

SHOWING IDEAS AS CAUSES: THE ORIGINS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Craig Parsons
Department of Political Science
University of California, Berkeley
FOR 1999-2000:
212 1/2 Coral Avenue
Balboa Island, CA 92662
cparsons@uclink.berkeley.edu

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Do ideas matter in politics? No reasonable person asserts that ideas play no role in human life. We all know, from personal experience and from observing others, that the "mental events" human beings carry in their heads can influence how they act. There could be no stronger example than academia itself. Yet many academics argue that most major political outcomes can be explained satisfactorily without reference to ideas. They present the beliefs actors hold either as epiphenomenal, flowing from deeper objective imperatives, or as marginal influences on political behavior.

The past decade has seen a rising challenge to this view among theorists of comparative and international politics. Drawing on research across a wide variety of empirical contexts, a growing literature points to ideas as important causes of political outcomes.¹ Objective constraints and incentives in actors' surroundings, claim these scholars, are rarely sufficient to account for their strategies. Political behavior varies not just with changes in the objective environment, but also with beliefs that are irreducible to other factors.

But this literature has not brought wide recognition of the causal importance of ideas. Instead, it has come to underpin perhaps the deepest divide in contemporary political science, sometimes referred to as the "third debate" in the history of the discipline.² Arguments about ideas, norms, and the "social construction" of politics have mostly succeeded at convincing only those scholars who were already sympathetic to them. Skeptics may accept that the best-presented empirical cases show *some* causal importance for ideas, but

¹Hall 1989, 1993, 1997; Onuf 1989; Sikkink 1991; Adler 1992; Weber 1992; Goldstein 1993; Goldstein and Keohane 1993; Checkel 1993; Risse-Kappen 1994; Katzenstein 1996; Wendt 1997; McNamara 1998; Mandelson 1998; Berman 1999. For a review of older work on ideas in international relations, see Smith 1988.

²Lapid 1989; Neufeld 1993.

see little reason to concede that ideas are more than residual "filler" for objective-style explanations. Since each side rejects the other's methodology, their dialogue is stuck at the meta-theoretical level.³

This article attempts to construct a bridge across this divide. It argues that the "interpretive" methodologies usually used by ideational arguments are inherently unable to persuade skeptics -- but that other methods are available to do so. In many cases, the causal impact of ideas can be measured using methods similar to those of objective, positivistic approaches. It then demonstrates one such method in a major historical case, showing the measurable causal impact of ideas in the early origins of the European Union (EU). Without certain ideas, European integration in the 1950s and 1960s would have taken a very different form. Rather than undertaking history's greatest experiment in international institution-building, west Europeans would have pursued prosperity and power through more standard diplomatic instruments. Ideas alone explain why today's Europe reflects the exception, not the rule, in the weakly institutionalized world of international relations.

The article has four sections. The first considers methodological problems in the literature on ideational causality. The second proposes one methodological solution. The third presents the empirical case, and the fourth draws conclusions about European integration and ideational explanation.

Interpretation and the 'How Much?' Problem

In political science, the central problem for ideational arguments lies in distinguishing the causal effects of actors' beliefs about their environment from

³Wendt 1993.

the direct environmental pressures privileged by non-ideational approaches.⁴ This problem occurs at two levels. First is the fundamentally "janus-faced" nature of ideas. In some cases actors' beliefs may guide their action; in others their apparent beliefs simply rationalize strategies chosen for other reasons.⁵ Telling the difference between the two situations can be difficult. Second, even assuming ideas do have real causal impact, they do so as interpretations or "filters" of the objective environment. Wherever ideas have causal effect -- in Max Weber's famous phrase, acting as "switchmen" among various material possibilities -- so too does the objective context they interpret.⁶ Thus the challenge for causal ideational argument is to isolate the ideational filter from its context, showing it has distinct causal consequences.

All ideational arguments to date, ranging from relativist approaches to more qualified challenges to positivist epistemology, use "interpretive" methods to meet this challenge. At the relativist, post-modern extreme, the challenge is met by denying it. The very notion of any accessible objective context is rejected, making interpretation of ideas the entire exercise, without parallel attempts to assess how ideas relate to objective pressures.⁷ But more mainstream ideational arguments ultimately rely on the same methods while engaging objective-style, positivistic alternatives more directly. These approaches maintain pragmatically that objective reality is accessible, but hold that explaining human action within it requires attention to actors' subjective

⁴Equally important for an overall understanding of ideas are the psychological and philosophical questions of how exactly ideas ("mental events that entail thought") affect action at the most basic level, in the human brain. This article follows the vast majority of the political-science literature on ideas in treating these questions as unproblematic; the puzzle is not to explain why ideas would cause action in the abstract, but to show that a given actor holds certain ideas and that this fact causes certain actions. For a political-science discussion of these issues, see Yee 1996.

⁵Laitin 1986, 11-20; Tetlock 1991, 47. For arguments that ideas merely legitimate preconceived objective interests, Shepsle 1985; Krasner 1993.

⁶Weber 1958, 280.

⁷CITES.

beliefs.⁸ They use standard positivistic (if qualitative) methods to argue that objective pressures on certain actors did not fully determine their strategies. Then they use interpretive methods, sifting meaning from actions and statements, to show that actors' beliefs help explain their choices. The result is a qualitative assessment of the causal impact of ideas on actors' strategies.

The problem with interpretive methods is that they offer little precise leverage to separate the ideational filter from its context. They often support a broad argument that ideas mattered in a given case, but only the richness and care of their interpretation suggest *how much* ideas mattered. Skeptics can always question the detailed and complex evidence that go into a rich interpretation, suggesting (for example) that the objective economic pressures towards a given strategy have been underestimated – meaning ideas actually caused that strategy less than has been claimed. Nor does an interpretive focus on a single course of action offer much purchase on the counterfactuals necessary to show specific causality: what exactly was the range of possibilities *without* these ideas?⁹ Even the combination of interpretive methods with cross-case comparisons – if helping to bolster broad claims that ideas matter -- has not produced specific conclusions about the distinct causal impact of ideas.¹⁰

⁸Epistemologically, such arguments espouse some variant of a "pragmatic" view, seeing ideas and interpretation as central to political action and to scholars' analysis of it, but arguing that careful observation and debate can discern "facts" that are pragmatically acceptable as "reality" (with a small "r"). Laudan 1990.

⁹On the importance of counterfactual tests in ideational arguments, Blyth 1997, pp. 235-6. On the importance of counterfactual tests with particular reference to European integration, Moravcsik 1995, 616; Wincott, Daniel. 1997. On counterfactuals in general, Fearon 1991; Belkin and Tetlock 1996.

¹⁰Several of the strongest ideational arguments have bolstered interpretive methods with cross-case comparisons, showing that actors in similar objective situations but with different ideas chose different strategies. Yet cases are rarely similar enough – between the development of English and American labor unions, for example, or German and Swedish Socialist parties, or French and British interwar military doctrines – to better specify the causal impact of ideas. Such comparisons bolster the broad interpretive claim that ideas mattered, but do not isolate the ideational filter more precisely. Hattam 1992; Berman 1999; Kier 1995.

This difficulty with specific claims about ideational causality has driven some ideational theorists in unfortunate directions. They have often sought out cases where idea-driven change in actors' behavior is *clearest*, rather than cases where the impact of ideas (if shown) would be *most important* for major outcomes. While often successful on its immediate terms, this tactic is self-defeating at a larger level. The most clear-cut cases have often turned out to be what skeptics see as marginal ones (or marginal aspects of major cases), where scientific "epistemic communities" influenced science or environmental policies, or international organizations "taught" states new norms in war-fighting conventions or aid to economic development.¹¹ This is no accident. The more complex, dynamic, and politically contested (and so the more interesting) the case, the less interpretive methods alone can clearly separate out the causal impact of ideational change from concurrent shifts in major objective constraints and incentives. While these tightly-argued studies have given ideational theorists some basic credibility, they have partly reconfirmed skeptics' view of ideas as minor forces in politics.

Overall, laments one sympathetic reviewer, ideas in the current literature are "simply *another* rather than *the* causal factor."¹² And for skeptics, these "how much" questions make all the difference. If ideas cannot be shown to be the sole causes over a specific and important range of major historical outcomes, objective theorists remain free to downplay them as residual "filler" for their own theories. As a less sympathetic reviewer concludes, positivists can safely continue to relegate ideas to the secondary role of "a valuable supplement to interest-based, rational actor models."¹³

¹¹I do not necessarily agree that these cases are marginally important, but many scholars perceive them that way. CITE CRITICISMS. Haas 1992; Adler and Haas 1992; Finnemore 1996.

¹²Blyth 1997, pp. 236.

¹³Jacobsen 1995, 285

Thus in most cases, interpretive methodology is inherently unable to convince skeptics that ideas are major causes of significant political outcomes. This does not necessarily mean, however, that there is a fundamental dilemma between the methods required to access beliefs and those needed to show clear causality.¹⁴ Nor is it final proof that the "third debate" reflects an intractable clash between entirely incommensurate paradigms, as much as objective and ideational approaches seem to be talking past each other. It may simply mean that *these* methods are unable to bridge this divide. Other methods may be available to show even positivist skeptics how much ideas matter.

Cross-Cutting Dissent and Ideas as Causes

One potential solution to this problem would be a comparative method that allows a search for variation in actors' behavior while holding *all* objective constraints and incentives constant. If actors in identical places in the objective world advocate different strategies, they must be interpreting that world differently. Such contrasts are available if we turn comparative methods inward on decision-making *within* groups and organizations. Close peers within groups are in near-identical positions in the objective world; comparing their views of their group's goals, constraints and incentives can separate their ideas on that subject from variation in objective pressures.

This reasoning is clearest when contrasted to the logical structure of objective-interest theories. All such theories see actors' interests as defined by their position within certain levels of political or socio-economic organization. For realists, all individuals in a state share specific geopolitical interests; political party theorists describe interests shared by party members;

¹⁴Yee 1996, 102.

bureaucratic theorists highlight interests of administrative units; and liberal or Marxist theorists ascribe interests on the basis of economic organization (if in different ways). All these theorists are correct that actors at any level of organization face shared environmental constraints. Their assumption that organizational compatriots share general preferences seems reasonable. Shared preferences and constraints, then, should define consensual interests.

If different ideas lead similarly-placed actors to interpret their situation differently, however, we will not find consensual interests. Close peers will advocate different strategies for their group or organization. Such cross-cutting dissent does not mean that actors are irrational.¹⁵ But it does mean that objective-interest theories based on higher levels of organization do not explain their actions. As domestic-politics theorists have long noted, domestic-level disagreements undercut state-level theories like realism. Dissent within parties, bureaucracies, or economic groups breaks the causal logic of objective-interest theories at these levels. Dissent cross-cutting all levels of organization, corresponding to no organizational affiliation, demonstrates most clearly the presence of different interpretations of actors' interests.¹⁶

The precise nature of internal comparisons can separate ideational filters from their objective context, with several major payoffs. First, this method can sustain a specific answer to the "how much" question. The range of strategies advocated by similarly-placed individuals within a group highlights a

¹⁵Like almost any situation, one of cross-cutting dissent can be framed in a vocabulary of rationality. Individuals could have different basic preferences, thus rationally preferring different strategies for their group or organization. Alternatively (or in addition), the environment could be objectively uncertain, making individual uncertainty over strategies perfectly rational. There is nothing necessarily irrational about acting on ideas, but such action does falsify specific rationalist theories which ignore ideas.

¹⁶Individual-level factors like bureaucratic career incentives could conceivably explain individual-level dissent in objective-interest terms. Such an argument would still have to show that the overall pattern of advocacy of different strategies corresponded closely to different career opportunities. I see no such pattern in my case.

spectrum of actions across which only ideas explain individual choices. If one French diplomat in 1955 consistently advocates an informal partnership with Britain as the basis for French policies in Europe, while a close organizational peer calls for constructing a supranational federation without British participation, the distance between their positions suggests a range of actions that different interpretations can draw from their shared environment. Across that range, objective pressures on these actors are indeterminate. If French decision-making organization more generally is cross-cut by these strategies, we can conclude that ideas alone *cause* one strategy across this range.¹⁷ Moving from strategies to outcomes, we can contrast the consequences of the selected strategy to the counterfactual consequences of advocated but non-selected views, showcasing the overall historical impact of these particular ideas.

Second, this method is strong because it is conservative, being likely to systematically *underestimate* the range of ideational causality. Only the range of explicitly advocated views can be documented, but a broader spectrum of ideas about group interests could potentially be drawn from the environment. Not all views that are consciously supported may be voiced, particularly in hierarchical organizations. Obtaining information about genuine dissent within organizations is also often very difficult. These built-in biases in the method strengthen the credibility of the cross-cutting dissent it reveals.

Third, and most importantly, this method relies no more on interpretation than do standard qualitative methods used by objective-interest approaches.¹⁸ To show that a given government policy is caused by the objective interests of certain economic sectors, for example, a typical approach looks for evidence that the pattern of support for that policy corresponds to

¹⁷Assuming no other causal mechanism *selects* across the variation caused by ideas. See the conclusions below.

¹⁸Any social-science method involves some interpretation, of course.

membership in those sectors. The scholar tries to find out what actors in certain sectors demanded, and how their demands were translated into government policies. A search for cross-cutting dissent operates in the same way. The analyst tries to find out who demanded what kind of action, and how those demands translated into organizational strategies. Either concrete evidence exists that actors in similar positions advocated different specific strategies, or it does not. If such evidence exists, no one can contest that objective pressures are being underestimated. *It is the actors, not the observer, who are defining the range across which ideas matter.*

Applying this method to government policy-making requires detailed research on individual-level views on particular decisions in all relevant branches of a government and its political coalition.¹⁹ Comparison should begin at the lowest organizational level, where objective-interest approaches would expect strongest concordance: bureaucratic offices, party currents, sectoral groups. Cross-referencing of many sources is necessary to verify that observed dissensus over given decisions is genuine, and not driven by some other motivation. Crucially, we must also differentiate the strategies actors *propose* from the ones they *accept*. In a government (or any hierarchical group), few individuals ultimately decide on major strategies. Lower-level policy-makers have little choice but to accept their decisions. This does not mean that they shared their superiors' analyses. To assess the extent to which participants share the same view of their groups' interests, we must pay close attention to what all actors want to *push for* in the early stages of policy formation.

We must avoid building a straw-man opponent by exaggerating the consensus implied by objective-interest alternatives. No one expects no debate

¹⁹"Relevant" means individuals with informed opinions on a decision, not just those with decision-making power. A low-level bureaucrat may have no influence, but whether she shares her minister's analysis helps measure the clarity of organizational interests.

among similarly-positioned individuals on major decisions; internal debates are part of any "rational" group's decision-making. That said, if dissenters only accept a strategic choice with reluctance (or better yet, if they do not accept it, continuing their criticisms once a decision has been made), we see that their opposition was not just a vetting of alternatives. Persistent cross-cutting battles over significantly different strategies cannot be accommodated by objective-interest theories. Demonstrating the spectrum of such views shows the need for an ideational approach, and highlights the range of outcomes which only such an approach can explain.

This method will only reveal the causal impact of ideas in some cases, not all. Obviously, ideas do not *necessarily* cross-cut organizational lines. The absence of cross-cutting dissent does not mean ideas are not present; members of a group may share a consensus informed by ideas. In such cases, however, the method may still be useful. We may be able to trace the consensus back to its origins, when certain ideas were still contested within the group. There cross-cutting dissent can display the range of paths across which ideas selected. When supplemented by an additional argument about how the selected ideas came to define a consensus – an argument about the *institutionalization* of ideas – this method can show how ideas were the "switchmen" between different historical possibilities in the definition of the group's interests.

French Ideas and the Origins of the European Union

Scholars agree that the European Union "ranks among the most extraordinary achievements in modern world politics."²⁰ Institutionally, its well-developed executive, judicial, and legislative branches resemble nothing so much as a

²⁰Moravcsik 1998, 1.

messy federal state. Substantively, these institutions have received responsibility for a massive Common Agricultural Policy, a supranationally-administered "Single Market," and most recently a single currency -- each of which *alone* surpasses delegations of sovereignty anywhere else in the world.

The literature on these remarkable institutions is dominated by two explanations. The first presents the EU as the result of "normal politics," wherein governments have responded rationally to objective imperatives in their environment; it was the structural circumstances, not the "achievement," that were extraordinary in postwar Europe. This view comes in two variants, economic and geopolitical. The former (and more prominent) sees the EU as the response to rising interdependence in trade and finance.²¹ The latter sees the EU as the response to pressures for political balancing inside and outside Europe (above all "keeping the Germans down, the Americans in, and the Russians out").²² The second major view, while not contesting that structural imperatives give the basic drive to European institution-building, presents those imperatives as looser, and the ultimate result as heavily "path-dependent." The unforeseen consequences of early institutional steps skewed what followed. In particular, the independent "supranational" agents of Europe's early institutions have been major catalysts for subsequent steps forward.²³

Ideas about European integration have received little direct attention in causal accounts.²⁴ This is true despite the fact that many of the leaders who have

²¹Moravcsik 1998; Garrett 1992; Milward 1984; Lynch 1997.

²²Hitchcock 1998; Hanrieder 1989; OTHERS.

²³Haas 1958 is the classic statement. Recent examples of similar thinking include Sandholz and Zysman 1989; Cameron 1992; Fligstein and Maradrita 1996; Pierson 1996; Jabko 1999.

²⁴The most prominent argument about ideas in the EU, by Kathleen McNamara (1998), concerns ideas about monetarist economic policies, not Europe itself. Broad historical arguments about ideology and integration, but without specific causal claims, include Lipgens 1977; Brugmans 1965. Several "constructivist" arguments assert that ideas and interpretations are important in European integration, but without making clear causal claims: Jørgensen 1997;

signed Europe's major treaties have loudly proclaimed their "Europeanist" ideology, advocating the intentional delegation of state sovereignty to supranational institutions. Existing arguments about economic, geopolitical, or path-dependent institutional pressures have treated these apparent beliefs either as post-hoc rationalizations for preconceived objective interests, or as marginal flourishes on them.

This section argues that the role of ideas in the EU project is more than superficial. It does so by examining the strategic choices of one central actor -- the French government -- in the creation of the foundations of today's EU in the 1950s. The story of the EU's origins is not reducible to French choices; it depended on the strategies of many other governments as well. But the French had a veto over European institutional projects, making particular French strategies *necessary* causal variables for European-level outcomes. This section shows that certain ideas are in turn necessary to explain particular French strategies. The method of cross-cutting dissent demonstrates that rather than adopting one strategy due to structural or institutional pressures, similar French elites in the 1950s held to three different ideational "models" of their interests in Europe. All were viable domestically and internationally. Certain leaders were able to select the "community model" for French strategies -- leading to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958 -- not because domestic or international pressures required it, but because cross-cutting domestic debates gave them the autonomy to follow their own ideas. The other active options -- the "traditional" and "confederal" models -- display the

Risse-Kappen 1996. Moravcsik (1998, 3-5) touches on an ideational view in his caveats, allowing that ideology may have a role on the margins of interest definition. Path-dependent ("neofunctionalist") accounts often mentioned ideology, but never addressed it directly in their theoretical arguments.

historical range across which we need ideas to explain French strategies and European outcomes.

The section first presents the three models of French interests in the abstract. Then it narrates the French choices leading to EEC in three steps, focusing on the creation of EEC's institutional precursor, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1950-51; the failed European Defense Community (EDC) in 1951-54; and EEC in 1955-57. Lastly, it considers why, if only certain ideas led France to EEC, its institutions survived when Charles de Gaulle brought distinctly different ideas to power in 1958.

Three Models of French Interests

Immediately after World War II, French elites largely agreed on their basic strategy in Europe. The primary goal was to keep Germany weak while rebuilding French strength. The means to this end were direct controls on occupied Germany, bolstered by alliances and economic cooperation with other European powers.²⁵ The advent of the Cold War in 1946-7, however, partly blocked this strategy. The Americans began to push for the rapid revival of a West German state and economy as a bulwark and ally against the Soviets. Pressure increased with the Marshall Plan in June 1947, offering the French badly-needed economic aid on condition that they coordinate their recovery with Germany and other countries.

In the face of these changing constraints, French elites began to debate three different views of their interests in Europe. One group advocated holding to traditional strategies, defending relative French strength in arms-length

²⁵To the extent that French elites disagreed over strategies before 1947, they argued over who was the major ally against Germany: the Soviets, the British, or the Benelux and Italy. Knipping 1990.

alliances. If the attempt to block a German recovery had been frustrated, there were traditional ways of dealing with the new situation. Some direct controls on Germany could still be salvaged; military and economic alliances with other powers could still be sought; if necessary, bilateral deals could even be struck with the Germans themselves. All these would uphold the balance of European power. For traditional thinkers, this would protect French interests better than entering into uncontrollable international organizations. It was also more worthy of "Great Power" France, whose independence was sacrosanct, and whose peers were the US, UK, and USSR, not the other Europeans.

Second was a "confederal" model. In this view, the best French strategy lay in broad, intergovernmental European organizations. The central idea was that Germany had to be drawn into international organizations to supervise its actions, but that a balancing dynamic was still important within them. Only combined Franco-British leadership would prevent the Germans from dominating any arrangement, ruling out a more narrow Franco-German framework. Other factors recommended this solution as well. Broad but weak organizations could provide a platform for a European "third way" between the superpowers, and for pragmatic economic cooperation, without necessarily implying direct losses of French sovereignty.

Third was the "community" model. From this perspective, the situation called for a more radical departure from standard diplomacy. Two massive wars had ravaged Europe in a generation. The continent had been surpassed by the superpowers. Only a new sort of "supranational" institutions, partly independent from governments, could lead fractious Europe to peace and prosperity. Weak intergovernmental organizations could not hold the Germans down. In order to make such control acceptable to the Germans, however, France had to submit to it as well. This might entail a break with the

British, who disliked supranationality. The security of Franco-British balancing against Germany would have to be forsaken to obtain a supranational solution. But the result would be real "integration," leading perhaps to a "United States of Europe" as powerful and rich as America.

If the models divided most clearly on the "German problem," their key difference was not pro- or anti-Germanism. Some traditionalists soon proved quite willing to deal bilaterally with Germany. Others arrived at confederal or community strategies out of visceral fear of Germany unfettered. Instead, the fundamental distinction concerned the relationship between France itself and Europe. Was France a Great Power whose main strategies had to be conceived independently (or at most in partnership with other Great Powers)? Did French well-being in interdependent Europe require cooperative decision-making in international organizations? Did supranationality unacceptably redefine what France was? To these questions, the models gave different answers.

The Parting of the Ways: ECSC

Today's EU traces its institutional origins to French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman's proposal for a "European Coal and Steel Community" in May 1950. He suggested that France, West Germany, and other countries "pool" their coal and steel industries under independent "supranational" institutions. The Schuman Plan solved several French problems at once. Geopolitically, it provided a new basis for Franco-German reconciliation while giving France a *droit de regard* on West Germany's nascent foreign policy, and it responded to US pressure for European collaboration. Economically, it secured both long-term access to German coal and oversight of German heavy industry. Recent

historical accounts see one or both of these benefits dictating ECSC as the "rational" French strategy.²⁶

As objective-style accounts would expect, important figures across Schuman's diverse coalition shared his reading of these imperatives. The "Third Force" government allied the full range of pro-parliamentary parties -- from the conservative Independents, to Schuman's Christian Democrats (MRP), to the centrist Radicals and UDSR, to the Socialists (SFIO) -- against the anti-parliamentary opposition of the Communists and Gaullists. Major members of each party across this broad right-left spectrum quickly expressed enthusiasm for the Schuman Plan: Independents like Paul Reynaud and Antoine Pinay; Christian Democrats like François de Menthon and Pierre Pflimlin; centrists like René Mayer and René Pleven; and Socialists like André Philip and Gérard Jacquet. Schuman also drew important support in the administration, from senior diplomats like Hervé Alphand and powerful Planning head Jean Monnet -- the author of the Schuman Plan.

Yet objective accounts overlook that other actors across the coalition and bureaucracy analyzed the situation differently. One group voiced confederal concerns: supranationality was undesirable and partnership with Germany was dangerous. They favored alternatives within two weak organizations under Franco-British direction, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) or the Council of Europe.²⁷ They included Independents like Finance

²⁶Milward emphasizes economic constraints and argues that ECSC "evolved logically from the consistent pursuit of France's original domestic and foreign reconstruction aims," 1984, 380. Hitchcock emphasizes geopolitical factors and finds that "France supported European integration not out of altruism but because to do so was consistent with the national interest." 1998, 10.

²⁷The OEEC, created in 1948 as the forum for allocating Marshall Plan aid, had 16 members. Organizationally, it was limited to a secretariat without formal impact on decision-making. An Executive Committee dominated by France and Britain set its agenda. The Council of Europe, created in 1949 as a French proposal to discuss new integrative projects and provide a framework to reintegrate Germany into Europe, had 10 original members and quickly expanded. It had a consultative assembly, but was run by a standard council of government ministers. Griffiths 1997; Bitsche 1986.

Minister Maurice Petsche; MRP leaders like Prime Minister Georges Bidault, party head Maurice Schuman, and Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Robert Buron; centrists like Pierre Mendès France (Rad.) and Édouard Bonnefous (UDSR); and most of the Socialists (SFIO).²⁸ Most of these actors did not just see ECSC as imperfect; they saw it as undesirable. Ministers Petsche and Buron even initiated secret talks with the British to discuss OEEC alternatives. The same opinions also cross-cut the most relevant bureaucratic offices. Hervé Alphand's deputy at the Foreign Ministry, Olivier Wormser, joining several Finance officials to try to shunt coal and steel discussions into the OEEC framework.²⁹ ECSC was challenged by confederal critics across the Foreign Ministry.³⁰

Other figures across the parties and bureaucracy attacked Schuman with traditional arguments. They wanted to defend the coal arrangement negotiated under the occupation, the International Authority for the Ruhr (IAR).³¹ Any renegotiation was to be avoided, as it would necessarily upgrade German status. MRP members like Léo Hamon and André Denis, like their close associates among the Gaullists, denounced any retreat from the occupation

²⁸Of the MRP, said partly leader Pierre Pflimlin, "One cannot say that it was the MRP which pushed [Schuman] to take his European initiative." Cited in Callot 1986, 144; see also Soutou 1991. On skepticism and opposition among the Radicals, Poidevin 1984; O'Neill 1981. On the Socialists, Criddle 1969; Delwit 1995, 61-4.

²⁹Bossuat 1992, 752.

³⁰Most senior diplomats saw "Britain as France's irreplaceable partner against Germany... [and] tended to regard community with Germany as suicidal or a betrayal of France's great-power prerogatives." Duchêne 1994, 206. Ambassador to London René Massigli, whose memoirs denounced France's community choices under the title *A Comedy of Errors*, wrote, "From the moment when Jean Monnet rallied Robert Schuman to the idea of European federalism, to which the supranational system he had invented was meant to lead, I fought tirelessly for the victory of a confederal conception to which it would be possible, with time, to rally Great Britain; I could not conceive Europe without Great Britain." Massigli 1978, 212-221.

³¹The IAR was created in 1949, due to French insistence that the occupiers retain lasting authority over Germany's industrial heartland, the Ruhr. It was weaker than most French leaders had hoped, but was empowered to limit production and allocate coal between export and domestic consumption. A governing board with US, UK, French, Benelux, and German representatives operated by majority vote. Bossuat 1992, 666; Milward 1984, 388-9.

controls. They were joined by Independents like Louis Marin and Pierre André, Radicals like Édouard Daladier, and Socialists like Defense Minister Jules Moch and French President Vincent Auriol. Many diplomats felt the same way, and were preparing a new push to expand the IAR's powers in May 1950.³² Most officials responsible for coal and steel in the Ministry of Industry agreed. They echoed the complaints of coal and steel firms and the broader employers' association (the *Conseil National du Patronat Français*, CNPF), who opposed being subjected to uncontrollable supranational authorities, and feared open competition with the Germans.³³

French advocates of confederal or traditional options were not less "rational" than their pro-community peers in the same parties and ministries. Their strategies were at least as viable as ECSC in international bargaining. The British were dead set on the OEEC/Council of Europe, and even ECSC's champions saw a break with London as a major liability. Benelux leaders and industrialists too were leery of supranationality. The Germans, seemingly the beneficiaries of Schuman's overture, had many skeptics as well. German industrialists and Economics Minister Ludwig Erhard echoed the hostility of all other business groups. Even the Americans were signaling opposition to the ECSC-like plans circulating in "Europeanist" circles before May 1950, fearing they would create an monstrous cartel.³⁴ Only when Monnet and Schuman sold

³²Milward 1984, 388-9; Poidevin 1986, 265.

³³In mid-July 1950 the CNPF's General Assembly unanimously passed a resolution that "While the CNPF is favorable to [the Plan's] envisaged aim, it expresses the greatest reservations in regard to the proposed means. It would indeed be very undesirable if the enactment of this treaty were to reinforce the intervention of government in economic matters." Ehrman 1954, 455. On the preference of French business for simple cartel arrangements, Poidevin 1988, 107.

³⁴Vague plans for some sort of organization in coal and steel had been endorsed by the two congresses of the European Movement in February and April 1949. But the State Department briefing for the May 1950 foreign ministers' meeting stated that "Europeanization" of the IAR "could hardly fail to become engaged in the maintenance of prices and the restriction of production in the interests of producers.... Can one confidently hope that a new organization consisting of the present members of the Ruhr Authority [Germany, France, Britain, Benelux] could undertake investment planning with respect to their steel industries (or their coal

US leaders on its political appeal did they come to favor ECSC.³⁵ Overall, French confederal or traditional strategies faced no more international obstacles (and probably less) than what Schuman called his "leap in the dark."

How did the French choose among these views of their interests? Amid demands fragmented by cross-cutting debates in every governing party, Schuman advanced his own minority view. He and Monnet negotiated the ECSC treaty with almost no input from other actors in Paris. By March 1951, France, West Germany, the Benelux, and Italy had signed a deal. When the treaty came back to Paris for ratification in late 1951, Schuman presented it as a *fait accompli*. He had negotiated away most prior controls on Germany, and now argued that the choice was not between ECSC and other frameworks, but between it and no supervision of Germany at all.³⁶ More importantly, the Third Force coalition was faltering over other issues (religious schools and social policies), and an ECSC rejection would mean its demise. For these reasons, confederalists in the MRP, Independents, Radicals, UDSR, and Socialists reluctantly voted to ratify. Most French elites had not wanted to *pursue* ECSC in 1950, but a hesitant majority *accepted* it in 1951.

As Schuman later wrote, "The road towards Europe reached a parting of the ways in 1950."³⁷ But ECSC's creation did not lock France and Europe into the path to today's EU. The Schuman Plan had introduced a new framework for

industries) in a manner which would be less open to objection than the only organized inter-governmental attempt in this field that has actually taken place [in the OEEC]? This would appear to be extremely doubtful since the OEEC at least has the advantage of including in its membership countries whose interests are primarily those of consumers of steel rather than producers." Cited in Milward 1984, 388.

³⁵Acheson 1969, pp. 382-3; Wall 1989, p. 278.

³⁶As one Radical deputy told me, "By 1951, many who disliked ECSC couldn't see how they could obtain a better arrangement. They complained Monnet had given away too much, but they recognized that at least ECSC gave us certain advantages. We couldn't go back and start over." Interview, Jacques Genton, Paris, 13 May 1997.

³⁷Schuman 1963, 132.

French interests in the "community model," but it had also crystallized support for the alternatives to that model. Now the battle of ideas was truly engaged.

The Battle Widens: EDC

From 1951 to 1954, the ECSC debates were repeated across several issue areas. Confederalists and traditionalists tried to reorient French policies to their preferred strategies. Community champions tried to imitate ECSC in proposals for a "European Agricultural Community," a "European Health Community," a "European Transports Community," and -- by far the most important -- a "European Defense Community" (EDC).³⁸ For Raymond Aron, France's pursuit and then rejection of EDC in 1951-54 animated "the greatest ideological and political debate France has known since the Dreyfus affair."³⁹

Yet recent historical studies of EDC have downplayed ideas, tracing French choices either to objective geopolitical pressures or to the economic concerns of domestic coalitions. All accounts begin with the outbreak of the Korean War in summer 1950, which brought intense US pressure to rearm West Germany. In the geopolitical view, this pressure led the French directly to EDC, since a supranational "European Army" modeled on ECSC offered the tightest controls on Germany. After the treaty's signature in 1952, however, geopolitical shifts undermined French support. Fears of German dominance inside EDC grew when the British refused to join, and as much of the French Army was called away to Indochina. Stalin's death in 1953 lessened Cold War pressures as well. By 1954, the French had changed their minds, and the

³⁸All the other proposals were serious enough to be the subjects of formal international talks. On agriculture, Noël 1988; Délorme and Tavernier 1969. On the Health Community, Parsons 1999, ch. 3.

³⁹Aron 1957, 8.

Assembly rejected the treaty.⁴⁰ The most sophisticated version of the domestic economic account argues that "Third Force" leaders conceived EDC to preserve domestic social budgets in the face of US pressure for rising defense spending by sharing costs with France's neighbors. French support for EDC declined after early 1952, when the Third Force dissolved and was replaced by a conservative coalition with no such domestic concerns.⁴¹

The problem with both explanations, as suggested in older French accounts, is that neither French elites in general nor Third Force leaders in particular ever agreed on EDC.⁴² Nor did any changes in constraints lead individuals to change their views of French interests from 1951 to 1954. Instead, French elites consistently responded to the pressure for German rearmament with the three views they had formulated on ECSC. As of late 1950 and through 1954, community advocates in the Independents, MRP, Radicals, UDSR, Socialists, and the bureaucracy called for integrating German units into a European Army under supranational institutions. Confederalists in the same parties and ministries preferred to incorporate German forces into a looser organization under Franco-British direction. Their traditionalist peers either rejected German rearmament outright or accepted it in a standard alliance framework.

Again, none of these French actors were misreading their environment. All three strategies were viable in international bargaining. The community option led to the EDC treaty in May 1952. It was ratified by the other five signatories (the ECSC members) and strongly supported by the United States, leaving it to the French to endorse or reject. A traditional solution, rearming

⁴⁰Hitchcock 1998, 133-202.

⁴¹Pitman 1997.

⁴²The best accounts remain Lerner and Aron 1957; de la Gorce 1979; Elgey 1993. For an excellent recent review of the literature, Vial 1992.

Germany without new European institutions, was also clearly available given French assent, since the French alone opposed this path against American and European pressure in 1950-51. The confederal option was equally viable as a compromise between community and traditional options -- and this is exactly what quickly emerged after the French rejected EDC (see below). *Ceteris paribus*, French strategies were selecting between European outcomes as different as a European Army and simple German entry into NATO.

Leaders' ideas, not objective imperatives, were selecting between French strategies. The French government pursued EDC through 1952 because pro-community elites controlled policy choices amid fragmented domestic demands. Pushed by Monnet and diplomat Hervé Alphand, Foreign Minister Schuman shifted French policies from stonewalling to pushing for an ECSC-style framework in summer 1951.⁴³ Monnet played a key role in convincing President Eisenhower to focus on EDC rather than the NATO track.⁴⁴ At home, this clear shift to a community strategy soon led confederalists to abandon Schuman. As they feared, the British ruled out joining any supranational solution in late 1951. Schuman and Alphand also steadily conceded more generous terms for German participation in EDC. By early 1952, large confederalist groups among the Independents, MRP, Radicals, UDSR, and Socialists moved into opposition to EDC. An open rebellion emerged inside the Foreign Ministry as well. Months before Schuman signed the treaty in May 1952, it was clear that only a scattered minority of elites supported it.

This time no majority accepted the community *fait accompli*. While Schuman negotiated, domestic realignments unrelated to European issues had erased the coalitional pressures that had rallied the ECSC majority. The

⁴³On this shift, made without consulting anyone in Paris, Elgey 1993, II, 295-6.

⁴⁴Winand 1993, 28.

collapse of the Third Force in March 1952 -- around religious schools and social policy, not Europe -- led to a right-center coalition and left opposition. Rather than allying all the parties with some community supporters, the majority-opposition cleavage now divided them. The key consequences were that in opposition, SFIO confederalists were no longer pressed to support the government; in the majority, the addition of anti-EDC Gaullist traditionalists encouraged confederalists to voice their criticisms. Pro-community minorities in each party were left isolated. At Gaullist insistence, Schuman was replaced as Foreign Minister by his MRP ally -- but EDC opponent -- Georges Bidault in early 1953. After several incoherent attempts at renegotiating EDC, it came to a vote in August 1954. The Socialists split 50 for, 53 against; the Radicals and UDSR voted 41 for, 44 against; and the Independents divided 66 for, 28 against. The hierarchical MRP maintained cohesion in favor of EDC only by expelling several members, and despite clear hostility to EDC by much of the party.⁴⁵ Gaullist and Communist opposition decided the outcome.

The divisions over EDC strongly cross-cut party currents, regional ties, and economic sectors. Daniel Lerner has showed that the vote lacked a regional pattern.⁴⁶ Erling Bjøl has demonstrated the same within each party and its currents.⁴⁷ Sectorally, while the French aeronautical and electronic industries stood to gain from guaranteed contracts for a European Army, many of their

⁴⁵Irving 1973, 170; Elgey 1993, II, 329-79; Milza and Mayeur 1993; Aron 1957, 9; Grosser 1957, 61; Fauvet 1957, 137-8. Furthermore, the illusion of Christian Democratic consensus on Europe was also only sustained by the fact that anti-European MRP members had steadily defected to the Gaullists, who were practically indistinguishable from the MRP on other issues.

⁴⁶Lerner 1957, 202-6.

⁴⁷Among the Radicals, UDSR, and Independents, "A regional perspective...totally lacks any correlation with [deputies' advocated] objectives of foreign policy [on Europe]. If there is a correlation, it is negative, the most fervent Europeans representing regions where the advantages of integration are not immediately obvious." To explain the Socialist breakdown, he argues, "One would lose oneself in individual cases which permit almost no generalization. One must resign oneself to the simple acknowledgement that a major part of the SFIO had no 'case of regional conscience' in espousing European integration." Bjøl 1966, 169, 161.

closest political representatives (like Gaullist deputy Marcel Dassault, of the aircraft firm) bitterly opposed EDC for traditional reasons.⁴⁸ Sectors like textiles and steel stood to lose from the treaty, since EDC contracts were sure to go to their Italian and German competitors. But if their business associations campaigned aggressively for rejection, many of their normal political mouthpieces (Independents like Antoine Pinay or André Mutter) were EDC supporters.⁴⁹ As Lerner summarized, "the traditional universe of internal French politics, and the new universe of political sentiment evoked by EDC, simply do not coincide. More was involved."⁵⁰

In sum, from 1950 to 1954, French political organization was severely cross-cut by disagreements over French interests in Europe. Except for the monolithic Communists, every part of the left-right spectrum and the administration split over European policies. Leaders of the same parties and diplomats in the same offices consistently advocated three divergent strategies. This cross-cutting dissent shows that objective constraints on French policies were indeterminate across these options. Interpretive evidence corroborates this more concrete pattern: these actors uniformly described their debates in terms of ideas. One anti-EDC Socialist wrote, "The Europeans displayed a kind of passion. They didn't tolerate the smallest discussion. One was or was not European. It was religion over ecumenism."⁵¹ A pro-EDC MRP member

⁴⁸The treaty specified that fifteen percent of each country's contribution to the EDC budget had to be spent outside its borders. Since the Germans were barred from producing aircraft and major weapons, their money was sure to go to these French sectors. To compensate this, German firms would get most steel contracts, and the Italians were likeliest to receive textile contracts.

⁴⁹On general business opposition to the treaty, and sectoral patterns within it, Vernant 1957; Ehrmann 1957, 413; Balassa 1978, 69-79; Cowles 1994, 109-110; Marchand 1957, 121-2; Elgey 1993, 360; Philip 1957, 24.

⁵⁰Lerner 1957, 207.

⁵¹Alain Savary, cited in Elgey 1993, III, 180. Maurice Faure, an EDC supporter among the Radicals, said, "I have never seen so much passion in a parliamentary debate as there was over EDC. Even in 1958, with the return of de Gaulle, or in May 1968, even the strong intensity of these debates did not translate the same passion, because with EDC we were stirring up sacred

concluded, "To speak of a European party, of a European majority, is to pose the question badly. The European ideal does not unite parties. It unites men across the barriers of parties."⁵²

EDC's defeat, however, left the ultimate outcome of this battle open. Community advocates had little to show for their efforts. ECSC was a narrow sectoral organization that had stimulated as much hostility as support for supranational institutions. In August 1954, almost all Europeans thought the brief community adventure had ended.

Choosing the Community Model: EEC

Just as ECSC's victory had sparked a rash of community projects, EDC's fall reenergized confederal and traditional plans. The confederalist premier who had presided over the EDC vote, Pierre Mendès France (Rad.), moved quickly to frame German rearmament within a Franco-British-led intergovernmental organization, the "Western European Union" (WEU).⁵³ The EDC signatories and Britain agreed to the much less constraining WEU deal in only four weeks. French confederalists were ecstatic.⁵⁴ In 1955, they hoped to expand the WEU to cooperation in arms production and foreign policy, refounding Europe on a

things: the flag, the blood.... The verbal exchanges were very rough, one heard: 'You are a traitor!'...It took ten years to get over it." Cited in Riondel 1994, 349.

⁵²Mallet 1958, 157.

⁵³During the EDC debate, Mendès-France proclaimed, "The axiom of French policy must be to stick to Great Britain." France, *Journal Officiel*, 1954, pp. 4454-4473. On his confederal views, Girault 1991.

⁵⁴One anti-EDC Socialist rejoiced, "...the [WEU] accords deliver us from the Europe of Six and the risks of German hegemony which it contained; today it is the Europe of Seven!" Cited in Cophornic 1994, 271. See also the memoirs of Pierre-Olivier Lapie, the anti-EDC Socialist who was the leading champion of developing a WEU arms pool. Lapie 1971, 262-5.

"Franco-Anglo-German triangle."⁵⁵ Parallel to this were plans for new OEEC cooperation in atomic energy, classic energy, and transports.

Traditionalists in every party, meanwhile, either rejected the WEU or accepted it with reluctance, seeing it (like EDC) as an "Anglo-Saxon" plan subordinating France to a non-global role in unimportant European organizations.⁵⁶ France needed to assert itself as a global power; in Europe, technical problems could be dealt with in standard bilateral deals. French business, bureaucrats in the technical ministries, and traditional politicians on right and left pushed in 1954-55 to develop new bilateral accords in trade, atomic energy, armaments production, and transports. They focused especially on new ties with the rising German economy, showing that a traditional strategy in no way implied an irrational refusal to adjust to environmental change. They too increasingly saw incentives to cooperate with the Germans, but continued to differ strongly with their peers over *how* to do so in European institutional terms.

Community advocates also returned to the fray in early 1955. Like their peers, they saw technical needs for European cooperation in atomic and classic energy, armaments, and transports. Unlike their peers, their solutions were again to extend or imitate ECSC. Foreign Minister Antoine Pinay (Indep.), an EDC champion, considered several such options, though he feared that no supranational initiative was possible after EDC.⁵⁷ Then the bureaucrat-turned-

⁵⁵The WEU was an extension of the earlier "Brussels Pact" alliance of France, Britain, and the Benelux to include Germany and Italy. The WEU had a ministerial council and a consultative assembly, and was given responsibilities for overseeing limits on German military production and weapons industries. Militarily, the Germans became NATO members. Bossuat 1993, 168; Soutou 1996, 28; Calandri 1995.

⁵⁶In late 1954, de Gaulle proclaimed that the WEU solution was better than EDC, but that it should not be accepted until further negotiations with the Soviets were attempted, the Atlantic Alliance was revised to downgrade American control, and a better deal was struck on the Saar. De Gaulle 1970, 621-9.

⁵⁷Massigli writes that "I remember a meeting of an interministerial committee, April 22 [1955], in which the technicians [of various ministries], without governmental directives, took great

activist Jean Monnet intervened to focus pro-community attention on a plan for an atomic energy community ("Euratom"). French anti-supranational views could be overcome, argued Monnet, by capitalizing on widespread faith in an impending atomic-energy revolution, fear of a separate German atomic program, and the appeal of sharing the huge costs of atomic investments. Since these reasons were less attractive to the other Europeans -- who preferred atomic cooperation with the more advanced British or Americans -- Monnet reluctantly accepted to package Euratom with a Benelux plan for a "European Economic Community" (EEC) of trade liberalization.

All these proposals were on the table when the ECSC Foreign Ministers met at Messina, Italy in June 1955. In international terms, confederal and traditional options were at least as viable as community proposals. The WEU was pushed by the British and accepted by the Germans as the appropriate forum for political cooperation and armaments projects.⁵⁸ The British, Germans, and many Benelux leaders strongly supported OEEC as the forum for economic issues. German Economics Minister Erhard and German business were particularly intent on liberalization in a framework broader than the ECSC Six.⁵⁹ In atomic energy, all of France's partners wanted to include Britain. Traditional bilateral ties were also active alternatives, if and where the French rejected confederal plans. Bilateral export contracts remained the norm

pleasure in pouring cold water on the European enthusiasm of the collaborators of Antoine Pinay." 1978, 506.

⁵⁸German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer supported the earlier community projects, but was never particularly doctrinaire about it, attaching the most importance to continual progress in political cooperation in any sort of framework. In presenting the WEU accords to the Bundestag, Adenauer said the WEU should be "the point of departure and the core of future European policy." Cited in Imbert 1968, 53; Adenauer 1967, PAGES.

⁵⁹The German contribution at Messina proposed nothing but liberalization among the Six in an unspecified institutional framework. This plan was the vague resolution of a major battle in the German administration between partisans of ECSC-style sectoral projects, the Benelux plan for a customs union of the Six, or free trade in the OEEC and GATT. Küsters 1986, 58-64, 90-94; Küsters 1987.

in industrial trade, and had not prevented massive growth in intra-European trade in the early 1950s. In agriculture, all governments except the Dutch defended the status quo of bilateral contracts. Bilateral cooperation in armaments production was moving forward slowly on several fronts. The Germans were receptive to (if not eager for) Franco-German cooperation in atomic energy.

Inside France, confederal or traditional options were universally seen as *more* viable than supranational steps. The anti-EDC majority was ready to quash community plans. Even Euratom – constructed by Monnet as the supranational plan most likely to appeal to his countrymen – drew little support from the best informed French elites. With a few important (and cross-cutting) exceptions, both civil and military experts in the growing atomic energy establishment strongly favored either OEEC or bilateral alternatives over Euratom. They argued that collaboration with the backwards German, Benelux, or Italian programs was much less interesting than with Britain or Switzerland. Euratom might also impede French military research. If the influential expert Louis Armand championed Monnet's plan, François Perrin, head of the Atomic Energy Commissariat, championed an OEEC project drawn up by the British. Pierre Guillaumat, director of the secret military program, favored bilateral deals and dismissed Euratom as "dangerous nonsense."⁶⁰

EEC's prospects in France were even worse. Literally everyone agreed that it looked impossible in the near term. Some of French business was becoming more receptive to liberalization, but they still feared competition. They pointed out that France already enjoyed favorable terms of trade thanks to unilateral German tariff reductions, and preferred bilateral sectoral deals

⁶⁰Louis Armand, head of the French railways and chair of the CEA's industrial applications committee, had been involved in Monnet's early discussions, and had invented the "Euratom" label. Scheinman 1965, 148-57; Goldschmidt 1980, 147-53; Elgey 1993, IV, 581; Soutou 1996, 41.

between business associations, flanked at most by hortatory OEEC pledges to gradual liberalization.⁶¹ Finance officials argued that liberalization in EEC was no less threatening than in the OEEC.⁶² Even French farmers -- later miscast in common wisdom as the impulse to EEC -- opposed community-style accords. Though the largest French farmers were among the most competitive in Europe and French surpluses were growing quickly, French agricultural organizations unambiguously favored the continued pursuit of bilateral contracts in 1955. The ECSC Six were seen as too small a framework for French exports. Germany was its only major importer, and the Dutch and Italians were more competitors than potential markets. Institutionally, farmers had come to oppose supranationality during the fight over a "European Agricultural Community" in 1951-53, denouncing the ECSC model as "too heavy, too rigid, too authoritarian and *dirigiste*, and weighted towards consumer interests."⁶³

How was the French strategy leading to EEC and Euratom selected? Pro-community politicians dragged France to the deal in two steps. First Foreign Minister Pinay stepped beyond his instructions at Messina -- which ruled out even discussing EEC -- to accept studies of all the proposals.⁶⁴ He also proposed the most pro-community participant, Belgian Foreign Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, to chair the studies, and sent an ultra-Europeanist young deputy, Félix Gaillard (Rad.), to represent France. These selections were not innocent. When talks in the "Spaak Committee" bogged down at the technical level,

⁶¹Mahant 1969, 178-200; Balassa 1978, 79-95.

⁶²A major Finance Ministry study in 1955 concluded that "the problems of forming a common market of the Six were no less than liberalizing trade within the OEEC since imports from the Federal Republic, Benelux and Italy represented 70 percent of all imports from the OEEC." Ministry of Finance, Rapport Boissard, "Comité restreint chargé d'enquêter sur les obstacles à la libération des échanges"; Lynch 1997, 176.

⁶³FNSEA pamphlet, 14 March 1953, cited in Délorme and Tavernier 1969, 20. Earlier, in February 1952, an FNSEA-related organization published a pamphlet entitled, "From the Black Pool [ECSC] to the Green Pool: Europe's Organization of the Ruin of French Agriculture." Fédération Nationale de la Propriété Agricole, Paris, 1952.

⁶⁴Interview, Pinay's cabinet director; Lynch 1997, 171-2.

Spaak, Gaillard, and the other delegation heads dismissed their bureaucrats and drafted the entire final report themselves.⁶⁵ The result was a coherent plan that, wrote one French diplomat, showed "considerable distance from all aspects of French positions."⁶⁶ It paired the EEC and Euratom projects, but focused on the former.⁶⁷ Institutionally, both were explicitly modeled on ECSC. In the "Common Market," liberalization would proceed in automatic stages. Quotas and subsidies of all sorts would be quickly eliminated. An unspecified "agriculture policy" was left to the future. Safeguard clauses were few, and operated at the discretion of a supranational "European Commission."

If the Spaak Report was welcomed by a handful of officials in the French Foreign and Finance Ministries, the bureaucracy's overall reception was "glacial."⁶⁸ Officials complained that the proposed institutions were "hardly different" from ill-loved ECSC, and that "the renunciations of sovereignty expressly foreseen in the Treaty [would] inevitably" cover not just tariffs, etc., but "the ensemble of other domains of economic activity."⁶⁹ The "fundamental risks" of accepting the Common Market included "economic and social disruption which cannot be underestimated," and an inevitable integration of

⁶⁵The actual drafting was left to Spaak, with help from a strongly pro-community German diplomat (Hans van der Groeben), and one of Monnet's closest collaborators (Pierre Uri).

⁶⁶MAE, DE-CE 613, 24 February 1956. Secrétariat d'État aux Affaires économiques, "Note: marché commun européen."

⁶⁷The report gave 84 pages to the Common Market and 24 to Euratom. MAE, DE-CE 613, 21 April 1956. "Rapport des chefs de délégation aux ministres des Affaires étrangères." See also Küsters 1986, 131.

⁶⁸Marjolin 1986, 282-3. He notes that the administration was "almost unanimously hostile to the idea of a Common Market..." Key supporters included Bernard Clappier, Robert Schuman's cabinet director in 1950 and now Director of External Economic Relations at the Finance Ministry, and Jean Sadrin, Director of External Finances. Bossuat 1995.

⁶⁹MAE, DE-CE 613, 2 February 1956. Service de coopération économique, "Note: marché commun."; MAE, DE-CE 613, 21 March 1956. Direction d'Europe, "Note: institutions du marché commun."; MAE, DE-CE 613, 14 April 56. Service de coopération économique, "Note: analyse du rapport des experts sur l'institution d'un marché commun européen." Also 25 April 1956, "Note: marché commun."

foreign policies.⁷⁰ Interministerial meetings in April 1956 rejected talks on the basis of the Spaak Report. France could only consider plans for an initial phase of liberalization, with new talks thereafter.⁷¹ Besides, argued bureaucrats, French interest groups would never support EEC:

It is obvious that a consultation with the directly interested economic and syndical groups would lead very rapidly to a negative assessment that could only limit the government's possibilities for maneuver and crystallize the heretofore latent opposition to the Common Market. In particular, this would be the case if such a consultation sought to determine the advantages and the disadvantages that our country could draw from the establishment of a Common Market.⁷²

This accurately characterized interest-group positions in early 1956. French farmers still favored bilateral solutions. French business was overwhelmingly hostile to the Spaak Report, though the CNPF -- careful after its failed fight on ECSC -- decided to critique the details rather than rejecting it outright.⁷³

Another unrelated shift in domestic coalitions, however, now allowed the second and decisive step towards EEC. Thanks to coalitional jockeying, SFIO leader Guy Mollet became premier after legislative elections in January 1956, despite a clear increase in the anti-community majority.⁷⁴ Though Mollet

⁷⁰MAE, DE-CE 613, 21 April 1956. Service de coopération économique, "Note: marché commun." Frances Lynch (1997, 170) paraphrases another Quai note of April 1956: "...far from securing France's place as leader of this customs union it would instead be a vehicle for restoring German political and economy hegemony in Europe." The range and tenor of these arguments makes clear that they did not reflect experts who evaluated a policy option in technical terms. Instead, they were grabbing at any rationale they could find to reject an option they already felt was unacceptable.

⁷¹MAE, DE-CE 613, 12 May 1956. Service de coopération économique, "Note: marché commun"; and 23 May 1956, "Résumé du projet de document de travail sur l'établissement d'un marché commun, préparé par la Commission interministerielle réunie à la Présidence du Conseil."

⁷²MAE, DE-CE 613, 23 February 1956. No author, "Note."

⁷³Ehrmann 1957, 414; Mahant 1969, 177-8; Balassa, 1981, 203; Girault 1987.

⁷⁴The Gaullists lost 60 seats, but the Communists and right-wing Poujadists won more than 100 new seats. The Left, center, and MRP barely cobbled together a majority. Pierre Mendès France, Mollet's electoral partner, was expected to become premier, but new French President René Coty (Indep.) selected Mollet partly because he felt he would be tougher on Algeria, and

was allied electorally with the confederalist Pierre Mendès France, he had become devoutly pro-community during the EDC battle.⁷⁵ Now he picked community champions to run French policies: Maurice Faure (Rad.) as junior minister for Europe, and officials Émile Noël, Robert Marjolin, and Jacques Donnedieu de Vabres as advisors. One historian says of the latter trio, "In the spring of 1956, three pro-European officials thus occupied the key posts in the French administration, and were entirely ready to direct European policy in new directions."⁷⁶

In spring 1956, Faure and Marjolin began intensive lobbying of the group they perceived as the key to EEC: farmers. Farmers' groups were still extremely reluctant to consider any arrangement that might mean a decrease in protection, but the government tried to persuade them that EEC could offer some sort of framework for their exports.⁷⁷ By summer 1956, if the main agricultural lobbies "remained until almost the last moment suspiciously antagonistic of anything more complicated [than bilateral contracts], especially anything that would provide a market for other peoples' surpluses in France," they endorsed the Spaak Report.⁷⁸ French positions were set in favor of a

partly for his pro-community sympathies. Lynch 1997, 173; Rioux 1983, 91; Fauvet 1959, 308; Elgey 1993, II, 218.

⁷⁵Traditionalist Socialist Jules Moch wrote that Mollet was "fanatically favorable to EDC, in which he saw an extension of ECSC, a step towards European unity." Duchêne, writing of strongly pro-community French politicians, notes, "A remarkable instance was Mollet. He was a classic party boss, for whom the unity and strength of the Socialist Party were sacrosanct. The EDC had split the party down the middle...in the midst of much personal animosity.... Yet his support for European proposals never wavered." Moch 1976, 477; Duchêne 1994, 267.

⁷⁶Küsters 1986, 142.

⁷⁷Marjolin writes that it was with the agricultural organizations "that I had the most prolonged and, at least for a while, the most difficult discussions." Marjolin 1986, 292; Duchêne 1994, 291; Milward 1992, 133. Confirmed for me by André Chandernagor, who was partly responsible for relations with agricultural groups in Mollet's cabinet. Interview, Paris, 28 April 1997.

⁷⁸Milward 1992, 293-4; Délorme and Tavernier 1969, 23-30; Barral 1968, 326-7; Bourrinet 1964. Bureaucrats in the Agriculture Ministry, however, still opposed the opening of negotiations in May 1956.

network of long-term contracts within EEC, but without clear demands for more integration (which farmers still feared would mean liberalization).

The farmers' endorsement made a deal imaginable, but hostility to EEC was still dominant in both majority and opposition. When Mollet approved negotiations based on the Spaak Report in May 1956, this was "manifestly contrary to the general sentiment of the ministers present."⁷⁹ Support for EEC was weak in Mollet's own SFIO, with opposition led by Finance Minister Paul Ramadier.⁸⁰ All but the most die-hard "ultras of Europe" in the MRP were also skeptical of EEC. MRP party statements paid it no attention until late 1956.⁸¹ The Radicals and Independents were still split into three camps. Traditionalists like Édouard Daladier (Rad.) or François Valentin (Indep.) opposed any sort of new commitments. Confederalists like Mendès France (Rad.) or André Boutemy (Indep.), with the support of the CNPF, argued for intergovernmental, non-automatic accords that allowed France to control the pace of liberalization and cooperation. Community champions like Faure and Gaillard (Rad.) or Paul Reynaud (Indep.) marshalled every conceivable economic or geopolitical argument for EEC and Euratom.⁸² In late 1956, even with their SFIO and MRP allies, the latter counted no more than a third of French parliamentarians.

⁷⁹Serra 1987, 282.

⁸⁰In sending a Finance official to observe the EEC talks, one of Ramadier's advisors said, "In Brussels [where the talks were held] there are a few irresponsible people who think they're going to create a customs union in Europe. They are idiots who don't know that the alarming situation of our currency reserves is going to force us to restore quotas on all imports. Their initiatives won't lead to anything. However, the Prime Minister attaches importance to this work, so we have to send someone from Finance to go see what's going on." Prate 1995, 17. On hostility in the SFIO, Delwit 1995, 71-2; Mahant 1969, 154-5; Criddle 1969, 82; Pinto-Lyra 1978, 82-3; Zariski 1956, 264.

⁸¹Bjøl 1966, 145; Brunet 1993.

⁸²Bjøl 1966, 168-205.

Hoping to make a treaty ratifiable in France, Mollet's team attempted in the early EEC negotiations to block any automatic liberalization.⁸³ This was refused categorically by the Germans, whose Economics Minister Erhard was pushing aggressively to drop EEC in favor of a new British proposal for a broader OEEC "free trade area." Mollet was faced with a choice between failure and fundamental concessions. Most of his bureaucrats, his Finance Minister, and his party preferred the former, and advised him to hold to previous positions. But in early November, Mollet met with Adenauer and dropped the key French conditions on automatic liberalization.⁸⁴ Thereafter, despite the continued internal complaints of Finance officials and Socialists, the negotiations sped to their conclusion.

The one battle still to be fought inside the French government concerned France's overseas territories. Mollet began to push hard for massive EEC (German) side-payments in the form of investments and aid for the French Union. If such direct payoffs look clearly beneficial to France with hindsight, many French elites did not see it this way at the time. Both traditional and confederalist thinkers saw EEC's intrusion into France's colonial relationships as another reason to oppose it. Many bureaucrats and deputies among the Independents, MRP, Radicals, and Socialists wanted to "safeguard the French Union" against "Europeanization."⁸⁵ Not only was liberalization threatening to

⁸³Much of Mollet's team was also no more liberal than their anti-EEC allies. They were drawn to EEC for European reasons, not economic ones, and proved willing to compromise on their economic views to push integration forward.

⁸⁴This deal was negotiated by Marjolin, who thought his own government's demands on harmonization "absurd." According to Milward, Mollet and Adenauer "scarcely read through the text of what they had agreed." Marjolin 1986, 286; Milward 1992, 215. Almost all recent accounts reject the alternative geopolitical argument that this compromise was driven by the concurrent crises in Suez and Hungary; the two leaders decided to compromise before the crises. For the geopolitical argument, Mayne 1973, 295-6; Pineau and Rimbaud 1991, 218-21. For the better documented counterargument, Lynch, Milward, Marjolin, Moravcsik 1998, 119. Alfred Grosser in IO, 11, 1957.

⁸⁵MAE, DE-CE 613, 21 April 1956. Service de coopération économique, "Note: marché commun"; Girault 1987, 371-2; Mahant 1969, 94, 105, 148; *L'Express*. December 28, 1956.

the territories; even *aïd* from other countries would undercut French control. Finance officials insisted well into the EEC negotiations that France's natural ally was Britain, and it should:

1) Push for European integration in the OEEC framework, trying to establish a Franco-British 'common front'.... 2) Not discuss, even 'in principle,' the integration of the Overseas Territories of the franc zone before the principles of European integration are established and have begun to be executed. 3) Activate as much as possible the economic, financial, and tariff integration of the franc zone (notably Morocco) with France, and not envisage the adhesion of this zone to Eurafrika until its own internal ties are sufficiently consolidated to avoid all risks of dislocations.⁸⁶

But this "was an argument that Mollet rejected completely."⁸⁷ Unlike many more "liberal" actors, he thought the closed trading system anachronistic. If he was successful — obtaining a five-year fund, of which 88% went to France — this was not because similarly-placed French elites agreed that this side-payment was worth pursuing.

The treaties on EEC and Euratom were signed in Rome on March 25, 1957. Now the pro-community French leadership turned to ratification. By spring 1957, observers forecast a close but positive vote. Three factors explain why an EEC majority coalesced when it had been clearly unratifiable six months before. First were coalitional pressures and issue-linkages. On the left, the fifty Socialists who had voted against EDC felt unable to reject a project identified so closely with party head Mollet.⁸⁸ On the right, many EEC skeptics voted "yes" explicitly to uphold Mollet's tough stance against Algerian independence. Second was pressure from the farmers' groups that Mollet's team had mobilized. Despite persistent divides in agricultural opinion on EEC

⁸⁶MAE, DE-CE 613, 19 October 1956. DREE. "Note pour Monsieur Clappier. Objet: l'intégration européenne de la zone franc." Quotes in original.

⁸⁷Lynch 1997, 204.

⁸⁸Delwit 1995, 72.

-- with the strongest parliamentary opposition coming from the heavily agricultural Poujadists and Gaullists, and some prominent members of farmers' organizations still hostile -- many rural politicians now accepted that the EEC offered attractive long-term contracts.⁸⁹ The farmers' call to ratify convinced skeptics among the Radicals, Independents, and even some dissident Gaullists. Third was the negligible public attention given to EEC. Political attention was focused overwhelmingly on the Algerian debacle. France's growing economic crisis -- caused by Algeria and Mollet's profligate domestic budgets -- also convinced many that EEC would go unimplemented in any case. Amid such disinterest that only 30 deputies cast their votes in person, the "Treaties of Rome" were ratified in July 1957 by a majority 342 to 239 (5 abstentions).⁹⁰

France was not led to EEC by "liberals" who wanted liberalization but feared a broader OEEC framework. Nor did Socialists, farmers, technocrats, or business coherently lead the way. All these groups were consistently divided on EEC's appeal. Instead, the impulse to EEC came from a diverse group of politicians who attached varying substantive goals to a shared model of a desirable Europe: the conservative industrialist Pinay, the Socialist party boss Mollet, the rural centrist Maurice Faure. These leaders' coalitions were not built on European goals; like their opposition, their majorities were cross-cut by European views. Nor were they the only possible coalitions. By far the most popular politicians in France during the EEC negotiations were its two

⁸⁹Inside the agricultural organizations, "These opponents were motivated by political, one could even say psychological, objections. They felt unable to accept an institution in which France would be so closely associated with Germany or where she might lose some of her freedom of decision." Examples included J. LeRoy Ladurie, President of the Calvados (Normandy) Chamber of Agriculture, Alfred Negré of the Southwest Cooperatives, and two recent Agriculture Ministers, Camille Laurens and Paul Antier. Mahant 1965, 221.

⁹⁰The only significant shifts since January were that 19 Gaullists who had abstained in January (to support Mollet on Algeria, and because the institutional provisions of the treaty were still ostensibly undecided) shifted to voting "no," and about fifteen Independents who had voted "no" in January shifted to "yes" votes "for reasons completely unconnected with European affairs," [i.e., Algeria]. Balassa 1978, 242; Mahant 1969, 341.

strongest leaders before and after that process, Pierre Mendès France and Charles de Gaulle. They respectively incarnated the confederal and traditional alternatives to community strategies. Only due to pro-community leaders, and because cross-cutting ideas gave those leaders the autonomy to choose, did France choose this model of their interests in Europe.

Institutional Consequences and EEC's Historical Window

If France only chose EEC thanks to pro-community leadership, why did EEC survive when the collapse of the Fourth Republic brought Charles de Gaulle to power in May 1958? De Gaulle incarnated the traditional perspective, and initially considered rejecting or revising the treaty. Yet he soon accepted EEC, and even accelerated its implementation. Objective imperatives, we might conclude, would eventually have pressed any French leaders to the community path. The foregoing claims may simply raise issues of timing.

But de Gaulle's rally to EEC in 1958 did not respond to imperatives that would have existed in the absence of the EEC treaty itself. According to his collaborators⁹¹, his main reasons concerned how his own foreign policy agenda fit with his predecessors' very different institutional legacy. De Gaulle was focused on leading Europe to a "third way" between the superpowers. To do so, he felt that he needed two things: broad support from Germany, and a way to exclude the "Anglo-Saxon" British from Europe. EEC now set the terms for both goals. In 1958, Konrad Adenauer made clear that good Franco-German relations depended on implementing EEC.⁹² Given earlier German preferences

⁹¹This section based on interviews with de Gaulle's Foreign Minister, Maurice Couve de Murville, and two other advisors.

⁹²When the two leaders met in September 1958, de Gaulle set out his plans for a European "third way," and Adenauer made EEC an explicit prerequisite for supporting any challenge to

for a wider trade accord, Adenauer would have made different demands in an EEC-less Europe; but given EEC, this was a liberalization deal he could demand from the unpredictable new French government. A similar reconfiguration of demands took place in Franco-British relations. The British had already excluded themselves from EEC. The Common Market was thus a very useful platform for de Gaulle's European plans. In the absence of EEC, as the Gaullists' attacks on the treaty before 1958 made clear, a supranational economic community was the *last* way he would have conceived of separating the British from Europe.⁹³ Given EEC, he could exclude the British and win continental support in one stroke. Thus de Gaulle's rally to EEC was an attempt to pursue his own European strategy within an institutional context constructed by his pro-community compatriots. Perceived imperatives in trade or agriculture played little role in his decision.⁹⁴ As the most detailed French account concludes, "Between May and December 1958, General de Gaulle

American dominance. Interview, a de Gaulle advisor who attended the meeting; Poidevin 1990, 82-3.

⁹³De Gaulle refrained from public statements on EEC (or other subjects) in the approach to his return to power in 1958, but his closest associates were EEC's strongest opponents, and his private comments show that he shared their views. In 1957 he told Michel Debré to refrain from his harsh attacks on the treaty, saying, "What for? Once we have returned to power, we will tear up those treaties." Jouve 1967, I, 253.

⁹⁴De Gaulle's more liberal advisors (Couve de Murville, Georges Pompidou, Jacques Rueff) did persuade him that EEC liberalization was desirable, but as Couve de Murville told me, if "de Gaulle rallied little by little to the economic arguments, he wanted the Common Market above all for political reasons." Couve made the same argument elsewhere: "[De Gaulle] warmed to the Common Market because he had been convinced or become we had convinced him that it was important for France from an economic point of view and in this it could only be advantageous. But what really interested him was that the European Community become a politically united organization, and it is not an accident that he took up this problem as soon as he had returned and even before the deadline of January 1, 1959." Cited in Institut Charles de Gaulle 1990, p. 183. Poidevin notes the economic arguments in a sentence that begins, "Certainly the General's dominant preoccupation was political, but..." Poidevin 1990, p. 82. Agriculture, by contrast, is not even mentioned in any first-hand account of de Gaulle's alignment on EEC, except one reference by Couve in passing. The most detailed French historical accounts do not mention it. Moravcsik's claim that agriculture was the key to de Gaulle's decision is based on statements (undated in Moravcsik's book) made in 1963 – almost five years later! Couve de Murville 1971, 43; Jouve 1967; Poidevin 1990; Moravcsik 1998, 180.

became interested in Europe primarily due to the heritage left him by the Fourth Republic."⁹⁵

Counterfactuals strengthen this factual argument. Had de Gaulle *not* inherited EEC, he was unlikely to obtain a similar deal even if he wanted it. One of his first priorities in 1958 was to stabilize the disastrously weak domestic economy. He decreed a 20% franc devaluation and unilateral liberalization to meet France's earlier OEEC pledges. Though these steps allowed France to respect the first EEC tariff reductions in early 1959, EEC considerations played no role in de Gaulle's decision; he would have taken similar steps without EEC. But had he done so in an EEC-less context, this would have vastly decreased his chances of later striking an EEC-like deal. Before 1958, only French economic weakness persuaded the Germans and Benelux to accept EEC instead of pushing for the OEEC accord they preferred.⁹⁶ After 1959, France quickly became the continent's fastest growing economy. French business became markedly more pro-liberalization. Even had de Gaulle demanded a "little Europe" deal after 1959 (itself far from certain!), Germany and the Benelux would have had no reason to concede it. Liberalization would have proceeded either in OEEC or in some still less institutionalized way.

The absence of a Common Market would in turn have undercut de Gaulle's leverage to acquire a Common Agricultural Policy. By late 1960, as French surpluses mounted, French farmers and the de Gaulle government finally began to perceive interests in an agricultural mechanism beyond bilateral contracts.⁹⁷ In an EEC-less Europe, de Gaulle would have lacked the central tactic he used to extract the CAP from the reluctant Germans after 1961:

⁹⁵Poidevin 1990, 79; also Lacouture 1984-5, II, 630.

⁹⁶Moravcsik 1998, 137-58.

⁹⁷Until then, the French farmers' organizations actually favored *extending* the transition-period provisions for bilateral contracts. Neville-Rolfe 1984, 116.

threats to destroy the Common Market. Even *with* this leverage, the CAP talks from 1961-67 almost failed on several occasions. Without it, the Germans would have had little reason to stifle their own major domestic opposition to the CAP. French threats to withdraw unilaterally from OEEC or other trade accords would not have carried the same menace of disruption. Little progress was likely to happen quickly -- and the CAP's historical window soon closed. In 1963, Ludwig Erhard's replacement of the ancient Adenauer brought the strongest German opponent of "little Europe" and the CAP to power. In the absence of a prior German commitment to the CAP, Erhard was very unlikely to strike a similar deal himself.⁹⁸

If EEC survived through traditional French leadership in the 1960s, then, this was as much despite as due to broader European trends. Growing French industrial competitiveness made EEC less necessary, not more, relative to other institutional options. Increasing agricultural surpluses may have convinced de Gaulle to look towards a CAP, but they also made the Germans all the less willing to lock themselves into an economically absurd and politically costly accord. Neither de Gaulle nor Erhard would have agreed that had EEC not existed before 1963, it would have had to be invented. Lacking a French choice for a pro-community strategy in the 1950s, the community model would have faded into the past as a failed experiment.

⁹⁸Marjolin wrote that if discussions had continued in the OEEC instead of moving to EEC in 1956-7, "The Germans, especially after the departure of Adenauer, would probably not have ceded to the French demands on the Common Agricultural Policy, knowing from the [OEEC] example that another commercial system, excluding agriculture but giving them the same advantages that they had found in the Common Market, was possible." 1986, 317.

Conclusions

The Origins of the European Union

This argument does not imply that underlying objective structures are unimportant in explaining the construction of the EU. Objective accounts are correct that there were broad trends to some liberalization and peaceful relations in postwar western Europe; by the 1950s, almost all elites were proposing some variation on these themes. But they are wrong that there were clear objective imperatives to the unprecedented pattern of institution-building we know as "European integration." In France, actors that shared material interests in parties, bureaucracies, regions, and sectors consistently espoused different ideas about how those interests connected to European projects.

The three views debated by similarly-placed French elites display the range of French strategies over which these ideas mattered in the 1950s and 1960s. The community option featured automatic liberalization, plans for a CAP, an atomic research pool, and other potential projects under supranational institutions among the ECSC Six. The confederal option pictured non-automatic liberalization in the OEEC, flanked by political cooperation in the WEU and various projects based on a Franco-British-German triangle. Agriculture would have remained in a network of intergovernmental contracts. The traditional option suggested similar non-automatic liberalization and bilateral contracts in agriculture, but emphasized standard diplomacy without the development of permanent multilateral organizations.

France's pivotal role in postwar Europe meant the variation in these strategies translated fairly directly into variation in European outcomes. The other European governments generally preferred confederal plans over

community ones, and would have had little choice but to accept traditional ties if the French insisted on them. In substantive (as opposed to institutional) terms, the European divergence between French community, confederal, and traditional choices was already considerable by the 1960s. It was clearest in agriculture. A French community strategy led to the CAP: the most extensive multilateral policy integration in history. Confederal or traditional alternatives were unlikely to lead to any major multilateral deal at all. Instead, national-level agricultural policies would have ended up adjusting on their own in various ways in the 1960s. In trade liberalization, the divergence was less crucial but significant. Liberalization of some sort was inevitable, but the automatic EEC schedule likely accelerated the pace over non-automatic alternatives. In geopolitics, the divergence was again fundamental. France's community choices from 1950 to 1958 reshaped western Europe's axis from the Franco-British *entente cordiale* to a Franco-German partnership.

Strictly speaking, ideas caused the *variation* in French actors' preferences over these strategies; the ultimate *selection* between them happened according to the dynamics of domestic coalition-building. But since coalition-building operated much more on left-right issues than on unrelated, cross-cutting cleavages on Europe, this selection mechanism was so loose and indirect that French strategies often seemed to be chosen on the basis of leaders' ideas alone. This was particularly true in the stage of policy formulation. Coalitions built on non-European issues were invariably divided over Europe. Since leaders' main support related to these other issues, they had broad autonomy to formulate their own preferred European strategies. Robert Schuman could negotiate ECSC and EDC without clear domestic support, as could Pierre Mendès France with the WEU and Guy Mollet with EEC. The selection was tighter when these treaties came back for ratification, but was still not directly

related to European questions. When unrelated coalitional pressures pressed allies with different views of Europe together, as with ECSC and EEC, a reluctant majority was assembled. When they did not, as with EDC, allies followed their different ideas and remained divided.

What are the broad implications for the EU literature? This evidence is historically incomplete; it does not demonstrate (or even directly imply) that EEC led inevitably to today's EU, or that confederal or traditional choices in the 1950s would have made subsequent choices for EU-like institutions impossible. Further research on the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, which I present elsewhere, is necessary to show that ideas continued to play a causal role in EU history.⁹⁹ But this account of the first decade of European institution-building lays the foundations for a strongly revisionist view of the entire EU story. This view recenters an explanation of these remarkable institutions on *politics* as most people understand the word: on contending beliefs, aggressive agenda-setting, and leadership. The European Union is not just a mechanically rational response to a particularly acute regional case of structural interdependence. Nor does it simply reflect unintended "path-dependent" variations on such a response, shepherded by supranational technocrats. Today's European Union is the result, in a causal sense and to a measurable historical degree, of a profoundly political process in which an elite minority has advanced a contested ideological agenda past their divided compatriots.

Showing Ideas as Causes

This article has used non-interpretive research methods to highlight the causal influence of certain ideas in a major case of governmental decision-making. Its

⁹⁹Parsons 1999.

method of focusing on cross-cutting dissent is fundamentally similar to the ways in which positivist scholars make qualitative arguments. The scholar searches for evidence of what actors demanded with respect to particular policy decisions, and then analyzes the pattern of demands to ascertain what causes lay behind them. The sole novelty here is to turn these methods inward on individuals within organizations or groups, on the supposition that similarly-placed actors may not always interpret their interests in the same ways. Good evidence that they did not can provide an answer to the "how much" question in ideational causality, with which interpretive methods have such difficulty. The divergence in the courses of action advocated by similarly-placed individuals allows the actors, independent from the observer, to delineate the spectrum of strategies over which ideas mattered.

A pattern of political mobilization that reflects cross-cutting ideas is no less "concrete" than one based on shared material interests at some level of organization, as much as the latter may seem more grounded in "reality." As scholars like Albert Hirschman and Karl Polanyi have shown, it is no more "natural" for human beings to privilege narrow interests in economic welfare (for example) than to define their interests via some more complex ideational apparatus.¹⁰⁰ When objective-interest theories causally side-step the human mind, they are just assuming that one simple kind of ideas dominates human action, in the methodological bet that this will deliver parsimony and generalizability without missing major aspects of causality. But this bet is legitimate only if it is checked against some method that would reveal whether or not one set of ideas actually did guide the actions under study.

Cross-cutting dissent provides one such method. It will not highlight ideas in all cases; in many, we will need to trace consensus far back in time to

¹⁰⁰Hirschman 1977; Polanyi 1944.

pinpoint when one idea overcame others to define a group's interests. Ideas might also become accepted without ever seriously engaging other competing ideas, skipping a stage of cross-cutting dissent entirely. Nonetheless, cross-cutting dissent is far from rare in most political contexts. Searching for it will construct a methodological bridge for positivistic skeptics to see the causal importance of ideas in at least some important cases. If their confidence can be gained in this way, interpretive methods may gain broader credibility as well.

More broadly, this attempt to show how much ideas matter is connected to some larger issues about the kinds of questions that political scientists ask about causality. The discipline's positivistic focus on constructing parsimonious, highly generalizable theories -- while admirable in principle -- has led in practice to a systematic disregard for "how much" questions. The typical theoretical argument claims that its variables offer a strong overall explanation of certain outcomes, and concludes with a few caveats on the secondary role of other causes and the need for further research.¹⁰¹ Even though it is patently obvious that *any* interesting political outcome depends on multiple causes, we are left at the stage of arguing "economics versus geopolitics," or "structure versus ideas," without serious attention to the relative weight of these factors. If we are truly interested in explaining why certain things happen historically and why others do not, this is a major problem. Even "small" causes can derail major historical events. In causal terms, the most important question is not "what is the biggest cause?" but "what would a change in this variable have led to?" "In other words," noted Kenneth Waltz, "understanding the likely consequences of any one cause may depend on

¹⁰¹Moravcsik 1998 is an example, despite the introductory remark (p. 12) that "The aim is not to prove one theory entirely correct or incorrect, but to assess the relative importance of various factors." See my review in *French Politics & Society* 17:2 (Spring 1999).

understanding its relation to other causes."¹⁰² In political science, it is at these interstitial points between causes -- the "how much" questions -- that the real explanatory payoffs lie.

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¹⁰²Waltz 1954, 14.

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