Showing Ideas as Causes: The Origins of the European Union

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Why does Western Europe, with its quasi-federal European Union (EU), have international institutions that are so much more developed than those in other regions? Scholars give two main answers. For "structuralists" like Andrew Moravcsik and Alan Milward, the EU responded to objective structural imperatives.[1] International interdependence was particularly acute in postwar Europe, so governments built particularly strong institutions to meet policy challenges. For "institutionalists" in the tradition of Ernst Haas, structural imperatives may have driven initial postwar institution building, but subsequent steps were heavily path-dependent. Once some power was delegated to "supranational" agents in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952, those agents crafted new projects and mobilized coalitions to extend supranational institutions. From this "spillover" arose the broader European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958—the direct foundation of today's EU—and its later development.[2]

Although I accept insights from both approaches, I argue that neither explains why Europeans chose this "community" Europe over radically different alternatives in the 1950s. If postwar structural conditions generated widely perceived imperatives to European cooperation, they did not dictate its shape or extent. If institutional path-dependence helped "lock in" the contested EEC institutions *after* 1958, it did not push Europeans in any specific direction before then. Within vague structural and institutional pressures, only certain *ideas* led Europeans to the EEC rather than to less extensive cooperation in much weaker international institutions (or without

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1. See Moravcsik 1998; and Milward 1992.
2. See Haas 1958; and Sandholtz and Stone Sweet 1998.

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formal institutions at all). Only advocates of a new ideology of integration—what I call the "community model"—perceived interests in the unprecedented institutional project showcased in the ECSC and EEC. Had Europeans followed other viable, historically active ideas about their interests in cooperation—the "confederal" or "traditional" models—they would have solved their problems through more standard diplomatic instruments. Today's Europe would reflect the rule, not the exception, in international relations.

This argument confronts two major obstacles. The first is theoretical: Isolating ideas as causes is difficult. A growing literature points to actors' subjective beliefs as important causes of political outcomes.[3] But if ideational theorists argue persuasively that ideas are often non-negligible factors in politics, they have trouble specifying *how much* ideas matter. Skeptics thus remain free to dismiss ideas as residual to objective responses to structural or institutional constraints. I argue that certain conditions allow for more concrete and specific claims about ideas. Where ideas strongly *cross-cut* lines of shared material interests in a polity, we can isolate individuals' beliefs most clearly from objective pressures. Cross-cutting ideas can also fragment coalitions and parties, creating situations similar to the "chaos" and "multiple equilibria" described by game theorists. Entrepreneurial leaders may gain the autonomy to set the policy agenda around their own personal ideas, and to mobilize one of several potential coalitions behind them. Leaders' ideas, as an autonomous causal factor, thereby select from a range of structural and institutional possibilities.

The second obstacle is historical: Tracing certain ideas across Europe and the 1950s is an immense task. I surmount this problem by focusing on the pivotal case of *French* strategic choices. Experts agree that European cooperation took the shape it did in the 1950s—the institutionally strong, geographically limited EEC—above all because the French government demanded it. The preferences of the other main actors (Germany, Britain, Benelux) summed to favor broader and weaker institutional options. I show that rather than reflecting structural or institutional pressures, French insistence on the EEC resulted from community-minded leadership. Alternative confederal or traditional French strategies were strongly represented and *at least* as viable domestically and internationally and would have oriented European bargaining to different outcomes. The differences between the EEC and these alternatives display the range across which French community ideas mattered.

Ideas and the "How Much?" Problem

Ideas are subjective claims about descriptions of the world, causal relationships, or the normative legitimacy of certain actions. The basic reasons to suspect that ideas

3. See Hall 1989 and 1993; Onuf 1989; Wendt 1989 and 1997; Sikkink 1991; Goldstein 1993; Goldstein and Keohane 1993; Checkel 1993; Katzenstein 1996; Kier 1997; McNamara 1998; and Berman 1998.

influence behavior have been well elaborated by the overlapping "constructivist" and "sociological institutionalist" schools in international relations and by comparative political economists like Peter Hall.[4] These scholars have had difficulty moving from ontological propositions to strong empirical demonstrations, however, due to two related problems. The first is the "Janus-faced" nature of ideas. Sometimes actors' beliefs guide their actions; sometimes apparent beliefs only rationalize strategies chosen for other reasons.[5] Distinguishing between the two situations can be difficult. Second, even assuming ideas have causal effects, they do so as interpretations or "filters" of the objective environment. Wherever ideas have causal effects—in Max Weber's famous phrase, as "switchmen" among various material possibilities—so does the objective context they interpret.[6] The challenge for causal ideational argument is to isolate the ideational filter from its context, to separate the subjective components of actors' perceived "interests" from their direct responses to the environment.

The postmodern extreme of the ideational literature meets this challenge by denying it. The very notion of an accessible objective context is rejected, making interpretation of ideas the entire exercise, without attempts to assess how ideas relate to objective pressures.[7] More mainstream ideational arguments, however, use fairly standard social-science methods to suggest the need for similar kinds of interpretation. Most common in the constructivist, sociological institutionalist, and comparative literatures is a reliance on "process tracing."[8] The observer traces the objective pressures impinging on certain decisions and concludes that they did not fully determine a choice. Thus we need to interpret the beliefs that did.[9] Cross-case comparisons are also often used to set up interpretation. In contexts ranging from the early Industrial Revolution to interwar military strategizing, scholars suggest that actors in objectively similar situations adopted different strategies due to different ideas.[10] Other studies show the need for interpretation in the proliferation of similar policies across structurally different cases.[11]

Especially when combined, these methods produce strong claims that ideas can affect politics to some degree. Their main weakness, however, is an apparent inability to show *how much* ideas cause certain outcomes. Scholars using these methods offer qualitative assessments of indeterminacy left by objective pressures and interpretations of how certain ideas resolved it. Yet skeptics can always question the former assessment, suggesting (for example) that it underestimates the objective economic pressures toward a choice—meaning that ideas caused it less than has been claimed. A process-tracing focus on a single course of action also offers little

4. See, in particular, Wendt 1989; Onuf 1989; Finnemore 1996; and Hall 1989.
5. See Laitin 1986, 11–20; Tetlock 1991, 47; Shepsle 1985; and Krasner 1993.
6. Weber 1958, 280.
7. For a recent example in EU studies, see Diez 1999.
8. George 1979.
9. See Hall 1989 and 1993; Goldstein and Keohane 1993, 26; and Adler and Haas 1992.
10. See Biernacki 1995; Kier 1997; Berman 1998; and Hattam 1992.
11. Finnemore 1996.

counterfactual leverage: What was the range of possibilities *without* these ideas?[12] Cross-case comparisons help in this respect, suggesting alternatives in similar situations. But cross-national comparisons are rarely similar enough for analysts to ascribe all their variation to ideas. Critics may suspect that unnoticed differences in structural or institutional situations account for part of the divergence.[13]

Overall, laments one sympathetic reviewer, ideas in today's literature are "simply *another* rather than *the* causal factor."[14] For skeptics, these "how much" questions make all the difference. If variation in ideas *alone* cannot be tied to specific variation in major outcomes, concludes a less sympathetic reviewer, ideas can still be downplayed as "a valuable supplement to [objective-] interest-based, rational actor models."[15]

One Way to Tie Ideas to Outcomes

We need not conclude that ideas and clear causal arguments are incompatible, as a third reviewer implies.[16] Settings where ideas *cross-cut* prevailing lines of organization can clearly display their causal impact. French decision making in early European integration is one very significant example. While such cases cannot prove that ideas matter everywhere, they should convince skeptics that ideas can be major causes in politics. This section first considers how to isolate ideas' effects on individuals' views. Then it suggests how individual-level ideas can affect major outcomes.

Cross-Cutting Ideas and Individual Variation

Cross-cutting ideas have particularly clear effects because they offer the sharpest possible contrast to the expectations of objective-interest theories. All such theories define actors' interests in terms of objective conditions at some level of organization. For realists, individuals in a state share interests defined by the distribution of power; political party theorists trace members' interests to electoral or coalitional constraints; bureaucratic theorists highlight units' interests within organizational rivalries; and liberals or Marxists derive group interests from economic constraints (in different ways). Ideational approaches posit, in contrast, that actors interpret their interests through ideas that can vary independently from their objective positions. Their greatest divergence with objective-interest theories thus occurs where ideas vary as independently as possible from organizational lines in an arena, strongly

12. On counterfactuals and ideas, Blyth 1997, 235; in general, Fearon 1991; and Tetlock and Belkin 1996.

13. Berman 1998, 11.

14. Blyth 1997, 236. A reviewer of constructivism echoes that "norms are invoked as one of several causal variables with little or no insight given on how much of the outcome they explain." Checkel 1998, 339.

15. Jacobsen 1995, 285.

16. Yee 1996, 102.

cross-cutting groups of people in similar material positions. This does not mean that ideas have stronger causal effects where they cross-cut groups; ideas shared within powerful groups may be equally (or more) significant for important outcomes. It simply means that ideas' autonomous effects should be particularly *demonstrable* in these cases.

To see this assertion in greater detail, consider how it responds to the "how much" problem. We could isolate ideas precisely if we found an extremely close comparison, contrasting actors in near-identical places in the objective world to highlight the purely subjective variations in their behavior. Such comparisons are available at the *individual* level, within groups. Close organizational peers share positions in the objective world; comparing their views of their groups' interests can separate variation in their ideas from variation in objective pressures. Take two French diplomats, with similar social backgrounds and party sympathies, in the same office of the foreign ministry in 1950. One insists on French interests in a new "supranational" Franco-German federation; the other sees French interests in policies based on an informal partnership with Britain. These similarly placed individuals face *all* the same objective pressures but seem to interpret them differently. If other similarly placed individuals across France also disagree (displaying a pattern that cross-cuts parties, bureaucracies, economic groups), and if these debates persist through important decisions (showing they were not just an initial vetting of options), we can conclude that objective pressures at these levels leave French interests indeterminate across these alternatives. If, in addition, we have the kind of "interpretive" evidence typically offered by ideational accounts—actors consistently *say* and *write* that they believe certain things, and that their peers think differently—we have strong evidence that *ideas alone* are causing individual variation across that range.[17]

This conclusion does not rule out that historical or psychological factors other than simple "ideas" (like past socialization, psychological dispositions, or individual experiences) may have led to this pattern of debate. But as long as we cannot trace current patterns of mobilization to current objective conditions (and *can* trace related patterns of rhetoric), we have evidence that subjective factors are *currently* influencing action. Psychological or historical factors may help explain why actors came to hold certain ideas, but neither factor invalidates the claim that subjective ideas are now causing variation in behavior. In other words, explaining the distribution of ideas as dependent variables is legitimately separate from showing their presence and effects as independent variables.[18]

Far from exaggerating the range of purely subjective variation in individuals' views, this approach should minimize interpretive biases. Unlike in most ideational arguments, *it is the actors, not the observer, who define the range across which ideas matter* (see Figure 1). One actor wants to pursue strategy X; one of her close

17. Provided there are no clear individual-level incentives to disagree, as in career competition. I see no pattern of such incentives in my case. *Disincentives* to internal disagreement seem more common in most organizations.

18. See Kingdon 1984, 77; Kier 1997, 148; and Kowert and Legro 1996, 469.

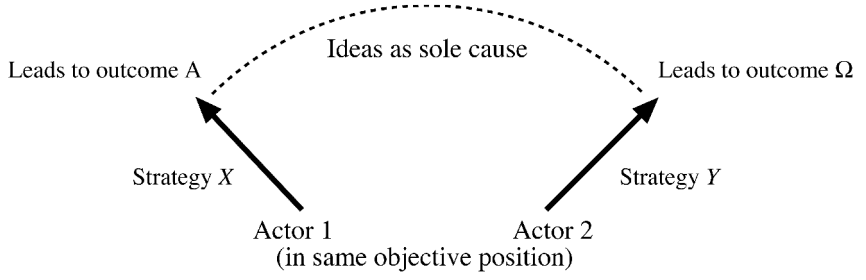

FIGURE 1. *How much cross-cutting ideas matter*

peers, in the same objective position, wants to pursue strategy Y. Given solid evidence of differing preferences, and careful verification that they face identical objective constraints, this control for objective causes is as free from bias as qualitative observations can be.

Furthermore, this method may tend to *underestimate* the overall impact of ideas on individuals' views. Open disagreements may well be narrow debates within a consensus built on other ideas.[19] Nor may individuals voice the full range and strength of their views in internal debates, especially in hierarchical organizations like governments. Even when they do, obtaining information about internal dissent is often difficult. This approach highlights the effects of ideas only where ideas separate most demonstrably from objective factors, without making claims about their less visible impact.

Leaders' Ideas and Entrepreneurial Coalition-Building

Variation in individuals' ideas does not mean ideas matter in government strategies. Whatever individuals debate, objective pressures in coalition building may ultimately impose one view on policy choices. Under certain conditions, however, they may not. A massive game-theoretic literature notes that when democratic groups face three or more alternatives on a given issue, or a decision involving two or more issues, multiple outcomes may be able to attract majority support. In the extreme situation of a pure "Condorcet paradox," where even thirds of the group rank three alternatives in incompatible ways, no option spontaneously garners a majority. The result is that actors with agenda-setting authority can pass *any* option.[20] Even with less perfectly divided preferences, bargaining over multiple issues can introduce similar flexibility.[21] Leaders may use payoffs across issues to make winners out of

19. For example, French elites in the 1950s may share ideas about the state, democracy, capitalism, and so on that limit their debate over European policies.

20. Given options *x, y, z,* even thirds have rank-ordered preferences *xyz, yzx,* and *zxy*. See Arrow 1951; and Riker 1980. For a recent overview, see Nurmi 1999.

21. See Kramer 1973; and McKelvey and Wendell 1976.

positions that would lose in a single-issue vote. Especially in some combination of these conditions—three alternatives on one issue, and in multidimensional issue space—individual leaders may enjoy broad autonomy to build the majorities they prefer.

There is nothing inherently ideational about such leadership. Game-theoretic analyses tend to picture leaders using this leverage for personal material gain. When connected to ideational variation at the individual level, however, these dynamics can tie variation in ideas alone to variation in strategies and outcomes. The cross-cutting debates described earlier not only highlight ideational variation at the individual level; they also create broad patterns of divided preferences and rich possibilities for issue linkages. Leaders may then enjoy opportunities to choose among "multiple equilibria" on the basis of their personal ideas. Showing that this happened requires three kinds of evidence: that individual ideas varied over distinct alternatives (as described earlier), that divided preferences or issue linkages made those alternatives viable options, and that leaders indeed asserted their personal views and used agenda-setting power and issue linkages to assemble coalitional support behind them. Given such evidence, we can say that leaders' ideas, as autonomous factors, *caused* one strategy across the range of active alternatives. By contrasting the outcome to the counterfactual consequences of alternatives, we can specify a range of variation in outcomes caused by variation in ideas alone.

Less abstractly, how would this process look? As a new cross-cutting debate emerged, top leaders' views on that issue would disconnect from their previous coalitional support. Support for various strategies would be scattered across parties and other organizations. As long as a leader retained office and agenda-setting power due to support on other (non-cross-cutting) issues, the leader could build majorities for any of several choices on the cross-cutting issue. Note that this does not require that the cross-cutting issue be obviously *less important* than the non–cross-cutting issue. In democracies, voters may be less informed or concerned (or both) about certain debates than policymakers. This seems particularly common in the domain of foreign policy.[22] Electoral coalition building and office holding can continue to operate along the "normal" issues resonant with voters, even though policymakers perceive a new debate as crucial. This disconnect can allow a leader to retain control of the agenda during a major cross-cutting debate. We would see the leader's choices contested by elites who shared the leader's main coalitional, party, bureaucratic, and economic positions, *differing only in holding other ideas* in the cross-cutting debate. But the leader's agenda-setting power, or use of pressure or payoffs on other issues, would decide the outcome.

The next section argues that French policymaking in early European institution building illustrates this process. Across three strategies that were viable domestically and internationally, leaders built majority support for their own ideas.

22. See Rosenau 1961; Margolis and Mauser 1989; and the annual *Index to International Public Opinion*.

French Ideas and the Origins of the EU

Western Europe first developed uniquely strong international institutions in the 1950s. At the end of that decade, six governments committed to deep and broad cooperation in the EEC, including the delegation of considerable powers to "supranational" agents in the EEC's executive commission and court.

Experts agree that French choices were particularly important to the EEC's birth. All three of the major supranational projects of the 1950s—the ECSC, the failed European Defense Community (EDC), and the EEC—took shape because governments that preferred *other* European projects conceded to the French. When the French proposed the ECSC in 1950, the British refused to join any supranational plan. German and Benelux leaders, though skeptical of supranationality and reluctant to proceed without Britain, eventually followed the French lead.[23] When the French proposed the EDC as a similar framework for West German rearmament, all the other Europeans argued for a simpler plan within NATO. France's ECSC partners (Germany, Benelux, Italy) eventually agreed to negotiate EDC but quickly dropped it when the French turned against it in 1954.[24] While the EEC itself was not a French proposal—originating with ultra-Europeanist Dutch foreign minister Jan Willem Beyen—it was partly crafted to appeal to the French. Beyen notwithstanding, most Benelux and German leaders preferred trade liberalization in the broader and institutionally weak format championed by the British. They hesitantly supported Beyen's EEC plan because they feared the French would only accept liberalization within a "little Europe" with elaborate economic safeguards.[25] In sum, no one contests that without French insistence on institutionally strong, geographically limited institution building in the 1950s no such framework would have resulted.

Two alternatives to my account, however, see this French position as strongly determined by nonideational factors. For structuralists, objective economic and geopolitical constraints selected French strategies. Historians like Milward and William Hitchcock argue that France needed a new basis for controlling and cooperating with a resurgent West Germany in 1950; the ECSC's supranational oversight of basic industries was the straightforward solution.[26] Similar concerns about overseeing German military power pushed the French to the EDC. The incentives of this larger delegation of sovereignty were less clear, however, and the EDC died. But soon economic interests, transmitted through interest groups, refocused the French on an institutionally strong "little Europe." Weak French business feared British plans for broad trade liberalization, preferring a smaller and more managed trade pact. Growing farm surpluses led French farmers to insist that

23. See Kersten 1988; Milward 1988; Ludlow 1997, 17; and Bührer 1995.
24. See Fursdon 1980; and de la Gorce 1979, 91–159.
25. See Asbeek-Brusse 1997, 157; Milward 1992, 192; Griffiths 1990; and Bouwman 1995, 141.
26. Milward emphasizes French economic needs for the ECSC; Hitchcock emphasizes geopolitics. See Milward 1984; and Hitchcock 1998.

any deal include a sheltered agricultural regime. This further alienated the British (with their Commonwealth agricultural preferences). The EEC was the result: The Germans and Benelux agreed to liberalization largely on French terms. Thus, claims Moravcsik, we can trace French choices to clear majorities based on objective societal interests.[27]

For institutionalist pioneer Ernst Haas, structural pressures led the French to the ECSC, but institutional feedback led on to the EEC. He suggested that French interest groups and parties did not spontaneously perceive interests in extending the ECSC to the EDC or EEC. Only the ECSC's supranational agents led domestic groups to perceive such interests. Chief among them was Jean Monnet, the French bureaucrat who presided over the ECSC's "High Authority" from 1952 to 1955, and thereafter led a lobby called the "Action Committee for the United States of Europe." Without the initial creation of supranational agents in the ECSC, implied this "neofunctionalist" account, leaders in France (and elsewhere) were unlikely to pursue the EEC. French choices can be traced to a majority of sectoral associations and their party representatives, but only supranational (not national) leadership built that majority.[28]

I accept elements of both approaches but strongly revise their causal claims. The institutionalist story requires more blatant revision. Between the initial, narrow ECSC deal and the much more extensive EEC, literally *no* major French actors shifted their policy preferences in response to supranational lobbying. Nonetheless, once the broader EEC bargain was struck, we need an institutionalist logic of path-dependence to understand why it was consolidated into Europe's fundamental architecture in the 1960s. My qualification of the structuralist case is less direct but no less profound. Any explanation of European institution building must begin with the economic and geopolitical context. Yet structuralists overlook the immense political battle that took place over different interpretations of that context. As of 1950, otherwise-similar French elites debated three ideational "models" of their interests in Europe. The divide between "community," "confederal," and "traditional" views did not quite display the impasse of a Condorcet paradox, but the availability of many issue linkages made all three options domestically viable.[29] Corresponding deals were viable in international bargaining. "Pro-community" leaders who obtained power on other, disconnected issues used their agenda-setting authority to assemble majorities behind their personal ideas and to strike particular

27. Moravcsik 1998, 86.

28. For similar arguments about the EEC's later development, see Fligstein and Mara-Drita 1996; and Sandholtz and Stone Sweet 1998.

29. Labeling "community" views *S,* for "supranational," "confederal" views *C,* and "traditional" views *T,* French elites divided into preference orderings *SCT, CTS,* and *TCS.* In single-issue voting, this would produce a confederal majority. Only issue linkages made "community" policies a viable outcome.

international bargains. The traditional and confederal alternatives display the historical range across which these ideas demonstrably mattered.[30]

Three points merit immediate clarification. First, I do not claim that ideas "mattered more" than other causes. Causality cannot be allocated meaningfully in percentage terms. Instead, my answer to the "how much" question specifies the range of historical outcomes dictated by each cause. Objective geopolitical and economic conditions ruled out autarchy or war in postwar Europe, causing some sort of international cooperation.[31] They also made certain issues salient over time: coal and steel during early reconstruction, defense with the outbreak of the Korean War, and trade and atomic energy in the later 1950s. But objective trends never set the shape or extent of cooperation. Ideas, as a distinct cause, selected among three European formats with different institutional and material features. Second, French choices were necessary but not sufficient causes of European outcomes. If all accounts see French choices as pivotal, Benelux leadership (from Beyen and Belgian foreign minister Paul-Henri Spaak) and German assent (from Chancellor Konrad Adenauer) were also crucial to the EEC. Third, my evidence is largely qualitative. Where possible I offer numbers to substantiate cross-cutting patterns, but my interview, archival, and secondary sources often sustain only estimates. Few precise figures are available. In France, leaders deliberately avoided divisive parliamentary votes that contrasted European alternatives. Most votes were called *after* policy choices, when leaders engaged coalitional pressures and side-payments to assemble support. Similarly, public opinion polls never contrasted policy options. They show mainly that many voters liked "Europe," but knew little of European alternatives. Nonetheless, I submit, the evidence strongly supports my analysis.

The section first presents how a new French debate emerged in the late 1940s. Then it narrates the French choices leading to the ECSC, EDC, and EEC. Finally, it considers why, if only "community" ideas led France to the EEC, these institutions survived when Charles de Gaulle brought "traditional" ideas to power in 1958.

Three Models of French Interests

Immediately after World War II, French elites largely agreed on their basic European strategy. Their primary goal was to keep Germany weak while rebuilding French strength. Their means were direct controls on occupied Germany, bolstered by alliances and economic cooperation with other European powers.[32] The advent of the Cold War in 1946–47, however, partly blocked this strategy. The United

30. The only academic precedents to this argument are vague histories without specific causal claims: Lipgens 1977; and Brugmans 1965. McNamara's argument about ideas in the EU concerns ideas about economic policies, not Europe itself. McNamara 1998.

31. Here I allow competitors to pack many other institutionalized ideas (about the state, sovereignty, capitalism, democracy) into "objective conditions."

32. French disagreements before 1947 mainly concerned who the major European ally was against Germany: the Soviets, the British, or the Benelux and Italy. See Knipping 1990; Gerbet 1991; Young 1990; and Willis 1962.

States demanded the rapid revival of a West German state and economy as bulwark and ally against the Soviets. Pressure increased with the Marshall Plan in June 1947, offering the French badly needed economic aid on the condition that they coordinate their recovery with Germany and other countries.[33]

These huge changes opened what Gerald Berk calls an "epochal moment" in French policymaking.[34] Rapid change can destabilize how actors understand their interests. Innovative actors may assemble new ideational "frames" out of the "tool kit" of ideas present in their culture.[35] Such innovations do not necessarily respond functionally to the new situation; adaptation of older framing ideas, or other new ideas, may suggest competing analyses. The result is a "battle of ideas" in which groups debate several viable strategies. This is what developed in France in the late 1940s. Major change in objective conditions brought new ideas to the fore but did not dictate their success. The rise of the super powers, the destruction of national economies, and domestic delegitimation of the nationalist far Right turned "Europeanist" projects—utopian musings before the war—into active options.[36] But older ideas survived these objective shifts as well. The battle over postwar Europe remained to be fought.

Some French elites held to traditional strategies. They retained a familiar *realist* analysis, with legitimacy and security located in the independent nation-state. If the attempt to block Germany's recovery had been frustrated, traditional options remained. 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 would uphold the balance of European power, protecting French interests better than uncontrollable international organizations. This was also more worthy of "great power" France, whose independence was sacrosanct, and whose peers were the United States, the United Kingdom, and the USSR—not the other Europeans.

Another group favored "confederal" strategies. They based their analysis on *liberal* thinking: The nation-state remained the source of legitimacy and security, but like-minded states should cooperate closely, given their interdependence. France's natural partner was its liberal counterpart, Britain; together they would preside over pragmatic cooperation in broad European forums, while supervising the illiberal, atavistic Germans. Only combined Franco-British leadership would prevent the Germans from dominating Europe—ruling out narrower Franco-German projects. Broad but weak organizations could provide a platform for a European "third way" between the super powers, and for economic cooperation, without requiring direct losses of French sovereignty.

33. See Milward 1984; and Lundestad 1998.

34. Berk 1994. Similar notions are Ann Swidler's "unsettled periods," Neil Fligstein's "institution-building moments," Robert Unger's "context making" eras, and Robert Dahl's "historic commitments." See Swidler 1986; Fligstein and Mara-Drita 1996; Unger 1987; Ackerman 1991; and Dahl 1986.

35. See Schön and Rein 1994; Snow et al. 1986; and Kingdon 1984.

36. On interwar Europeanism, see Brugmans 1965.

A third group called for a more radical departure from standard diplomacy, in "community" strategies. In their *functionalist* analysis—where legitimate policies were those that best provided welfare—two world wars and the rise of the super powers showed that Europe needed more than the nation-state. Only a new sort of "supranational" institution, partly independent of governments, could lead fractious Europe to peace and prosperity. In particular, weak intergovernmental accords could not hold the Germans down. In order to make such control acceptable to the Germans, however, France would have to submit to it as well. This might entail a break with the British, who abhorred supranationality. Thus a supranational solution meant forsaking the security of Franco-British balancing against Germany. But the result could be real "integration," leading to a "United States of Europe" as powerful and rich as the United States of America.

If these 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 distinctions concerned the "master frame" linking France itself and its European environment. In the slightly different vocabulary of John Searle, they suggested different "constitutive rules" about France as a player in a European game.[37] Each packaged a set of normative and causal claims that defined France's position vis-à-vis its neighbors.

Crucially, these different views of Europe had no direct connection to the Right–Left cleavage that dominated French politics. Each model's constitutive rules were general enough to link to various lower-level "regulative rules"; arguments soon arose that pictured a "community" Europe (and its competitors) as either advancing or impeding goals across Left and Right (except for the Communists).[38] For the Left, a supranational community could undo conservative legacies at the national level—or mean capitulation to the German *Konzerns*. For the Right, supranational integration could open France to broader markets—or emasculate national strength and identity. Since Right, Left, and Center had their realists, pragmatists, idealists, Anglophiles, and even Germanophiles, domestic allies gravitated to different European strategies. After several years of confusion, their positions crystallized around the ECSC proposal. Some elites sought to mobilize coalitions in favor of community projects; others in the same parties and bureaucracies called for confederal or traditional alternatives.

The Parting of the Ways: The ECSC

The community model first entered French debates seriously with Foreign Minister Robert Schuman's proposal for a "European Coal and Steel Community" in May

37. See Searle 1995; and Ruggie 1998.
38. On ideas at different levels of generality, see Campbell 1998; and Goldstein and Keohane 1993.

1950. France, West Germany, and other countries would pool their coal and steel industries under independent "supranational" institutions. Structural accounts present the Schuman Plan as responding directly to clear imperatives. Geopolitically, it initiated Franco-German reconciliation while giving France oversight of West Germany's nascent foreign policy, and it responded to U.S. pressure for European collaboration. Economically, it secured long-term access to German coal and supervision of German heavy industry. These benefits dictated that the ECSC was the "rational" French strategy.[39]

Yet structuralists overlook actual French reactions to ECSC. Rather than reflecting clear preferences in parties, interest groups, or bureaucracies, Schuman's self-described "leap in the dark" provoked a deeply divided response. Early support was weakly scattered across Schuman's diverse "Third Force" coalition, which allied the full range of pro-parliamentary parties—from the conservative Independents, to Schuman's Christian Democrats (Movement républicain populaire, MRP), to the centrist Radicals and the Union démocratique et socialiste de la résistance (UDSR), to the Socialists (Section française de l'internationale ouvrière, SFIO)—against the Communists and Gaullists.[40] Only about a third of the majority saluted the plan, including major figures in each party: a third of the 67 Independents, around Paul Reynaud and Antoine Pinay; perhaps 50 of the 166 MRP, behind François de Menthon and Pierre Pflimlin; a score of the 52 centrists, such as René Mayer and René Pleven; and another 20 of the 128 Socialists, around André Philip and Gérard Jacquet. Schuman also drew support from some prominent bureaucrats, like diplomat Hervé Alphand and Planning head Jean Monnet (author of the Schuman Plan).

But the other two-thirds of the majority, the opposition, most high officials, and all interest groups criticized Schuman's proposal. About one-third of the coalition voiced confederal concerns, supporting coal and steel cooperation but fearing supranationality and partnership with Germany. They favored plans within two weak organizations under Franco-British direction: the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) or the Council of Europe.[41] They counted close to half of Schuman's own MRP, including Prime Minister Georges Bidault, party head Maurice Schuman, and Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Robert Buron; at least a third of the Independents, most notably Finance Minister Maurice Petsche; a similar portion of centrists like Pierre Mendès France (Radical) and Édouard

39. See Milward 1984, 380; and Hitchcock 1998, 10.

40. For different reasons, the Gaullists and Communists wanted to alter the Fourth Republic's parliamentary institutions.

41. The OEEC, created in 1948 to allocate Marshall Plan aid, had sixteen members. Organizationally, it was limited to a secretariat without decision-making powers. An executive committee dominated by France and Britain set its agenda. The Council of Europe, created in 1949 to discuss integrative projects and to readmit Germany into Europe, had ten original members and quickly expanded. It had a standard council of government ministers and a consultative assembly. See Griffiths 1997; and Bitsch 1986.

Bonnefous (UDSR); and perhaps seventy Socialists (SFIO).[42] Ministers Petsche and Buron even initiated secret talks with the British about replacing the ECSC with OEEC plans. Similar critiques arose across the bureaucracy. Hervé Alphand's deputy in the Foreign Ministry's *Service de cooperation économique*, Olivier Wormser, joined Finance officials to try to shunt coal and steel discussions into the OEEC.[43] These officials 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."[44] Ambassador René Massigli later wrote, "From the moment when Jean Monnet rallied Robert Schuman to the idea of European federalism, to which the supranational system he 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."[45]

Another third of the majority, some bureaucrats, the opposition, and interest groups attacked Schuman with traditional arguments. They wanted to defend the Occupation coal and steel arrangement, the International Authority for the Ruhr (IAR).[46] Renegotiation was to be avoided, since it would necessarily upgrade German status. A dozen MRP members like Léo Hamon and André Denis, like their close associates among the Gaullists, denounced any retreat from occupation controls. They were joined by the remaining twenty Independents behind Louis Marin and Pierre André, a similar number of Radicals behind the influential Édouard Daladier, and about twenty Socialists like Defense Minister Jules Moch and French president Vincent Auriol. Officials under Alphand in the Foreign Ministry were similarly preparing a new push to expand the IAR's powers in May 1950.[47] The least divided section of the government was the officials responsible for coal and steel in the Ministry of Industry, who closely echoed the traditional views of coal and steel firms and the broader employers' association (the Conseil National du Patronat Français, CNPF). The interest groups flatly opposed being subjected to supranational authorities, feared open competition with the Germans, and wanted to retain the IAR.[48]

Schuman's critics had good reason to think that confederal or traditional strategies were viable domestically and internationally. Domestically, in single-issue terms, traditionalists and confederalists would support each other's plans over

42. See Callot 1986; and Soutou 1991. On the centrists, see Poidevin 1984; and O'Neill 1981. On the Socialists, see Criddle 1969; and Delwit 1995, 61–64.

43. Bossuat 1992, 752.

44. Duchêne 1994, 206.

45. Massigli 1978, 212–21.

46. The IAR was created in 1949, on French insistence that the occupiers retain lasting authority over Germany's industrial heartland, the Ruhr. It was weaker than most French leaders hoped, but it could limit production and allocate coal between export and domestic consumption. A governing board with U.S., U.K., French, Benelux, and German representatives operated by majority. See Bossuat 1992, 666; and Milward 1984, 389.

47. Milward 1984, 388.

48. See Ehrman 1954, 455; and Poidevin 1988, 107.

supranationality. The confederal middle ground was the path of least resistance for new initiatives; without new initiatives, policy would default to its traditional track. Internationally, the British were fixated on the OEEC/Council of Europe.[49] Benelux leaders and industrialists too were leery of supranationality.[50] The Germans, seemingly the beneficiaries of Schuman's overture, had many skeptics as well. Industrialists and Economics Minister Ludwig Erhard echoed the hostility of business groups elsewhere. Even the United States signaled opposition to the ECSC-like plans circulating in "Europeanist" circles before May 1950, fearing they would recreate interwar cartels.[51] Only when Monnet and Schuman sold U.S. leaders on its political appeal did they come to favor the ECSC.[52] Overall, French confederal or traditional strategies faced no more international obstacles—and probably fewer.

Schuman's institutional authority as foreign minister allowed him to select among these "multiple equilibria." The divisions in his coalition and party showed that he did not owe that position to his pro-community views; as another MRP leader later remarked, "One cannot say it was the MRP which pushed [Schuman] to take his European initiative."[53] But his position let him set the French agenda. In late May 1950, Schuman insisted on immediate and rapid negotiations of the ECSC. He collaborated purposefully with Monnet to limit input from other actors in Paris. The Germans, Benelux, and Italians agreed, though they consistently pleaded for British involvement and fought to limit the ECSC's supranational provisions.[54] After difficult negotiations—which almost failed due to German intransigence—the treaty was signed in March 1951.

Then, in late 1951, Schuman used issue linkages and coalitional pressures to assemble a majority for ratification. The ECSC had not become more popular during its negotiation. Public opinion remained ill-informed and neutral.[55] Among politicians, not even his MRP displayed increased enthusiasm. Haas notes, "Clearly, there was no 'majority' for integration among the French parties in 1951–1952."[56] Yet with leverage unrelated to the ECSC—leverage that could have built support for

49. See Bullen 1988; and Young 1995.

50. See Kersten 1988; and Milward 1988.

51. The State Department briefing for the May 1950 foreign ministers' meeting asked whether a new coal and steel body could be "less open to objection" than the OEEC and answered, "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." Milward 1984, 388.

52. See Acheson 1969, 382–83; and Wall 1989, 278.

53. Callot 1986, 144.

54. See Gillingham 1991; and Schwabe 1988.

55. An October 1950 poll found that only 9 percent of French voters could identity basic features of the Schuman Plan; of these, 25 percent supported it. In October 1952, 28 percent still had not heard of it. Though it now scored 46 percent approval, contemporary accounts emphasized that the ECSC "hardly affected the French people" and that the public was "all but indifferent to [the ECSC]," with dominant attitudes of "armed neutrality." See Ehrmann 1954, 475; IRIB 1953, 316; Goriély 1953; and Willis 1968, 98.

56. Haas 1958, 123.

whatever strategy he chose—Schuman rallied a majority. Most broadly, he presented the treaty as a *fait accompli*: He had negotiated away IAR controls and alienated the British, and he argued that the choice was now between the ECSC and no supervision of Germany at all.[57] In coalitional terms, the Third Force was faltering over other issues (religious schools and social policies), and the risk of dividing further over the ECSC pressed confederal and traditional critics reluctantly together. Most blatantly, Schuman made side-payments on colonial policies to secure centrist and Independent votes. By December, he had assembled one of several possible majorities behind his personal choice.

Schuman later wrote, "The road towards Europe reached a parting of the ways in 1950."[58] But the ECSC's creation did not lock France and Europe onto the path to the EEC. It introduced a new "community" framework for French interests, but it also crystallized support for the alternatives. Now the battle of ideas was truly engaged.

The Battle Widens: The EDC

From 1951 to 1954, the ECSC debates echoed across several issue-areas. Confederalists and traditionalists tried to reorient French policies to their strategies. Community champions tried to imitate the ECSC in proposals for a "European Agricultural Community," a "European Health Community," a "European Transports Community," and—most important by far—a "European Defense Community."[59] For Raymond Aron, France's pursuit and then rejection of the EDC animated "the greatest ideological and political debate France has known since the Dreyfus affair."[60]

Yet recent studies of the EDC downplay ideas, tracing French choices directly to structural pressures in geopolitics or economic interests. All accounts (including this one) begin with the outbreak of the Korean War in summer 1950, which brought intense U.S. pressure to re-arm West Germany. In the geopolitical view, this pressure led the French straight to the EDC, since a supranational "European Army" offered the tightest controls on Germany. After the treaty's signing in 1952, however, geopolitical shifts undermined French support. Fears of German dominance inside the EDC grew when the British refused to join and as French forces were called to Indochina. Stalin's death in 1953 lessened Cold War pressures. By 1954, the French had changed their minds, and the Assembly rejected the treaty.[61]

57. 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 by the author, Paris, May 1997.

58. Schuman 1963, 132.

59. *All* these proposals were serious enough to provoke formal international talks. On agriculture, see Noël 1988; and Délorme and Tavernier 1969. On the Health Community, see Parsons 1999.

60. Lerner and Aron 1957, 8.

61. Hitchcock 1998, 133–202.

The domestic–economic account argues that Third Force leaders conceived the EDC to preserve social spending despite U.S. pressure for rising defense outlays, by sharing the latter among Europeans. French support for the EDC declined after early 1952, when the Third Force was replaced by a conservative coalition with no such social agenda.[62]

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 the EDC.[63] Nor did any changes in constraints lead individuals to change their views of French interests from 1951 to 1954. Straightforward geopolitical pressures did put German rearmament on the table, but French elites consistently responded to these pressures with the three views they had formulated on the 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 supranational European Army. Confederalists in the same parties and ministries preferred to incorporate German forces into looser organizations under Franco-British direction. Their traditionalist peers either rejected German rearmament outright or favored a standard alliance framework.

Again, none of these actors misread their environment. All three strategies were viable internationally. The community option led to the EDC treaty in May 1952. It was ratified by the other ECSC members and supported by the United States, leaving it to France to ratify or reject. A traditional solution—re-arming Germany without new institutions—was also clearly available, since the French alone opposed this path against U.S. and European pressure in 1950–51. The confederal option was equally viable as a compromise—since this is what quickly emerged after the French rejected the EDC (see below). All else equal, the French were selecting between outcomes as divergent as a European Army and simple German entry into NATO.

The French pursued the EDC through 1952 not because the Third Force coalition coherently supported it, but because pro-community leaders controlled the foreign-policy agenda. Encouraged by Monnet and Alphand, Schuman shifted French policies from stonewalling to pushing for an ECSC-style framework in summer 1951. No one else in Paris was consulted on this change.[64] Monnet played a key role in convincing U.S. leaders to focus on the EDC rather than the NATO track.[65] At home, the shift to a community strategy soon led Third Force traditionalists and confederalists to abandon Schuman. As they feared, in late 1951 the British ruled out joining any supranational solution. Schuman and Alphand also steadily conceded more generous terms to Germany within the EDC. By early 1952, traditionalists were denouncing the EDC, and large confederalist groups among the Inde-

62. Pitman 1998.

63. The best accounts remain Lerner and Aron 1957; Elgey 1993; and de la Gorce 1979. For a review, see Vial 1992.

64. Elgey 1993, 2:295–96.

65. Winand 1993, 28. Note that Monnet was still a national official in 1951.

pendents, MRP, Radicals, UDSR, and Socialists moved into quiet opposition. An open rebellion emerged inside the Foreign Ministry.[66] Even before Schuman signed the treaty in May, he knew that only a scattered minority supported it.

Still, many observers believe a ratification vote could have passed in early 1952.[67] Had the negotiations proceeded slightly faster, Schuman could have used the same coalitional pressures and issue linkages that secured the ECSC in late 1951. As it was, an unrelated realignment in March 1952 erased these pressures and eventually removed Schuman from office. The Third Force collapsed over religious schools and social policy (not over Europe, which had never united them to begin with) and was replaced by a Right–Center coalition and Left opposition. The key consequences were that in opposition, more than fifty confederalist or traditionalist Socialists were no longer pressed to support the government; within the majority, the addition of anti-EDC Gaullists encouraged others to voice their own criticisms. Pro-community sections of each party were left isolated. At Gaullist insistence, in early 1953 Schuman was replaced as foreign minister by his MRP ally—though EDC opponent—Georges Bidault. After attempting to renegotiate the EDC, Radical premier Pierre Mendès France called a vote in August 1954 (though he himself abstained). The Socialists split fifty for, fifty-three against; the Radicals and UDSR voted forty-one for, forty-four against; and the Independents divided sixty-six for, twenty-eight against. The hierarchical MRP maintained cohesion for the EDC only by expelling several members and despite known hostility from much of the party.[68] Gaullist and Communist opposition decided the outcome.

The EDC did not emerge from majority support and die when policymakers changed their positions. The 1952 realignment reflected no broad shift on European issues. The public was ill-informed about the EDC and its alternatives.[69] Neither before nor after 1952 did any substantive agreement on European policies help unite the governing coalition; the Independents and Radicals who led governments from 1952 to 1955 were the groups *most* divided over Europe. Instead, the EDC drew its support consistently from minority groups in each of the governing parties. It rose and fell as they obtained and lost agenda control on the *other* issues that dominated coalition building.

The extent to which the EDC vote cross-cut French politics was remarkable. Daniel Lerner has shown that it lacked a regional pattern.[70] Erling Bjøl has

66. Alphand 1977, 228.

67. Fauvet 1957, 163.

68. See Irving 1973, 170; Elgey 1993, 2:329–79; Mayeur and Milza 1993; Lerner and Aron 1957, 9; and Fauvet 1957, 137.

69. In May 1953, French polls found 21 percent had not heard of the EDC; 60 percent did not know if it had been ratified; 40 percent did not know if Germany participated; and 51 percent did not know if Britain participated. In July 1954, 36 percent approved of the EDC, 31 percent were opposed, and 33 percent had no opinion; in August it was 32 percent, 33 percent, and 35 percent. See Stoetzel 1957; and Rioux 1984.

70. Lerner 1957, 202.

demonstrated the same within the parties and their currents.[71] Sectorally, while the French aeronautical and electronic industries would receive guaranteed contracts from a European Army, many of their political representatives (like Gaullist deputy and aircraft magnate Marcel Dassault) opposed the EDC for traditional reasons.[72] Sectors like textiles and steel stood to lose from the EDC, and their business associations campaigned aggressively for rejection. But many of their normal political mouthpieces (Independents like Pinay or André Mutter) were EDC supporters.[73] As Lerner summarized, "the traditional universe of internal French politics, and the new universe of political sentiment evoked by EDC, simply do not coincide."[74]

Massive interpretive evidence corroborates the pattern of cross-cutting mobilization: These actors uniformly described their debates as ideological. 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."[75] Raymond Aron noted, "The difficulty seems to me to have been that for the theoreticians of Europe, the whole meaning of EDC was in its supranationality. They were more attached to this principle than to reality. On the other hand, the EDC opponents were more against the principle than against the reality. The former dreamed about a European State of the Six growing out of EDC; the latter imagined this with horror."[76] A pro-EDC MRP member 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."[77]

The EDC's defeat highlighted that pro-community elites were scattered across parties. Their strategy was not a domestic "equilibrium" without support across other issues. It could be adopted only if they obtained power on other cleavages. For the moment, they had little to show for their efforts. The ECSC was a narrow sectoral organization that had stimulated as much hostility as support for supranationality. In August 1954, almost everyone thought the community adventure had ended.

Choosing the Community Model: The EEC

Just as the ECSC's victory sparked several community projects, the EDC's fall reenergized confederal and traditional plans. Premier Mendès France—a confederalist who declared in August 1954 that "The axiom of French policy must be to stick

71. Bjøl 1966, 169.

72. The treaty required that each country spend 15 percent of its EDC contribution outside its borders. Limits on German production of aircraft and major weapons meant their money would go to these French sectors. In compensation, German firms would get steel contracts and Italians would get textile contracts.

73. See Ehrmann 1957, 413; Balassa 1978, 69–79; Elgey 1993, 360; and Lerner and Aron 1957.

74. Lerner 1957, 207.

75. See Elgey 1993, 3:180; and Riondel 1994, 349.

76. Lerner and Aron 1957, 20.

77. Mallet 1958, 157.

to Great Britain"—moved quickly to frame German rearmament in a Franco-British-led intergovernmental organization, the "Western European Union" (WEU).[78] The EDC signatories and Britain drafted the much looser WEU deal in four weeks. French confederalists were ecstatic. One Socialist rejoiced, "The accords deliver us from the Europe of Six and the risks of German hegemony which it contained; today it is the Europe of Seven!"[79] In 1955, they hoped to expand the WEU to cooperation in arms production and foreign policy, refounding Europe on a "Franco-Anglo-German triangle."[80] Parallel plans emerged for OEEC cooperation in atomic energy, classic energy, and transports.

Traditionalists in every party, meanwhile, rejected the WEU or accepted it with reluctance, seeing it (like they saw the EDC) as an "Anglo-Saxon" plot relegating France to a nonglobal role in minor European organizations.[81] France needed to assert itself as a global power; technical European problems could be handled in standard bilateral deals. French business, bureaucrats in the technical ministries, and traditional politicians on the Right and the Left pushed to develop new bilateral accords in trade, atomic energy, armaments production, and transports in 1954–55. They focused especially on new ties with the rising German economy, showing that traditionalists too acknowledged environmental change. All French elites saw incentives to cooperate with Germany, but they still differed over *how* to do so.

Community advocates also rejoined the fray in early 1955. Like their peers, they saw incentives to cooperation in atomic and classic energy, armaments, and transports. But their solutions were to extend or imitate the ECSC. Foreign Minister Antoine Pinay (Independent), an EDC champion, considered several such options, though he feared that supranational initiatives were impossible after the EDC.[82] Then bureaucrat-turned-activist Monnet focused pro-community attention on plans for an atomic energy community ("Euratom"). French anti-supranationalism 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 expensive atomic investments. Since these reasons appealed less to other Europeans—who preferred atomic cooperation with the more advanced British or Americans—Monnet reluctantly agreed to package Euratom with a Benelux plan for a "European Economic Community" of trade liberalization within managed safeguards.[83]

78. The WEU extended the earlier "Brussels Pact" between France, Britain, and the Benelux to Germany and Italy. It had a ministerial council and consultative assembly, and it oversaw limits on German military production. Within its limits, Germany joined NATO. See Girault 1991; Bossuat 1994, 168; Soutou 1987 and 1996, 28; and Calandri 1995.

79. See Cophornic 1994, 271; and Lapie 1971, 262.

80. Bossuat 1994, 168.

81. De Gaulle 1970, 621. The EDC and WEU votes approached a true Condorcet paradox. After confederalists and traditionalists rejected the EDC, pro-community deputies and traditionalists combined to reject the first vote on the WEU. A shocked Mendés France called a second vote on a question of confidence (linking the WEU to his other policy goals) and achieved a majority.

82. Massigli 1978, 506.

83. Duchêne 1994, 262–79.

All three kinds of proposals were active when the ECSC foreign ministers met at Messina, Italy, in June 1955. Internationally, confederal and traditional options were strong possibilities. The WEU was pushed by the British and accepted by the Germans as the appropriate forum for political and armaments cooperation.[84] The British, the Germans, and most Benelux leaders strongly supported the OEEC forum for economic issues (though Benelux foreign ministers Beyen and Spaak were personally pro-supranationality). German economics minister Erhard and German business were particularly intent on liberalization in the OEEC.[85] In atomic energy, all of France's partners wanted to include the advanced British.[86] Traditional bilateral ties were also active alternatives. Bilateral export contracts remained the norm in industrial trade and were not preventing massive growth in intra-European trade (which would double from 1953 to 1957). 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.[87]

Inside France, confederal or traditional options were universally seen as *more* viable than supranational steps. The anti-EDC majority stood ready to quash community proposals. Even Euratom—constructed by Monnet as the supranational plan most likely to appeal to the French—drew little support from the best-informed French elites. With few exceptions (like the prominent Louis Armand), civil and military atomic experts strongly favored either OEEC or bilateral alternatives over Euratom. They saw collaboration with the backward German, Benelux, or Italian programs as far less appealing than collaboration with Britain or Switzerland. Euratom might also impede French military research. François Perrin, head of the Atomic Energy Commissariat, championed a British OEEC project. Pierre Guillaumat, director of the secret military program, favored bilateral deals and dismissed Euratom as "dangerous nonsense."[88]

The EEC's prospects in France were worse. If Beyen and Spaak judged correctly that practically all French elites thought liberalization acceptable only within managed safeguards, other aspects of their plan made it *less* appealing to French business than alternatives. Liberalization in bilateral deals or the OEEC allowed governments to impose safeguards as they saw fit; liberalization in EEC would be

84. The British were absent from Messina but strongly present in overall bargaining. German chancellor Adenauer's earlier support for the ECSC and the EDC did not reflect a doctrinaire enthusiasm for supranationality. He attached highest importance to progress in political cooperation, whatever the framework. Before the Bundestag, Adenauer called the WEU "the point of departure and the core of future European policy." See Imbert 1968, 53; and Adenauer 1967.

85. Germany's contribution at Messina proposed only liberalization among the Six with unspecified institutions. It reflected a stalemate in Bonn among partisans of ECSC-style sectoral projects, the Benelux Common Market plan, and free trade in OEEC/GATT. Küsters 1986.

86. See Lee 1995; and Griffiths 1990.

87. Soutou 1996, 42–49.

88. See Scheinman 1965, 148–57; Goldschmidt 1980, 147–53; Elgey 1993, 4:581; and Soutou 1996, 41.

automatic, with safeguards authorized by supranational administrators. Consequently, and contrary to common wisdom, French business and economic officials did *not* see the EEC as the safer route. A 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."[89] Businessmen added that unilateral German tariff cuts already gave them favorable terms of trade. In July 1956, business representatives in the French Economic Council voted *unanimously* to relocate the EEC talks to the OEEC. The prospect of automatic, supranationally administered liberalization in "little Europe" frightened them more than the wider (but weaker) OEEC did. In the latter, they hoped broad liberalization could be "indefinitely delayed" and channeled into sectoral, bilateral accords between business associations.[90]

Even French farmers—similarly miscast in common wisdom as the EEC's champions—opposed community-style accords in 1955. Though the largest French farmers were among the most competitive in Europe, and French surpluses were mounting, agricultural organizations unambiguously favored the continued pursuit of bilateral contracts. They saw the ECSC Six as too small a framework for French exports. Germany was The Six's 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."[91]

Under these conditions, France did not return to community policies because objective economic interests or supranational lobbying formed a majority to demand it. Instead, pro-community leaders unexpectedly gained opportunities to reassert their views. This occurred in two steps. First, conservative foreign minister Pinay stepped beyond his instructions at Messina—which ruled out even discussing the EEC—to accept studies of all the proposals.[92] He also proposed the most pro-community participant, Belgian foreign minister Spaak, to chair the studies and sent an ultra-Europeanist young deputy, Félix Gaillard (Radical), to represent France. These selections were not innocent. When talks in the "Spaak Committee" bogged down at the technical level, Gaillard and the other delegation heads dismissed their bureaucrats and allowed Spaak's aides to draft the entire final report themselves. The result was a coherent plan that, wrote one French diplomat, showed "considerable distance from all aspects of French positions."[93] It linked the EEC and Euratom but focused on the former. Institutionally, both were explicitly modeled on

89. Lynch 1997, 176.
90. See Szokolóczy-Syllaba 1965, 287; Mahant 1969, 178–200; and Balassa 1978, 79–95.
91. See Délorme and Tavernier 1969, 20; and Neville-Rolfe 1984, 116.
92. Interview, Pinay's cabinet director; and Lynch 1997, 172.
93. French Foreign Ministry (FFM) archives, DE-CE 613, 24 February 1956. Sécrétariat d'État aux Affaires économiques, Note: marché commun européen. Comment on early Report draft.

the ECSC. In the "Common Market," liberalization would proceed in automatic stages. All quotas and subsidies would be quickly eliminated. An unspecified "agriculture policy" was left to be considered in the future. Safeguards operated at the discretion of a supranational "Commission."[94]

With few exceptions, French bureaucrats' reaction to the Spaak Report was "glacial."[95] Diplomats wrote that the EEC's "fundamental risks" included "economic and social disruption which cannot be underestimated."[96] The Ministries of Finance, Industry and Commerce, Agriculture, Transports, Social Affairs, Public Works, and Overseas France echoed them. Participants at interministerial meetings rejected negotiations based on the Spaak Report, agreeing to discuss only an initial four-year phase of liberalization.[97] Some officials wanted to shift the talks to the OEEC, arguing (like business argued) that its weak commitments were safer despite its wider scope.[98] They also insisted that French interest groups would never support the 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.[99]

This statement accurately characterizes the positions of interest groups in early 1956. Agricultural lobbies remained unconvinced of the Common Market's promise.[100] French business was overwhelmingly hostile to the Spaak Report, though the employers' association CNPF—careful after its failure against the ECSC—critiqued the details rather than rejecting the report outright.[101]

While the Spaak Committee met, however, a coalitional shift allowed the second step to a French community strategy. In January 1956 a Left–Center coalition won a razor-thin legislative victory. The new majority was neither pro-community nor pro-liberalization; it won on a social-policy platform led by EDC-killer Mendès France. The popular "PMF" (as Mendès France was known) was expected to become premier. But President René Coty (a conservative Independent with little love for anyone in the coalition) instead nominated Mendès France's less popular

94. FFM, DE-CE 613, 21 April 1956. Rapport des chefs de délégation aux ministres des Affaires étrangères.

95. Marjolin 1986, 282–83. On EEC's scattered supporters, Bossuat 1995.

96. FFM, DE-CE 613, 21 April 1956. Service de coopération économique, Note: marché commun.

97. FFM, DE-CE 613, 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.

98. Note: Marché commun, Direction Générale des affaires économiques, 2 February 1956, in *Documents diplomatiques français* 1 (67):127–40.

99. FFM, DE-CE 613, 23 February 1956; no author, no Note.

100. Küsters 1986, 142.

101. See Ehrmann 1957, 414; Mahant 1969, 177; Balassa 1978; and Girault 1989.

electoral partner, doctrinaire Socialist head Guy Mollet. Coty chose Mollet partly because Mollet opposed Algerian independence and partly because the two men shared pro-community sympathies.[102] Though his Socialists remained deeply split over Europe and broadly hostile to liberalization, Mollet soon set as his main goal a treaty based on the Spaak Report. He assigned European policies to a strongly pro-community Radical, Maurice Faure, along with a team of like-minded officials.[103]

Rather than being lobbied *by* interest groups, Mollet's team began lobbying *them* to support the EEC. They began with farmers. In what one participant called "the most prolonged, and at least for a while, the most difficult discussions" of the process, they argued to farmers that the EEC promised stable export contracts, not menacing liberalization.[104] Though the agricultural organizations "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 EEC talks in summer 1956.[105] French positions were set in favor of a network of long-term intergovernmental contracts within the EEC, without any demand for a "common policy" (which farmers still feared meant liberalization).

The farmers' endorsement made a deal imaginable, but hostility to the EEC still dominated the majority and the 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."[106] Opposition to the EEC in Mollet's SFIO was led by Finance Minister Paul Ramadier.[107] All but the most die-hard "ultras of Europe" in the MRP were also skeptical. Party statements paid the EEC no attention until late 1956.[108] The Radicals and Independents still divided into three camps. Traditionalists like Édouard Daladier (Radical) or François Valentin (Independent) opposed anything beyond existing frameworks. Confederalists like Mendès France (Radical) or André Boutemy (Independent) argued for intergovernmental, nonautomatic accords that allowed France to control the pace of liberalization and cooperation. Community champions like Faure and Gaillard (Radical) or Paul Reynaud (Independent) marshaled every conceivable economic or geopolitical argument for the EEC and Euratom.[109] But even with their SFIO and MRP allies, the community camp still counted no more than a third of parliamentarians by late 1956.

102. See Lynch 1997, 173; Rioux 1983, 91; Fauvet 1959, 308; and Elgey 1993, II, 218. On Mollet, see Moch 1976, 477; Lefebvre 1992, 156; and Duchêne 1994, 267.
103. See Delwit 1995, 71; Criddle 1969, 82; Pinto-Lyra 1978, 82; and Küsters 1986, 142.
104. Marjolin 1986, 292.
105. Milward 1992, 293.
106. Serra 1987, 282.
107. See Prate 1995, 17; Delwit 1995, 71; Mahant 1969, 154; Criddle 1969, 82; and Pinto-Lyra 1978, 83.
108. See Bjøl 1966, 145; and Brunet 1993.
109. Bjøl 1966, 168–205.

Hoping to make a treaty ratifiable, Mollet's team attempted to block automatic liberalization in the early EEC talks.[110] This was refused categorically by the Germans, whose economics minister, Erhard, was pushing aggressively to replace the EEC with a new British proposal for an OEEC "free-trade area." Mollet faced a choice between failure and fundamental concessions. Most of his bureaucrats, his finance minister, and his party preferred the former. But in early November Mollet met Adenauer and dropped the key conditions on automatic liberalization.[111] Thereafter, despite continued internal complaints from Finance officials and Socialist ministers, the negotiations sped to their conclusion. The delegations agreed on phased liberalization and preferential long-term agricultural contracts (with undefined future discussions of a "common agricultural policy"). Meanwhile, to Mollet's chagrin, German and Benelux opposition diluted Euratom into a minor research pool.

The one remaining battle inside the French government concerned its overseas territories. Mollet pushed hard for German side-payments in investments and aid for the French Union. If with hindsight such payoffs look clearly beneficial to France, many traditionalists and confederalists actually saw EEC's intrusion into colonial relationships as another reason to oppose it. Bureaucrats and deputies among the Independents, MRP, Radicals, and Socialists wanted to "safeguard the French Union" against "Europeanization."[112] Not only did liberalization threaten the territories; even *aid* from other countries would undercut French control. Finance officials insisted well into the EEC negotiations that France's "natural ally" was Britain, and that France 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 Eurafrica until its own internal ties are sufficiently consolidated to avoid all risks of dislocations.[113]

But this "was an argument that Mollet rejected completely."[114] Unlike many more liberal actors, he thought the nationalist trading system anachronistic. If he was

110. Much of Mollet's team was no more liberal than their anti-EEC allies, and they genuinely supported these positions. But unlike their allies, they soon proved willing to compromise on them.

111. France was allowed to briefly maintain import taxes and export subsidies. Recent accounts agree that both leaders decided on this compromise before the geopolitical crises in Suez and Hungary. Küsters 1986, 285–304; Milward 1992, 215; Bossuat 1996, 324; and Moravcsik 1998, 119.

112. FFM, DE-CE 613, 21 April 1956. Service de coopération économique, Note: marché commun; Girault 1989, 371–72; Frank 1992; and Mahant 1969, 94, 105, 148.

113. FFM, DE-CE 613, 19 October 1956. DREE. Note pour Monsieur Clappier. Objet: l'intégration européenne de la zone franc.

114. Lynch 1997, 204.

successful—obtaining a five-year fund, of which 88 percent went to France—this was not a side-payment that many French elites had wanted to demand.

The treaties on the EEC and Euratom were signed in Rome in March 1957. Now Mollet turned to ratification. Three factors explain why, four months later, an EEC majority coalesced despite widespread skepticism. All resulted either from the direct leadership of Mollet's team or from their use of unrelated coalitional pressures and issue linkages that (as with the ECSC) could have created support for *whatever* European strategy they had pursued. First was their mobilization of farmers. Despite persistent divides in agricultural opinion on the EEC—with the strongest opposition coming from the heavily rural Poujadists and Gaullists, and with prominent members of farmers' organizations still hostile—many rural politicians were persuaded that the EEC offered attractive long-term contracts.[115] The farmers' support convinced skeptics among the Radicals, Independents, and even some dissident Gaullists. Second were coalitional pressures. The fifty Socialists who had swung the balance against the EDC felt unable to reject a treaty identified so closely with their party boss.[116] Third was issue linkage to Algeria. In the opposition, at least twenty EEC skeptics voted "yes" only to uphold Mollet's stance against Algerian independence.[117] Public inattention also aided ratification. France was gripped by the Algerian debacle. A growing economic crisis—caused by Algeria and Mollet's profligate domestic budgets—suggested that the EEC might go unimplemented. Amid such disinterest that only thirty deputies voted in person, the "Treaties of Rome" were ratified in July 1957 by 342 to 239.

Thus Mollet used his agenda-setting power and issue linkages to build coalitional support for his own European ideas. The availability of equally strong (or stronger) domestic support for confederal or traditional choices was obvious in 1955–57. Nor did Mollet owe his agenda-setting power to any electoral or coalitional upswell for a community Europe. He became premier against all contemporary predictions, campaigning for social policies that fit poorly with liberalization. By far the most popular French politicians during the EEC negotiations were its two strongest leaders before and after that process, Mendès France and Charles de Gaulle; they respectively incarnated confederal and traditional thinking. France chose the EEC over these alternatives because certain leaders asserted their views amid a deeply cross-cutting battle of ideas. These diverse politicians—the conservative industrialist Pinay, the Socialist boss Mollet, the rural centrist Maurice Faure—shared little besides a model of a desirable Europe. They achieved power on other issues, used their authority to direct European policies, and built French strategies around their ideas.

115. Inside 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." Mahant 1969, 221.

116. Delwit 1995, 72.

117. *Le Monde*, 24 January 1957.

Institutional Consequences and the EEC's Historical Window

This account faces one final question: If only pro-community leadership led France to the EEC, why did the EEC survive when the collapse of the Fourth Republic brought the very traditional Charles de Gaulle to power in May 1958? De Gaulle considered rejecting or revising the treaty.[118] Yet he soon accepted the EEC and even accelerated its implementation. Objective imperatives, we might conclude, would eventually have pressed *any* French leader to the community path. The foregoing may simply raise issues of timing.

In this section I argue that de Gaulle's rally to the EEC reflected the institutional consequences of the EEC itself. Had pro-community leaders not led France to the EEC in 1957, there is no reason to think de Gaulle would have adopted a similar path. This analysis draws on the fundamental insight of institutionalist accounts—that new institutions feed back to alter subsequent interaction—but it presents that logic as more inertial and less dynamic than originally claimed by "neofunctionalists." As noted earlier, I see little evidence that the ECSC's agents engendered *forward* momentum toward the EEC. I know of no ECSC skeptics, among politicians or interest groups, who came to favor community-style policies because of Monnet's proselytizing. The ECSC's main effect was inertial: It was not *undone* when the EDC fell. The same would prove true of the EEC, but it extended much more broadly across economic and foreign policy issues, and it had much more significant inertial consequences.[119] The EEC set a new context for de Gaulle's strategizing, preventing him from moving backward to his preferred (and previously available) traditional strategy.

According to the most detailed archival and contemporary accounts and my own interviews,[120] de Gaulle's main reasons for accepting the EEC in 1958 concerned how his foreign policy agenda fit with his predecessors' very different institutional legacy. De Gaulle was focused on leading Europe to a "third way" between the super powers. To do this, he thought he needed two things: broad support from Germany and a way to exclude the "Anglo-Saxon" British from Europe. The EEC now set the terms for both goals. In 1958 Konrad Adenauer made clear that good Franco-German relations depended on implementing the EEC.[121] Given earlier German preferences for a wider trade accord, Adenauer would have made different demands in an EEC-less Europe; but given the EEC, this was *a* liberalization deal he could demand from the unpredictable new French leader. A similar reconfiguration of demands took place in Franco-British relations. The British had already

118. See Jouve 1967, 1:202; and Rimbaud 1990, 365.

119. On why the EEC's institutions had such constraining effects (compared to projects like the OEEC, WEU, and others), see Parsons 1999.

120. See Poidevin 1990; Jouve 1967; and interviews by the author with de Gaulle's foreign minister, Maurice Couve de Murville, two other advisors, and diplomats, Paris, 1997–98.

121. When the leaders met in September 1958, Adenauer made the EEC an explicit prerequisite for supporting de Gaulle's plans. Interview by the author with a French advisor present at the meeting; and Poidevin 1990, 82.

excluded themselves from the EEC. The Common Market was thus a very useful platform for de Gaulle's European plans. In the absence of the EEC, as Gaullist 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.[122] But given the EEC, he could exclude the British and win continental support in one stroke. Thus de Gaulle's rally to the EEC was an attempt to pursue his own European strategy within an institutional context constructed by his pro-community predecessors. Perceived imperatives in trade or agriculture apparently played little role in his decision.[123] The two most detailed French accounts agree. Raymond Poidevin, author of the more careful archival study, finds that "Between May and December 1958, General de Gaulle became interested in Europe primarily due to the heritage left him by the Fourth Republic."[124] The exhaustive contemporary study by Edmond Jouve concludes, "In 1958, General de Gaulle found himself constrained to pursue an enterprise begun by others."[125]

Counterfactuals strengthen this factual argument. Had de Gaulle *not* inherited the 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 17.5 percent 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, observers agree that the EEC played no role in de Gaulle's decision; he would have stabilized the economy similarly without it.[126] But had he done so in an EEC-less context, this would have vastly decreased the chances of a subsequent EEC-like deal. Before 1958, only French economic weakness persuaded the Germans and most Benelux elites to accept the EEC instead of pushing for the OEEC accord they preferred.[127] After 1959, France quickly became the continent's fastest growing economy. French business became markedly more pro-liberalization. Even if de Gaulle had demanded a "little Europe" deal after 1959 (itself unlikely!), Germany and the Benelux would have had no reason to concede it. Liberalization would have proceeded either in the OEEC or in some still less institutionalized way.

122. De Gaulle's closest associates were the EEC's strongest opponents, and his private comments show he shared their views. In 1957 he told Michel Debré to quiet his attacks on the treaty, saying, "What for? Once we have returned to power, we will tear up those treaties." Jouve 1967, 1:253.

123. De Gaulle's more liberal advisors (Couve de Murville, Georges Pompidou, Jacques Rueff) persuaded 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." Poidevin notes economic arguments in a sentence that begins, "Certainly the General's dominant preoccupation was political, but . . ." Poidevin 1990, 82. Agriculture was mentioned in the de Gaulle–Adenauer meeting, but at this point French farmers and the government were more interested in bilateral contracts than in a CAP. Couve de Murville 1971, 43; Jouve 1967; and Maillard 1995, 135–68. For an alternative view, see Moravcsik 2000.

124. See Poidevin 1990, 79; and Lacouture 1984–85, 2:630.

125. Jouve 1975, 54.

126. Rueff 1977.

127. See Moravcsik 1998, 137–58; and Milward 1992, 220.

The absence of a Common Market would in turn have undercut de Gaulle's leverage to acquire a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). By late 1960, as French surpluses grew, French farmers and de Gaulle's government finally began to perceive interests in agricultural arrangements beyond bilateral contracts.[128] But French demands alone were not sufficient to create the CAP; as de Gaulle's foreign minister wrote, "In no other domain were the partners' positions so divergent, their interests so contradictory."[129] 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: threats to destroy the Common Market. Even *with* this leverage, the CAP talks from 1961 to 1967 almost failed several times. Without it, the Germans would have had little reason to stifle their major domestic opposition to the CAP. French threats to withdraw unilaterally from the OEEC or other trade accords would not have carried the same menace of disruption. Little progress was likely to be made quickly—and the CAP's historical window soon closed. In 1963, Ludwig Erhard replaced the ancient Adenauer, bringing to power the strongest German opponent of "little Europe" and the CAP. Failing a prior German commitment to the CAP, Erhard was not likely to strike a similar deal.[130]

In sum, the EEC survived traditional French leadership in the 1960s not because of structural trends but despite them. Growing French industrial competitiveness made the EEC *less* necessary, not more, relative to weaker institutional options. Increasing agricultural surpluses may have convinced de Gaulle to pursue a CAP, but they also made the Germans *less* willing to lock themselves into an economically absurd and politically costly accord. Neither de Gaulle nor Erhard would have agreed that had the EEC not existed before 1963, it would have had to be invented. This does not mean that subsequent choices for a community Europe would have been impossible. We cannot reliably trace counterfactuals very far. But the distinct cause I have highlighted—the assertion of community ideas in France in the 1950s—decided the outcome across three widely different Europes in the 1960s, and probably across even more divergent futures in subsequent decades.

Conclusions

The Origins of the European Union

This argument does not imply that objective structures are unimportant in EU history. Structural accounts are correct to note broad trends toward liberalization and

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

129. Couve de Murville 1971, 314.

130. EEC negotiator Marjolin wrote that had discussions continued in the OEEC instead of moving to the EEC in 1956, "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." Marjolin 1986, 317.

cooperation in postwar Europe. By the 1950s, almost all non-Communist elites advanced some variation on these themes. They also account well for the salience of issues over time within cooperation. Almost all European (and especially French) elites saw coal and steel plans as crucial during reconstruction, defense cooperation as urgent during the Korean War, trade deals as desirable in the boom of the mid-1950s, and atomic cooperation as enticing as civil applications became evident. But structural accounts are wrong to see clear imperatives to the unprecedented political project we know as "European integration." In France, actors who shared objective positions in parties, bureaucracies, and sectors consistently espoused different ideas about how those interests connected to European institution building. France selected the ECSC and EEC projects not because clear majorities dictated them, but because leaders with support on other issues used their authority to craft one of several potential coalitions.

This argument also incorporates institutional path-dependence, but it disputes the forward-leading dynamics of "neofunctionalist" scholarship. European institutions did not constrain major policy choices going forward before 1958, let alone carry Europeans from the ECSC to the EEC. Institutions mattered instead in the way often described by "historical institutionalists": Their inertial qualities blocked *backward* movement from aggressive community initiatives, foreclosing previously available alternatives.[131] Before the ECSC, Europe's institutional terrain remained wide open. After the ECSC, confederalists and traditionalists were *not* persuaded to move forward to new community projects—but in coal and steel, talk of backward movement to the OEEC, Council of Europe, or bilateral options faded away. After the EEC, new community projects received few if any major converts (anti-supranational discourse became *more* dominant in de Gaulle's France)—but the EEC's alternatives in the OEEC, WEU, or Franco-German formats increasingly lost relevance. French champions of further supranational projects remained a scattered minority, but institutional inertia consolidated their broad EEC victory into the foundations of European politics. The EEC of the 1960s, like many institutional frameworks, rested "on defeated and repressed alternatives."[132]

Thus structures set the broad context for European institution building, and institutions held Europeans to one path once it was chosen. In between, Europeans faced three viable alternatives in the 1950s. My answer to the "how much" question is that leaders' ideas, as a cause irreducible to other factors, determined the outcome across these alternatives. During the late 1940s, French individuals gravitated to three different views of their national interests in Europe, in patterns that diverged from their main material and organizational positions. Within complex multidimensional issue-space, this three-way divide in preferences meant majorities could be crafted for all three options. Corresponding alternatives in international bargaining were available as well. Since European cleavages cross-cut Right and Left in

131. See Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992; and Ikenberry 1988.
132. See Berk 1994, 16; and Unger 1987.

France, leaders were selected on unrelated issues. Neither Schuman, Pinay, nor Mollet gained agenda-setting power because of their pro-community views, but once in power, they enjoyed the autonomy to act on them.

That electoral coalition building was unrelated to leaders' views on Europe does not mean it was irrelevant. The EDC made clear that a centrist majority was a prerequisite to community policies. Under the Third Force, Schuman and pro-community figures in all the centrist parties could invoke party and coalitional pressures to press confederalist and traditionalist peers into line. When the centrists divided into Right and Left in 1952, they lost their coalitional leverage over the Center–Left. Socialist confederalists and traditionalists in the opposition had no reason to support government policies and were themselves sufficient to swing the vote against the EDC. Only when the Socialists returned to a centrist coalition in 1956 (for non-European reasons) did it become possible to assemble another reluctant majority behind community plans.

But though centrist majorities *allowed* for community choices, they never *demanded* that strategy. The conventional wisdom that European policies served as functional "glue" for centrist majorities reverses the real dynamic. Far from being united over Europe, the Center was the part of French politics *most divided* over Europe. Only the Communist and Gaullist extremes had united (traditional) European preferences. All the parties in between included community advocates, confederalists, and traditionalists. Consequently, not only did community plans not help any centrist leader form a majority, but committing to *any* European track provoked opposition from at least half the leader's electoral allies. Schuman could pass the ECSC only by expending political capital from other issues. The same was true for Mendès France with the WEU and Mollet with the EEC. Centrist majorities created permissive conditions for community policies, but they did not cause them.

How exactly did French choices matter for European outcomes? French community strategies led to automatic liberalization, plans for a CAP, an atomic research pool, and other projects under supranational institutions among the Six. A confederal strategy, by contrast, suggested nonautomatic OEEC liberalization, flanked by WEU political cooperation and other projects in a Franco-British-German triangle. Agriculture would have remained in webs of intergovernmental contracts. A traditional strategy led to similar nonautomatic liberalization and bilateral agricultural contracts but emphasized standard diplomacy without multilateral organizations.

The divergence between these options was not just institutional but also substantive in a very material sense. This was clearest in agriculture. Community choices led to the CAP, which, until the euro, was the most extensive multilateral policy integration in history. Confederal or traditional alternatives were unlikely to produce any major multilateral deal at all. Instead, national policies would have adjusted independently in the 1960s. In trade liberalization, the divergence was less crucial but still significant. Some liberalization was inevitable, but the EEC's automatic schedule likely accelerated the pace over alternatives. In geopolitics, the divergence

was again fundamental. Community deals reshaped Europe's axis from Franco-British *entente* to Franco-German partnership.[133]

What are the broad implications for the EU literature? This evidence is historically incomplete; it does not show (or even imply) that the 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 assess the full causal role of ideas in EU history.[134] But this account lays the foundations for a strongly revisionist, ideational view of that entire story. Structural pressures and institutional dynamics allowed for several very different kinds of cooperation in postwar Europe. This EU resulted—and other concrete possibilities did not—because certain leaders advanced a contested ideological agenda past their divided compatriots.

Showing Ideas as Causes

To convince objective-interest theorists that ideas deserve attention, I have argued, ideational theorists should highlight historical choices where ideas' distinct effects are clearest. These choices arise where ideas strongly cross-cut prevailing lines of interest aggregation, for two reasons that other scholars have noted. First, as hinted at in some comparative studies, cross-cutting ideas allow us to separate ideational variation in individuals' views from the individuals' objective context. Cross-cutting divides alone cannot display ideas; they merely show a range of debate over which objective constraints are *not* dictating individual positions. This approach also requires interpretive evidence that individuals diverge because they hold different beliefs. Second, as developed in the literature on "cycling" and "chaos," divided preferences create "multiple equilibria" in coalitional terms. Especially in multidimensional issue space, individual leaders may gain the autonomy to build majorities around their personal ideas.

This argument should have direct applications in other contexts. Cross-cutting ideas are not terribly rare. Many theorists discuss "epochal moments" when new problems do not map onto preexisting lines of political mobilization. They tend to hypothesize that these arise amid major environmental change or crisis and over newly salient issues or institutional projects where the costs and benefits of competing positions are unclear. Locating other such episodes—perhaps in the creation or modification of national institutions, social movements, or other international organizations—will build the clearest possible case for ideas as important causes.

The broader implication of this analysis is the fundamental credibility it lends to ideational approaches in general. If structuralists and skeptical institutionalists

133. Though a traditional Gaullist emphasis on a bilateral Franco-German partnership might have had similar (if probably less enduring) geopolitical results.

134. Parsons 1999.

accept this demonstration that ideas *can* be concretely displayed as autonomous causes, we can move beyond battles over *whether or not* ideas matter to the much more interesting questions of *how much* they matter in particular situations and *under what conditions* they matter most.[135] Within these debates, furthermore, the burden of proof should no longer fall disproportionately on ideational theorists. If we accord ideas basic credibility as distinct causes, not only must ideational theorists show that ideas do not reduce to objective factors, but also others must take seriously the possibility that apparently objective interests reduce to ideas. This is precisely the challenge constructivists have issued since the late 1980s, but it has lacked force because of lingering doubts about their causal claims.

The implications go further. If this article helps convince objective-interest theorists to confront this challenge and ideational theorists to search for other responses to the "how much" problem, the gap dividing them may begin to close. We would then all face the same theoretical dilemma: the relative weighting of structural, institutional, and ideational causes. Today's rigid division of labor among the champions of each factor, with each dismissing the others as universally secondary, could give way to a common interest in highlighting the boundaries and interactions among them. Precise claims about structures or institutions would help delineate the precise effects of ideas, and vice versa. If cumulative progress is possible in political science, this is surely the way.

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135. Goldstein and Keohane 1993, 26.

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