

The Maastricht Treaty in 1992 was based on neoliberal ideas of a market-driven European economy and democracy, and continues to be seen as a new step towards a new stage of unification: towards a more federal Europe based on market integration. The book demonstrates that European integration as a federal project actually came to an end around 1970. The European Economic Community (EEC), the precursor of the EU, was never thought of as a democracy. The book locates a shift in thinking about legitimacy and further integration in the 1980s, when the idea of a European democracy was connected with a plan for the internal market: the market would pave the way for democracy. Since then, there has been growing tension between the official line about a democratic EU and the institutional capacity to carry it through. This tension has undermined integration. The book suggests that, instead of democracy-through-market, there are signs of increasing social disintegration, political extremism and populism in the wake of economic integration. The book argues for a more realistic historical understanding of European integration.