EDWARD HEATH AND THE EUROPEANISATION OF ENGLISHNESS: THE HOPES AND FAILURES OF A EUROPEAN ENGLISH LEADER

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Clichés and stereotypes are the two most likely dangers of any exogenous perception of Englishness. Seen from a Continental point of view, Englishness is immediately associated with the notions of insularity and isolation, and the English are often depicted as a secluded people content to live among themselves on their island. Yet, historical reality invalidates this image of Englishness withdrawn from the rest of the world and reveals the formidable network of relationships that Englishness has forged and developed across the world. From the Empire to the "special relationship" with the United States, Englishness has always cultivated a close and intimate relationship with the outside world, so much so that Ian Baucom writes in his book *Out of Place* that "the trouble with the English is that their history happened overseas."[1] History is one of the main constituents of a common identity and Baucom's quotation suggests that Englishness is a trans-territorial, trans-national notion that forces us to go beyond the mere geographical and ethnic frontiers of England in order to consider it in the more appropriate context of globalisation. But why then is this myth of isolation so deeply widespread on the continent and especially in France? In its privileged relationship with the world, Englishness made one conspicuous exception, Europe, and recent history bears witness to the irredeemable impermeability of Englishness towards the European continent. This paper will focus on the post-war years, a period beset with crises and mutations during which the old paradigms steadily disappeared and new ones emerged to try and redefine the essence of Englishness. But Englishness does not so easily merge with alien concepts as Edward Heath's attempt at europeanising Englishness will show and I will pay attention to his experience as it sheds an interesting light on the relationship between Englishness and Europe. One of the most compelling issues raised by Edward Heath's experience is why, in spite of his success in taking Britain into the European Community, he nonetheless failed in his project of europeanisation of the nation.

Post-War Englishness: Pride and Prejudice

The Second World War brought about two major upheavals in the foundations of Englishness. The loss of the Empire was the first and most excruciating hardship for a country which had built most of its power and prestige on its colonies. Englishness was deeply touched and impaired by this loss. Shorn of its Empire, Englishness was deprived of a part of its identity forged across foreign lands. Directly linked to the loss of the Empire was the dramatic loss of status and economic decline the United Kingdom experienced after the war. Though victorious, the Second World War bled the country white and imposed a new world order in which the United States emerged as the undisputed major world power. This new distribution of power altered the "special relationship" and created an imbalance in which America's newly-gained superiority magnified Britain's suddenly befallen weakness.

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[1] Ian Baucom, *Out of Place. Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) 40.

Thus, in the aftermath of the War, Englishness was characterised by loss, but in spite of these upheavals, British politicians did not seem to realise the vulnerability and frailty of their country and they continued to extol Britain's grandeur and magnificence. Churchill's speech on the three circles encapsulated the prevailing vision of Britain at the time as holding a central position on world affairs amid three circles: the Commonwealth, the United States and Europe. This distorted vision of Britain's status was what led governments to make a series of diplomatic choices which ignored the new economic and geopolitical realities. The Attlee Government sent troops to Korea to help the Americans and endured a huge economic sacrifice in the name of the sanctity of the "special relationship" whereas a few years earlier in 1950 it had shunned the discussions on the Schuman Plan. Right after the War, the countries of Europe had decided to work together to prepare the post-war future and the Schuman Plan devised by two French politicians, Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet, was the first step in what was to become the European Community. Though invited to take part in the discussions, the Attlee Government turned down the invitation and preferred to stay away from the nascent European Community and looked at it with a mixture of scepticism and suspicion.

In the Conservative Party, Churchill was the main spokesman for the unity of the European family and in a series of speeches he delineated his vision of a United Europe based on the model of the United States, but he remained very vague about the exact role and implication of his country in this process of unification. As early as 1950, Edward Heath emerged as one of the most forceful advocates for Britain's involvement in Europe and in his maiden speech he urged "the Government…to go into the Schuman Plan to develop Europe."[2] But the Labour Government remained deaf to his appeals and even the Conservative Party forsook the European issue when it came back to power in 1951.

For Heath, the psychological impact of the victory in 1945 fostered arrogance towards Continental Europe and he admits:

> We thought of ourselves as intrinsically superior, because we were dealing with the vanquished. On that basis there was no reason why the British needed to take part in any of these proposed activities.[3]

More largely, victory concealed the structural weaknesses of the country and prevented it from initiating a profound introspection and questioning to assess the difficulties and better prepare the future. Unlike France, Germany and Italy, Britain did not need to exorcise its past and thus remained blind to the opportunity offered by the European Community. But why this blindness towards Europe? This is the main issue raised by Roy Denman in his book *Missed Chances* which provides an illuminating answer:

> With a failure to recognise change can easily go delusions of grandeur…. One has been of Britain's unique strength, in both being the centre of a huge Commonwealth and enjoying a special relationship with the United States…. Another facet of a reluctance to change and a reliance on past glories is a conviction that British institutions are the best in the world and cannot possibly be changed…. This has been a sad tale, of a refusal to face change at home and abroad, of the continuation of this century of a long period of national decline, and of fateful, missed chances in Europe.[4]

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[2] *Hansard,* 476 :1966 (26th June 1950).
[3] Edward Heath, *The Course of My Life* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1998) 122.
[4] Roy Denman, *Missed Chances: Britain and Europe in the Twentieth Century* (London: Pimlico, 1997) 289-96.

Denman's ruthless judgement shows that an overwhelming historical background and a hypertrophied pride constituted the backbone of Britain's status quo. But Denman's main point here is the feeling of pride in the institutions. British institutions are primarily English, and the English are proud to identify themselves with a parliamentary tradition and a set of common values such as freedom and democracy. Thus, the interesting point to raise about Englishness is that it is a civic notion and to be English is to adhere to a civic system which has shown its stability and efficacy along the years. Compared to the English national values, the European continent is an unstable land prone to wars, oppression, and dictatorship. Linda Colley argues that the birth and development of a national feeling and a common identity grew out of a rejection of the Continental model and especially the French model. France, the arch-enemy, became the counter-model against which Englishness could mature:

> In other words, men and women decide who they are by reference to who and what they are not. Once confronted with an obvious alien "Them", an otherwise diverse community can become a reassuring or merely desperate "Us". This was how it was with the British after 1707. They came to define themselves as a single people not because of any political or cultural consensus at home, but rather in reaction to the Other beyond their shores.[5]

What she describes for the British is actually more relevant for the English. It is the English, not the Scottish or the Welsh, who rejected the French and have nourished a deep-seated aversion towards them. Consequently, as France was at the helm of the European construction, it is easy to understand the reasons for the English people's reluctance to co-operate with them inside a supranational structure. The Scottish and also, but to a lesser extent, the Welsh are enthusiastic pro-Europeans. They have seen Europe as a means to dissociate themselves from English power and have always emphasised the help provided to their regions by the European Community. In France, bad blood and resentment towards the English are also widespread, and this hostility towards the English was best embodied by de Gaulle whose refusal to accept the United Kingdom inside the European Community was a clear signal of his unwillingness to work with the English. To him, England – and only England – was responsible for the bad relationships with France and the following quotation encapsulates de Gaulle's feelings:

> Our greatest hereditary enemy was not Germany: it was England. From the hundred years of war to Fashoda, England has always fought against us. And since then she cannot avoid setting her interests against ours. See how she behaved between the two wars. She forbade us to take action when Hitler reoccupied the Rhineland. She prevented us from opposing Germany's rearmament. She gaily bombarded our fleet in Mers-el-Kébir. She betrayed us in Syria. She always makes common cause with America. She wants to prevent the successful development of the Common Market. It is true that she was our ally during the war, but she is not genuinely prone to wish us good.[6]

In this quotation, de Gaulle recalls the myth of perfidious Albion, and insists on England's treachery and disloyalty, but above all he insists on England's fundamental un-Europeanness. De Gaulle never faltered from the view that England was not and did not want to be European. Andrew Geddes confirms de Gaulle's view and argues that

> In the 1950s, there was little interest in or enthusiasm for European integration because of the competing influences of the Empire/Commonwealth and the special relationship with

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[5] Linda Colley, *Britons, Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992) 6.

[6] Alain Peyrefitte, *C'était de Gaulle*, vol. 1 (Paris : Editions de Fallois, Fayard, 1994) 153-54, (my translation).

the USA. These were seen as the route to international influence and the maintenance of power status. Ideas of Europe were marginal.[7]

Ideas of Europe became less marginal after 1956 and the fiasco of the Suez crisis. The Suez crisis represented the starting point of a new conduct of foreign affairs and a better, more realistic approach to geopolitical realities. For Heath, it was the painful but necessary shock to awaken the country from the state of torpor and plan new priorities for the future, one of them being Europe because it

> forced many who had hitherto been sceptical about European unity to realise that our future lay in our own continent and not in distant lands which our forefathers had coloured in pink on the map.[8]

The unusual distance expressed in this sentence by a British leader towards the countries of the Empire sharply contrasts with the usual familiarity and intimacy that suffuse references to the Empire. But it is all the more striking in the light of Richard Davis's statement that:

> Whereas for most people in Britain, Europe, that is to say continental Europe, has usually been portrayed as essentially foreign, the Empire, or the English-speaking world, has most often been regarded as being quite similar, almost homely, a little part of Britain transported across the oceans.[9]

Heath never shared with his fellow countrymen the closeness and sentimental attachment to the Empire described by Richard Davis. As his private secretary, Douglas Hurd, pointed out, "his background had of course been distinctly unimperial."[10] Indeed, none of his family ever worked or lived in British colonies and he first visited the countries of the Commonwealth quite late in his life compared to other British leaders who had spent time during their youth in the colonies. But one might also argue that Heath distanced himself from the Commonwealth because he saw it as the major obstacle to the acceptance of the European option. The Commonwealth still loomed large in the English people's hearts and as long as nostalgia prevailed, Europe was being kept at bay. But little by little, as the influence of the Commonwealth and of the United States faded, Heath's European discourse got more attention and more credit. After years of status quo, the 1960s opened a new age when Englishness found the need for a transforming vision which would rekindle the dynamism lost after the War.

Englishness in Crisis: the Search for New Models

At the beginning of the 1960s, Englishness was characterised by an identity crisis best encapsulated by Dean Acheson's famous statement, "Britain has lost an Empire and has not yet found a role."[11] The loss of the Empire left a deep scar that needed to be healed by re-

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[7] Andrew Geddes, "Europe," in *The Political Thought of the Conservative Party since 1945*, ed. Kevin Hickson, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 119.
[8] Edward Heath, *The Course of my Life*, *op. cit.*, 177.
[9] Richard Davis, "Britain in Europe: Some Origins of Britain's Post-War Ambivalence," in *La Grande-Bretagne et l'Europe : ambivalence et pragmatisme*, ed. Claire Sanderson (Paris: Cahiers Charles V, Université Paris 7, 2006) 21.
[10] Douglas Hurd, *An End to Promises. Sketch of a Government 1970-1974* (London: Collins, 1979) 41.
[11] Speech delivered in West Point, December 5, 1962 cited in John Baylis, *Anglo-American Relations since 1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997) 129.

inventing a new form of Englishness. Two different discourses emerged from this need for reconstruction: the European discourse and the nationalist discourse.

The Conservative Party was the first British party to embrace the European cause. In 1960, Macmillan announced that the United Kingdom would apply to get into the European Community. The Conservative Party, since Disreali traditionally associated with the Party of England and of the Empire, took on a cosmopolitan dimension by becoming the Party of Europe. But by espousing the European cause, the Conservative Party above all showed its pragmatism and realism (or fatalism?): Britain was a declining power and Europe, with its huge market and sound economy, offered the best chances to recover prosperity and strength, but in no way did the decision to get into the European Community trigger a europeanisation of the Conservatives' hearts and minds as Andrew Geddes very well highlights:

> The "choice for Europe" did not represent a positive embrace of the European ideal or signify any great enthusiasm for federal visions of a united Europe. If anything, the choice was born from a lack of alternatives as the vision of the Commonwealth as a world power bloc with Britain at the helm receded, the special relationship no longer seemed so special (and the US was pushing the UK towards the EC anyway) and a general perception of decline induced a national identity crisis.[12]

The "choice for Europe" was then a well thought-out and rational choice aimed at redressing the economy but sentiments still lay towards the Commonwealth and the United States and no commitment to Europe could alter the profound strength of those links, be they historical, cultural, linguistic or simply sentimental. Even Edward Heath, usually the first to dismiss this profound attachment as mere nostalgia, acknowledged that the tradition of co-operation and trust between his country and the United States would be hard to remove:

> To hear some people talk in Europe one would think that the world is in fact run by the British Prime Minister and the President of the United States meeting daily in conclave in a command post on some island in the middle of the Atlantic. This belief stems of course partly from the wartime partnership of Churchill and Roosevelt and partly from the instinct, which is obviously sound, that Britain and the United States will always have much in common, the same basis of language, law, and custom and innumerable professional and personal ties. It is also true that in day-to-day matters of government there is an instinctive tendency among some British officials when assessing foreign reactions to a particular situation to ask first and foremost what the United States will think and how it will react. In military matters this tendency is particularly noticeable and natural because of the history of the Anglo-American nuclear partnership and the present British reliance on American military equipment. But in government one quickly learns that as one symptom of the shift of power in the modern world the instinct is no longer so strong in Washington. As Britain becomes more closely involved in Europe the instincts of officials will no doubt turn to Paris, Bonn or Rome, though I must also add sometimes there has been little sign of this.[13]

One word is very important in this passage, the word "instinct". Can we change what is natural and instinctive? Is a country instinctively turned to the United States able to suddenly turn to Europe? Yes, but this partnership will immediately look artificial and unnatural because Englishness is instinctively and essentially Atanticist, not European. The "special relationship" grew out of a reciprocal feeling of a common identity and common

[12] Andrew Geddes, *op. cit.*, 122.

[13] Edward Heath, *Old World, New Horizons. Britain, Europe and the Atlantic Alliance,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970) 66-7.

roots; the European option on the other hand was forced upon the country by economic circumstances.

But European integration is also different from the "special relationship" because as Andrew Geddes points out it is "clearly not a mere foreign policy issue "external" to the UK."[14] Europe encapsulates ideas about the nation and sovereignty which are of primary importance to the English. European integration implies a unique form of commitment with other countries that the relationship with the United States never implied. The United States is a partner which, though demanding and sometimes unrewarding, has never imposed changes in the life style, in the laws or institutions. Union with Europe is a marriage of convenience where the bride has to submit to rigid rules and forsake a great part of her freedom. Thus, entry in the European Community can inspire a feeling of bondage that no Englishman (the "free born Englishman") would be ready to accept. Englishness worships the principle of freedom and democracy and sees its fulfilment only in the sovereignty of its institutions. For the English, entry into Europe threatens the purity and integrity of their national values but also threatens to absorb and dissolve Englishness inside a federal superstructure which would iron out all differences between the countries to create a uniform bloc. Englishness succeeded in resisting Britishness but fears she might not resist the European Community and might be engulfed by this monstrous Continental creature devised by the French. This fear of assimilation and dissolution lies deep inside the English psyche and represents a powerful obstacle to integration in Europe. But if one understands Englishness as the expression of a profound rejection of the Continental model, then it is easier to understand the fear and mistrust associated with the European Community.

In his different writings on Europe, Heath tackled those issues but always tried to play down their impact on the country's life. The debate on federalism was for him "at best sterile and at worst a positive hindrance,"[15] and as far as sovereignty was concerned, it seemed to him that it was "a conception much more of pooling sovereignty with others who are occupied in the same joint enterprise."[16] But to dismiss those fears as unfounded or ludicrous shows the extent of Heath's ignorance of Englishness. Englishness is not just a question of nationality or country, it is also the expression of a profound admiration for English institutions and parliamentary tradition as Roy Denman underlined.

And it is precisely on those questions of sovereignty and nationhood that the second discourse, the nationalist discourse thrived. Agnès Tachin explains that anti-Europeanism is first and foremost

> directed against the European institutions perceived as the main instrument for the establishment of a federal Europe, actually a vast conspiracy zealously carried out by Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, among others. For the anti-Europeans, the British political system represents the quintessence of a democracy patiently arrived at maturity and would not be pledged to a Continental federalism.[17]

The anti-Europeans skilfully played on the fears aroused by Europe and exploited cherished themes like history and tradition to argue in favour of isolation from the Continent. The Labour Party largely indulged in propagating this nationalist discourse and Denis MacShane, himself a Labour MP, acknowledges the populist tendencies of his party at the time:

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[14] Andrew Geddes, "Europe," *op. cit.*, 114.

[15] Edward Heath, *Old World, op. cit.*, 56.

[16] Edward Heath, *The Course of My Life, op. cit.*, 211.

[17] Agnès Tachin, "Imaginaire et processus de décision : l'exemple des deux vetos gaulliens contre l'entrée de la Grande-Bretagne dans le Marché Commun," in *La Grande-Bretagne et l'Europe, op. cit.*, 105 (my translation).

Hugh Gaitskell, the Labour Leader, said to join the EEC would "mean the end of Britain as an independent nation state…It means the end of a thousand years of history" and was cheered and cheered at the Labour Party conference, which loved such nationalist populism.[18]

After years of implicit consensus between the two parties, Europe became a subject of heated debates and Labour MPs revelled in mocking the sudden European enthusiasm of their opponents. Denis Healey, for instance, sarcastically declared that "The Europeanisation of the Conservative Party [was] nothing but imperialism with an inferiority complex."[19] However harsh this statement may be, it contains an undisputable truth: for the Conservatives (as well as for a majority of the English), the choice for Europe was an admission of weakness and an explicit acknowledgement of the major decline suffered in a few years. The once almighty Albion dominating the world was now a minor power forced to secure its survival in a common destiny with Europe. For Continental Europeans, the European Community was a symbol of peace and unity; for the English, on the other hand, Europe was a humiliating symbol of decline. But if application to the European Community was experienced as a painful humiliation, was it then the best remedy to heal the identity crisis Englishness was going through? Linda Colley suggests that Europe was both the symptom and the cause of the crisis of Englishness:

> But national uncertainty is most evident, perhaps, in the apprehension with which so many Britons regard increasing assimilation into a united Europe. Whereas the Germans and the French, who are more confident about their unique identity, see a Europe without frontiers in terms of opportunity, the British are far more inclined to view it as a threat. This is partly because they have so often fought against Continental European states in the past; but their apparent insularity is to be explained also by their growing doubts about who they are in the present.[20]

In the search for a new form of Englishness, Europe was unable to provide the expected answers about the future and fuelled more anxieties instead of soothing them. After de Gaulle's successive vetoes, it is easy to appreciate the reactions of detachment and disillusions. De Gaulle twice denied the European dimension of Englishness and simply killed all incipient possibility of identification with Europe.

The reaction against Europe sparked a wave of acute nationalism at the end of the 1960s best exemplified by Powellite nationalism. Enoch Powell, the freak of the Conservative Party, became famous and successful with his nationalist and racist speeches founded on the fear of what is not English. Powell was not only anti-European, he was also anti-American and anti-immigrants. In 1968 in Birmingham, Powell delivered his famous "rivers of blood" speech in which he exposed his apocalyptic vision of a country invaded by immigrants. For him, the threat posed by coloured immigration was the same as that posed by Europe: in both cases, the identity of England was at stake and both threatened the purity and essence of Englishness. Ian Baucom underlines that Powell initiated a new ideology of Englishness which abandoned spatial criteria in favour of racial ones and

> insisted that there was no enchanting magic in the nation's soil which would mysteriously transform immigrants, or even the island-born children of immigrants, into Englishmen.

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[18] Denis MacShane, *Heath* (London : Haus publishing, 2006) 42.
[19] Greg Rosen, *Old Labour to New* (London: Politico's, 2005 [1970]) 42.
[20] Linda Colley, *Britons, op. cit.*, 375.

Englishness, he argued, did not emanate from the British space, but was, instead, an inheritance of race.[21]

Thus at the end of the 1960s, Englishness once a trans-spatial, trans-territorial notion shrunk into a narrow regional and ethnic notion in the New Right discourse. But the success of Powell's theories revealed, more than a simplistic racism or a noxious xenophobia, the instability and confusion around the definition of what it is to be English. After dominating the world, conquering and colonising foreign lands, Englishness discovered the need to strengthen its sense of identity on its own soil. But it is precisely at this moment, when Englishness needed time to find its roots, that Heath was elected Prime Minister and revived his European project.

Heath and the Re-Definition of Englishness

When Heath became Prime Minister in 1970, he had one overriding objective in mind: to get the UK into the European Community. For him it was not just a political issue, it was his mission. His European dream was born out of his military experiences during the Second World War where he witnessed the chaos, suffering and slaughters engendered by the hatred between the countries of Europe.[22] Europe had always been a long-standing component of his political beliefs as his maiden speech showed and now that he was in power he was determined to fulfil his dream.

Heath's relationship to Europe was double; it was both pragmatic and sentimental. On the one hand, Europe was central to his project of modernisation: the Common Market was a formidable opportunity for development and growth and prosperity would revive the bygone days of influence and prestige. But beyond this pragmatic approach, Heath was above all deeply and sincerely committed to the cause of Europe and to the construction of a strong European Community. His European project went further than that of his predecessors' (and successors') in the sense that he was not only interested in getting into the Community, what he wanted was to change mentalities so that Englishness would eventually become European. This sentimental dimension did not exist with the previous leaders who instinctively turned to the United States as their best ally.

In the British political landscape, Heath looks like an exception, even an "aberration"[23] according to his biographer John Campbell. Heath embodies the harmonious reconciliation of opposites, and Campbell insists on this notion of paradox: he points out that "no one could be more quintessentially English."[24] Heath spoke no foreign languages, his ancestors were all Kentish people, yet at the same time no one could be more European than him and Heath always tried to pass his love of Europe and of the European culture on to his fellow citizens. What may seem paradoxical or anomalous for some was absolutely natural for Heath because he always considered it an historical distortion to deny or ignore the European dimension of Englishness. To him, the roots of Englishness were European and he expressed this idea of a common identity in his speech in Brussels in 1963, the day after de Gaulle's first veto:

> We are a part of Europe, by geography, history, culture, tradition and civilization. There have been times in the history of Europe when it has been only too plain how European we are; and there have been millions of people who have been grateful for it. I say to my

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[21] Ian Baucom, *Out of Place, op. cit.*, 14.

[22] Edward Heath, *The Course of My Life, op. cit.*, 717.

[23] John Campbell, "From Heath to Thatcher, 1970-90," in *Britain, France and the Entente Cordiale since 1904*, ed. Antoine Capet (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2006) 187.

[24] John Campbell, *Edward Heath: A Biography* (London: Pimlico, 1993) xvi.

colleagues: they should have no fear. We in Britain are not going to turn our backs on the mainland of Europe or the countries of the Community.[25]

Thus Heath distinguished himself from the traditional rhetoric of British leaders who insisted on the quasi-filial links with the United States and the Commonwealth. In the Godkin lectures he gave at the University of Harvard in 1967, the most detailed lectures on his vision of Britain's place in the world and role in Europe, Heath did not hide his lack of enthusiasm for what he called "the so-called special relationship"[26] and his irritation towards the Commonwealth which

seems to have drifted into a position where one member, and one member alone, is expected to submit its policies for examination of a kind which other members would not dream of accepting, and this member is Britain.[27]

Heath went very far in his criticism of Britain's favourite partners but his attitude partook of a larger strategy which consisted in estranging the old partners to get closer to Europe, and particularly to France which had never been favourable to Britain's attachment to the United States. But in his wish to break from the past, one can also accuse Heath of being too radical in his europeanism at the expense of Englishness. Heath certainly underestimated the profound strength of the links that existed with the United States and the Commonwealth, and these links make an integral part of the history of Englishness. To wipe out the past is not in the English character and Heath went against the Burkean vision which commends a deep respect for tradition and a continuity between past, present and future. Heath's europeanism did not go against the interests of the country, as sometimes accusations against him suggested, it went against the principles of Englishness.

More than a re-orientation of foreign politics, Heath wanted to achieve a change of national attitude in the way people perceived Europe. But at the beginning of the 1970s, and despite Britain's entry in 1973, Europe did not arouse any enthusiasm or optimism. This discrepancy between a political will and a popular reality was clearly revealed by the way people reacted to the festival organised to celebrate Britain's entry, "Fanfare for Europe". John W. Young informs us that it was received with "depressing indifference"[28] by the population. Heath imposed a European sentiment on the nation but feelings cannot be commanded, they are instinctive, as Ian Baucom reminds us: "A sense of collective identity rarely, if ever, proceeds by stipulation; it is instead an affectionate condition."[29] And precisely, it is this affectionate condition that was so desperately lacking and that accounts for Heath's failure to Europeanise Englishness. Ultimately, this failure reveals Heath's inability to comprehend the English character and to understand the aspirations and expectations of his people.

Conclusion

The United Kingdom's entry into the European Community was Heath's most beautiful success in his whole career. But behind this apparent success lay also the failure to europeanise the concept of Englishness and to instil a degree of sentimental connection to

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[25] Edward Heath, *The Course of My Life, op. cit.*, 235.

[26] Edward Heath, *Old World, New Horizons*, 63.

[27] *Ibid.*, 65-66.

[28] John W. Young, "The Heath Government and British Entry into the European Community," in *The Heath Government 1970-74: A Reappraisal*, ed. Stuart Ball and Anthony Seldon (London: Longman, 1996) 284.

[29] Ian Baucom, *Out of Place, op. cit.*, 12.

Europe. Hostility towards Europe and its institutions remain very high today across England and the image of Continental Europe as the threatening Other remains deeply-ingrained in people's psyche. Englishness still defines itself against the Continental model and for a few years now has reasserted its unique identity through a renewed allegiance to English symbols like St George's flag that everyone can see on cars, front doors or during popular events. To study Englishness in its relation to Europe is to get at the heart of a tension between commitment and isolation, between acceptance and refusal. But in recent years, Englishness seems to have chosen isolation from Europe as the best way to protect itself. The refusal of the Euro, the absence of vote on the European constitution and the success of the UKIP are obvious symptoms of withdrawal. In this paper, I tried to highlight the rigidity and traditionalism of Englishness, together with England's inability to set itself free from the weight of the past to accept a common destiny with Europe. Englishness has considered its permanence by protecting itself from European influences but its survival nowadays might well depend on its ability to evolve and finally accept Europe as a partner and not as a menace, thus rehabilitating Heath's vision of a European Englishness.

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