingly cut off from official diplomatic channels? Did *Cercle* members return the favour with pro-South African initiatives?

I intend to lay the focus particularly on two comprehensive batteries of questions that will guide my research. The first battery of questions addresses the role that the *Cercle* played in

<sup>24</sup> Iriye, *Global and Transnational History*, p. 15.

<sup>25</sup> Saunier, *Learning by Doing*, pp. 174f. Saunier lists visits, correspondence, and both formal and informal organizations as examples of interactional communities.

<sup>26</sup> Daugbjerg and Pedersen, *New Policy Ideas*, p. 245.

<sup>27</sup> For a short overview of the involvement of the South African apartheid regime with the *Cercle* see Hänni, *Global Crusade against Communism*, pp. 164-167.

early European integration as a transnational network of Christian democratic elites. Pinay had conceived the *Cercle* as a confidential forum for leaders of the Christian Democratic parties and governments of the six “core Europe” states to meet and establish personal relationships, a network of contacts which could promote European integration and ensure closer cooperation in areas of common interest. *Did the Cercle in the 1950s/1960s in fact enable personal contacts that facilitated European integration and/or Franco-German reconciliation, which was the core of integration in post-war Europe? Did the ideas articulated in the Cercle help shape the approach of Christian Democratic leaders to European integration? If so, how and at which particular moments did the Cercle facilitate the integration process? And to what extent did the Cercle influence the early institutionalization of Europe that eventually resulted from interstate negotiations?* Even without being aware of the existence of the *Cercle*, Wolfram Kaiser has argued that “informal transnational networks of Christian Democratic party elites influenced in crucial ways the institutionalization of core Europe”.<sup>28</sup> Their “hegemonic political position” had enabled Christian Democratic leaders to implement transnationally agreed party policy in their functions as members of national governments. Kaiser exemplifies that some of the government policies of Adenauer, who played a crucial role at the intersection of the partly overlapping networks, were “prepared in transnational network-type party contacts including the long-term preparation of sectoral integration in coal and steel”.<sup>29</sup>

Although its character and program evolved over the period of investigation, the *Cercle* was always an anti-Communist network. Through the 1970s and the 1980s, anti-communism and the preoccupation with the “Soviet threat” were its main *raison d’être* – at least judging from preliminary research. The second battery of questions accordingly addresses the *Cercle’s* Cold War role as a network of conservative elites from Western Europe and the United States. *In what way did the Cercle in the 1970s/1980s contribute to the emergence of private transnational networks between members of a conservative elite on both sides of the Atlantic? What was the role of the Cercle in the transnational and transatlantic transfer of anticommunist ideas, strategies and propaganda? And what was its specific material output of anti-communism?* Further, I will explore to what extent the *Cercle* was able to influence national politics, especially the Cold War politics of the administrations of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan in the United States, but also the Thatcher government in Great Britain and other European governments.<sup>30</sup>

At least during its first two decades, the *Cercle* was shaped by its Catholic character. Discussions at meetings covered topics such as the decline of the church in modern life or “modern man and morality”. In the 1950s, the *Cercle* was also closely connected with “la Commission pour l’Eglise persécutée”, an organization headquartered in Fribourg, Switzerland, which maintained contacts with ecclesiastical authorities and Catholic refugees

<sup>28</sup> Kaiser, Leucht and Gehler, *Transnational Networks in European Integration Governance*, p. 12. Researching the political Left, Rathkolb, *Brandt, Kreisky and Palme as Policy Entrepreneurs*, shows how an informal network of Social Democratic party elites has significantly shaped Europe’s policy towards the Middle East between 1973 and 1983.

<sup>29</sup> Kaiser, *Christian Democratic Networks*, pp. 90-93.

<sup>30</sup> Personal contacts between the Nixon administration and the *Cercle* go back to December 1970, when National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and an NSC staff member secretly met with the *Cercle* leaders at David Rockefeller’s residence in New York. President Reagan has sent his intimate friend William A. Wilson, who was entrusted with the sensitive post of Reagan’s first Ambassador to the Holy See, as his personal ambassador to the *Cercle*. During Reagan’s presidency, an impressive number of senior officials from the key bodies which planned and implemented US foreign and security policy – the National Security Council, the Department of Defense, the Department of State and the CIA – as well as several eminent ‘retired’ intelligence veterans participated in the *Cercle*.

centers in Eastern Europe. And in 1970, the *Cercle* mounted a large-scale propaganda program to fight communist subversion of the Church.<sup>31</sup> Against this background, a history of the *Cercle* will also have to explore whether the group reinforced the nexus between religion and Cold War politics, which already existed at the time of its foundation, and how it contributed to the political and cultural production of the Religious Cold War.<sup>32</sup> Diane Kirby has noted that the religious dimension of anti-communism and the Cold War “helped consolidate transatlantic relations and European integration” – in fact the other key objectives of the *Cercle*.<sup>33</sup> Finally, I will attempt to explain the shift that took place within the *Cercle* in the 1970s from an anti-communism shaped by Catholic notions of “Abendland” to a more transatlantic-oriented, secular anti-communism,<sup>34</sup> and try to place that evolution within the history of continental European conservatives in the Cold War era.<sup>35</sup>

## 1.4 Sources

Although the secret character of the *Cercle* and its neglect by academia indicate the opposite, there are more than sufficient and adequate sources for a historical project. The study will be based primarily on two groups of sources:

### 1) *Historical documents in various archives in the United States and Western Europa*

The archival documents include correspondence between leading *Cercle* members, list of participants and agendas of *Cercle* meetings, handwritten notes of *Cercle* meetings, financial documents and bank statements e.g. Among the most relevant collections are: the Brian Crozier Papers and the Monique Garnier-Lançon Papers at Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University (USA); the William A. Wilson Papers at Georgetown University in Washington DC (USA); the papers (Nachlass) of Franz Josef Strauss, Archiv für Christlich-Soziale Politik, Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, Munich (Germany); the papers (Nachlass) of Konrad Adenauer, Archiv Stiftung Bundeskanzler-Adenauer-Haus at Bonn (Germany); the Papers of Julian Amery at Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge (UK).

<sup>31</sup> See Arduini, *Lotta alla sovversione comunista all'interno della Chiesa Cattolica*, pp. 9-13.

<sup>32</sup> See Kirby, *The Religious Cold War*, for a masterful introduction into the subject. Kirby places the Religious Cold War into “a growing corpus of work exploring the influence of ideas, culture, and norms now complementing material explanations and enhancing causal debates within the fields of international relations” (p. 557). See further Silk, *Spiritual Politics*; Kirby (ed), *Religion and the Cold War*; and Muehlenbeck (ed), *Religion and the Cold War*.

<sup>33</sup> To Kirby, the “godless Soviet bogey” was one of “the key constructions facilitating the European nations [...] putting aside their differences”. See Kirby, *The Religious Cold War*, p. 547. In any case, religious themes and rhetoric played a prominent role in anti-communist propaganda, and covert operations such as plots to subvert the communist regimes sometimes exploited religion.

<sup>34</sup> To be in an optimal position to address this issue, I plan a collaboration within an international research network that proposes to investigate the history of socialism and religion in their interactive relationship to one another, and which is currently being built by Dr. Todd Weir of Queen’s University Belfast. A symposium is planned in spring 2016 that will explore the decline of a specifically Catholic notion of *Abendland* as the ideological foundation of conservative ideas of European union, and the rise of a secular anti-communism that became allied to American Evangelicals.

<sup>35</sup> See Forlenza, *Christian Democracy and the European Project*, for the nexus between “Abendland”, Christian Democracy, European integration, anti-communism, and the Cold War. “Das Abendland” was a popular concept in Catholic milieus and the Christian Democracy movement after World War II. It evoked a supranational integrated Europe and combined anti-communism with anti-American cultural criticism.

In line with the character of the *Cercle*, private papers will contribute more to the source material than governmental archives. Nevertheless, there are a few relevant collections in national archives as well. For example a folder of records in the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, that documents the interaction between European *Cercle* leaders and the U.S. National Security Council during the Reagan administration (see below); and the Henry A. Kissinger Telephone Conversation Transcripts (TELCONS) at the U.S. National Archives II in College Park, MD, which contain transcripts of numerous phone conversations on the *Cercle* between Kissinger and David Rockefeller. An Early Postdoc.Mobility fellowship would further allow me to search for records in the National Archives of South Africa (NASA) in Pretoria. A visit to the NASA is particularly promising considering that the South African Department of Foreign Affairs has sent high-ranking diplomatic delegations to *Cercle* meetings for more than a decade.

2) *Oral History interviews with former Cercle members (as a supplement to archival documents)*

## 1.5 Importance of the project

The outlined research project is relevant to a number of research areas.<sup>36</sup> Primarily, it will make a significant contribution to both the history of European integration and the history of the Cold War. First, the history of the *Cercle* tries to contribute to a history of European integration that gives stronger emphasis on the role of private and transnational actors, and goes beyond reconstructing the origins of European integration as basically the outcome of multilateral negotiations between the governments of member states. While such heavily state-centric approaches for long dominated diplomatic and economic historiography of western European integration,<sup>37</sup> a transnational disciplinary agenda emerged more recently that has also increased the interest in the role of private networks.<sup>38</sup> A history of the *Cercle* will therefore provide a case study on how private transnational networks attempted to shape European integration from the very beginning – rather than emerging only in the 1970s in the context of an alleged “hollowing-out” of the nation state.<sup>39</sup>

Second, a history of the *Cercle* will make a valuable contribution to an emerging field within the research of anti-communism and the Cold War that shifts the focus away from national governments and formal decision-making procedures, and instead explores the role of private actors and informal transnational networks – like the *Cercle* – that are connected based on categories such as ideology, faith or class.<sup>40</sup> The envisaged intensive primary research within

<sup>36</sup> Since the *Cercle* was to a major degree funded by large Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) such as *Philips* and *Standard Elektrik Lorenz* (SEL), and top executives of industrial corporations, banks and publishing houses were participating in *Cercle* meetings alongside high-ranking politicians and diplomats, the study will, for instance, also contribute to a deeper understanding of the interactions between business and politics in Western Europe and the United States in the decades following the Second World War.

<sup>37</sup> See Kaiser and Varsori (eds), *European Union History*; for shorter introductions see Gilbert, *Narrating the Process* and Kaiser, *Historiography of European Integration*.

<sup>38</sup> See Kaiser, Leucht, and Rasmussen (Eds.), *History of the European Union*. Brigitte Leucht, for example, analyzed the role of transatlantic networks in the formation of core Europe in her 2008 PhD dissertation. See Leucht, *Transatlantic Policy Networks and the Formation of Core Europe*.

<sup>39</sup> The latter has often been claimed by political scientists: See for example Hirst, *Democracy and Governance*; Hooghe and Marks, *Unravelling the Central State*. For a critical discussion see Kaiser, Leucht, and Gehler, *Transnational Networks in European Integration Governance*, pp. 1-5.

<sup>40</sup> The edited volume by van Dongen, Roulin and Scott-Smith (eds), *Transnational Anti-Communism and the Cold War*, is mapping out the field. Earlier scholarship in this field includes Scott-Smith, *Western Anti-*



the scope of this project will therefore broaden our knowledge about hidden network-type political relations, their motives, and impacts; and it will give additional insights on informal mechanisms that generate political ideas leading to political action and decision-making in complex environments. The outlined project will therefore enrich the study of the Cold War and enhance our understanding of the East-West conflict.

## 1.6 Preliminary work

Following initial archival research (mainly at the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University) and the evaluation of *Cercle* documents largely from the 1980s, I presented a paper at an international conference in Fribourg (*Transnational Dimensions of Cold War Anti-communism: Actions, Networks, Transfers*, University of Fribourg, Switzerland, 26-29 October 2011). A short article based on this presentation (*A Global Crusade against Communism: The Cercle in the "Second Cold War"*), which gives an introduction into the *Cercle* of the 1980s and focuses on its anti-communist agenda, has successfully passed peer-review and was published this year in an edited volume of the *Palgrave Macmillan Transnational History Series (Transnational Dimensions of Cold War Anti-communism: Actions, Networks, Transfers*; editors: Giles Scott-Smith, Luc van Dongen and Stéphanie Roulin). I also submitted a Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR) request for a folder of records in the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library that documents the interaction between European *Cercle* leaders and the U.S. National Security Council during the Reagan administration. (In summer 2014 I was notified that declassification authorities had acceded to my request and that the documents will at least be partially released.)

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*Communism and the Interdoc Network*; Müller, *Krieger und Gelehrte*; Grossmann, *Ein Europa der 'Hintergründigen'*; Ludwig, *Anticommunisme et guerre psychologique en RFA et en Europe*; Ludwig, *Le Comité européen et international 'Paix et liberté'*; Delmas and Kessler (eds), *Renseignement et propagande pendant la guerre froide*; and, with a stronger local and "street-level history" perspective, Pieper Mooney and Lanza (eds), *De-centering Cold War History*. The outlined new strand within Cold War studies overlaps to a certain degree with the program of a New Diplomatic History, whose approach is also more transnational than international. It likewise grants more importance to the role of individuals and private institutions and dislocates the state as "the prime adjudicator of diplomatic legitimacy", acknowledging potential but not necessary linkages and relationships between state and non-state actors without giving either priority. See Scott-Smith, *Private Diplomacy*.

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