

## [CFP: \(GSA Conference 2022\) Founding the FRG in an Emerging Europe: Early West German Imaginaries of the European Unification Process in PR and Documentary Film, 1949-1957 \(15.03.2022\)](#)

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### **Founding the FRG in an Emerging Europe: Early West German Imaginaries of the European Unification Process in PR and Documentary Film, 1949-1957**

Both the Adenauer administration and pro-European interest groups campaigned for the European unification process during the first years of the FRG's existence. Embedding the new, separate West German state firmly in Western European economic and defense networks was part and parcel of Adenauer's political doctrine of Western integration (Westanbindung). At a time when former enemies had to be rewritten as partners and collective memories of WWII had to be realigned, these efforts produced a considerable and elaborate body of filmic PR work. How was the European project advertised domestically during the FRG's founding years?

This panel seeks to investigate this question further by inviting papers that examine pre-EEC filmic imaginaries of the European unification process in West Germany between the founding of the Federal Republic in May of 1949 and the Treaty of Rome that formed the EEC in 1957. The imaginations of Europe in newsreels (Pfister 2014) and the efforts at creating a common European identity through documentary and PR films on Europe (Clemens 2016) have been examined in pathbreaking, transnational studies. Building on these findings, this panel seeks to further understand how the early FRG specifically imagined its place in the emerging Europe, how the founding of the FRG in a European context affected German collective memory, and what socio-economic benefits the recently founded nation would obtain through the process of Europeanization.

Contributions will examine documentary and PR films commissioned by the Federal Government or other pro-European organizations to answer the following questions: What arguments for Europe are being leveraged, socially, economically, politically, militarily? How do the films describe the role of the FRG's relationship to its neighboring countries in the process? What related or ancillary topics existed as part of the overarching goal of Europe? What possible solutions to national, socio-economic problems of the FRG do the films present through the project of Europe? What different figurations/configurations of the European unification process are being presented? What fears, reservations, or concerns do the films try to address in their argumentations for Europe? How was the argument for European unification balanced against the FRG's emerging alliance with the United States or the question of a future German reunification?

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