



## **Die Zeitschrift *Die Zukunft* (1938-1940) und ihre Autoren (1899-1979): Politische Konzepte für Europa und die Welt im 20. Jahrhundert**

### **ABSTRACT**

*Die Zukunft*, a publication of antifascist émigrés in Paris which came out from 1938 to 1940, invites us to enquire into the influence of intellectuals during the interwar period and particularly into the initiatives of émigrés to warn the Western democracies against the Nazi dictatorship and its expansionist goals. The weekly was created by a former key figure of the Comintern, Willi Münzenberg, after his breakoff with Stalinism in 1938. There were 81 issues between October 12, 1938 and May 3, 1940, among them some special editions « England-Germany » (« England-Deutschland »), « Sweden-Germany » (« Schweden-Deutschland ») or « France-Germany » (« Frankreich-Deutschland »), printed in the two languages.

The magazine allows, in fact, to discover an impressive transnational network of 332 authors from 25 countries and distinguishes itself by the implication of well-known intellectuals and politicians, such as Heinrich, Thomas, Klaus and Erika Mann, Alfred Döblin, Lion Feuchtwanger, H.G. Wells, Aldous Huxley, Harold Macmillan, Clement Attlee, Édouard Daladier or Édouard Herriot. Even Jawaharlal Nehru participates in the debate about the future of the colonial empires, an important issue in the *Zukunft*.

This can be explained by the fact that the magazine does not restrain itself to a platform of information for German-speaking émigrés in Paris. It aims at a wide discussion about a new order for Germany, Europe and the world after Hitler's downfall, as it is expressed in its title (*Die Zukunft* means *The Future*).

The weekly represents a confluence of two networks created in the previous decades : the international pacifist movements and the associations created by Willi Münzenberg for the Comintern. But it integrates other personalities from outside these two networks, too, like Tory politicians or French and German nationalists. The variety of political movements represented in the same publication is outstanding in a historical perspective.

This variety has been a result of the break-off of a certain number of left-wing intellectuals with Stalinism, like the creators of the *Zukunft*, and in the first line Willi Münzenberg who throws his famous accusation on Stalin on September 22, 1939 in the *Zukunft* : « The traitor, Stalin, is you ! » (« Der Verräter, Stalin, bist Du ! »).

The different groups of *Die Zukunft* authors have played important roles before and after its publication in Western intellectual and political life. This fact has led to a wider approach in our research work, on the thematic and chronological level. The debate in the *Zukunft* is replaced in the context of intellectual and political history, from 1899 and the first networks created by the future authors of the weekly (the Christian network Sillon and the first pacifist movements) until 1979 and the first direct elections of the European Parliament, which signifies the success of the European idea outlined in the *Zukunft*. The principal political and economical orientations of the postwar period will be analysed, too, at the example of the former authors of *Die Zukunft*.

In order to attain this goal, we have chosen two complementary approaches : a prosopographic analysis, by issuing a database of the whole group of authors and by following some biographies of emblematic authors more in detail, and an analysis of the intellectual history of the eight decades covered by our work.

The wider historical context permits us as well to call into question the classic periods used in historiography concerning the cultural, economic and political evolutions of the 20th century.

We will try to understand in how far the *Zukunft* reflects the evolution of intellectual thought in the 20th century, and how the actions of its authors have contributed to create Europe and the world as we know them today.

In the first place, we analyse the creation of the networks, in the second place the debate about different topics in the *Zukunft*, and finally, in the third place, the influence of its authors after the end of the weekly.

The analysis of their biographies shows that the authors came, in their large majority, from the pacifist networks created before World War II (the « Sillon » in France, the supporters of the League of Nations...) and from the networks created by Willi Münzenberg, first for the Comintern, and, later on, during his exile in France, especially after his break-off with Stalin.

Thus a very diversified intellectual network came out :

1. Different nationalities, with 25 countries represented. Among them, we find a lot of exiles from Central Europe, but as well a great number of authors from Western Europe or the United States. In this environment, the French-German couple takes a central place by the creation of the « French-German Union » (« Union franco-allemande »/Deutsch-Französische Union »). But it is completed with an equivalent network in Great Britain, the « Federal Fellowships », and other organisations in the world.

2. Different political convictions : former Communists, Socialists, Christian Democrats, Liberals, Keynesians, and even former Nationalists or Monarchists.

3. Different generations : the oldest authors are born around 1860, the youngest ones around 1920.

The articles of the weekly show its important contribution to the intellectual life of Western Europe, by their analysis of the totalitarian phenomena and the geopolitical evolutions in the world from 1938 to 1940, but also by the implication of the authors in favour of a new world order (European integration and renovation of the League of Nations, among other points).

After the end of the weekly, its authors take part in the continuation of these struggles : by their participation in the war effort, in the French Résistance or inside the Allied authorities and secret services. After the war, they take part in the intellectual networks supporting the European integration and the Atlantic cooperation. Several authors have political or governmental responsibilities (e.g. Clement Attlee, Harold Macmillan, Georges Bidault or Carlo Sforza), and they contribute actively to the creation of the post-war Western world (parliamentary democracy, welfare state), besides the creation of the first European and international organizations.

At the end of our investigation, we show the consistency of the personal course of the authors before, during and after the period of existence of the weekly *Die Zukunft*. In general, we would like to highlight the role of the « engaged intellectual » in the big political and economic orientations, his possibilities of action and his limits.

In order to achieve this work, we used a great number of sources : archives in France, Germany, the UK and the United States (including archives of the weekly, personal archives of certain authors, institutional archives), publications of these authors besides the magazine, interviews. These sources are completed by a bibliography of about 450 books and articles, 46 press titles and 80 websites.

Keywords : Pacifism, Christian Democrats, Comintern, Nazism, Totalitarianism, exile, intellectuals, 1930s, Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, World War II, Franco-German relations, European construction, UNO, transnational network, Cold War