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Did Power Politics Cause European Integration? Realist Theory Meets Qualitative Methods

ANDREW MORAVCSIK

There is much to admire in Sebastian Rosato's *Europe United: Power Politics and the Making of the European Community*.¹ Its core argument exemplifies ambitious, theory-driven scholarship aimed at establishing a revisionist account of European integration in the 1950s, which it generalizes to a monocausally realist theory of regional integration. "The European Community," Rosato argues, "is best understood as an attempt by . . . France and Germany . . . to balance against the Soviet Union and one another."² Since many have observed that early European integration was influenced by the geopolitical imperative of balancing against the Soviet Union and its Communist allies, this explanation is not intuitively implausible. With much realist writing having degenerated (in the "philosophy of science" sense) into a neoclassical form often indistinguishable from liberal theory, Rosato remains a real realist. At the same time, at his best, as in his discussion of the defeat of the European Defense Community (EDC), he shows himself to be a nuanced historian who recognizes the complex interaction of ideology and geopolitics in bringing about events. *Europe United*'s explicit aim to predict the future means that it has important implications not just for scholars, but for contemporary decision makers and citizens. All this deserves praise.

The breadth of *Europe United*'s ambition makes it doubly important to probe whether its account of European integration is empirically accurate. This raises the issue of qualitative methods. In principle, the intensive use of historical case studies to test theories is commendable. Carefully crafted,

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¹ Sebastian Rosato, *Europe United: Power Politics and the Making of the European Community* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

² Rosato, *Europe United*, 2.

finely nuanced, contextually informed, theory-guided case studies of decision making can teach us much about world politics. Yet *Europe United* is also, unfortunately, an example of what can happen when basic qualitative methodological standards are consistently violated. The book seeks to test causal claims, yet in the end backs them with little beyond overtly biased circumstantial evidence.³ The absence of general methodological constraints—I demonstrate in detail below—permits its empirical conclusions to rest largely on misunderstandings of the secondary literature, one-sided presentation of arguments and evidence, selective citation of primary and secondary material, outright misreadings of sources, and a failure to weight the results fairly. The resulting realist bias accounts for almost all of the book’s apparently counterintuitive divergence from the prevailing multicausal explanation of European integration, which stresses economic interest and relegates geopolitics to a secondary role. As a result, *Europe United* remains unpersuasive as a revisionist historical account of the 1950s, as a novel theoretical contribution to integration theory, or as a prediction of future European integration.

Since these are strong criticisms, I aim to be as precise as space allows in documenting them. Three issues are particularly important. Does *Europe United* offer a novel and plausible theoretical interpretation of Europe in the 1950s? How valid is its empirical explanation for what occurred in the 1950s? Can we generalize from a relatively brief period in the 1950s to European integration in general?

THEORY: WHAT'S NEW?

Europe United does not claim to present fresh sources or to set forth a magisterial synthesis of EU history; its assertion of novelty lies in the purported originality of the specific monocausal theoretical claim that anti-Soviet and Franco-German balancing has motivated European integration. “My account,” Rosato writes, “stands in stark contrast to the conventional wisdom.”⁴ Other theories, notably economic and ideological ones, “fail” completely.⁵ This

³ The book is an exemplar not just of poor qualitative methodology, but also of poor social scientific methodology. The analysis does not present explicit hypotheses, make appropriate causal process observations, choose cases that have variation on the independent variables (to have a quasi-experimental treatment group comparable to a control group), properly take into account confounding factors that precisely estimate the effect of the favored independent variable, or measure phenomena in an unbiased fashion. It also repeatedly fails to test theoretical claims using data different from those employed to develop those same claims. The fundamental basis of such standards is common to all forms of social scientific analysis, qualitative and quantitative. Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

⁴ Rosato, *Europe United*, 10.

⁵ Ibid., 218. Nowhere does *Europe United* conclude that other causes played a significant role, except to assert occasionally that ideas mattered but were endogenous to geopolitics—an exception that

misrepresents the literature. What is unusual here is not, as *Europe United* claims, an acknowledgment of the impact of balancing and other geopolitical motivations on European integration policy. That such motivations played some role has long been, and remains, conventional scholarly wisdom. The unusual aspect is the assertion of the *monocausal* or *dominant* importance of realist factors. Even this assertion is not entirely original; it is a position scholars used to hold but discarded decades ago, faced with new evidence and greater interpretive sophistication.

Few deny that geopolitics has had some impact on integration, especially in the 1950s. The leading undergraduate textbook on European integration correctly reflects the broad scholarly agreement that in establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), France had to find a solution to the Ruhr problem consistent with, among other things, balancing against the USSR (mediated in part by the United States) and fear of German power.⁶ I know of no major account of the EDC—after all, a military alliance—that denies that it was proposed to accommodate German rearment within the imperatives of Western alliance policies against the USSR.⁷ Even the European Economic Community (EEC), an economic arrangement, has customarily been explained in part as an instrument in German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's strategy of embedding Germany within the West and preventing war between France and Germany, thereby strengthening the Western alliance.⁸

In the 1980s and 1990s, a new generation of interdisciplinary scholars, including the historian Alan Milward and myself, challenged geopolitical and

proves the rule. To be sure, not all the evidence presented in the book actually supports a geopolitical interpretation. The book includes some caveats, some of which involve entire decades of EU history being explained using economic factors. Yet none of this evidentiary ambivalence is reflected in *Europe United*'s conclusions. See the discussion under "Internal Validity" below.

⁶ Desmond Dinan, *Ever Closer Union: An Introduction to European Union*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, co: Lynne Rienner, 2005), 17–25.

⁷ Dinan, *Ever Closer Union*, 27–29.

⁸ Among more recent analyses are Raymond Poidevin, "Introduction to the Debate," in *Power in Europe? Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the Origins of the EEC, 1952–1957*, ed. Ennio Di Nolfo (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992), 546–50 passim; Raymond Poidevin, *Robert Schuman* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1997); Hanns Jürgen Küsters, *Die Gründung der Europäischen Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft*, (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft: 1982); Hans von der Groeben, *Aufbaujahre der Europaäischen Gemeinschaft: das Ringen um den Gemeinsamen Markt und die Politische Union (1958–1966)* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1982); Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Zentralmacht Europas: Deutschlands Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne* (Berlin: Siedler, 1994); Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (New York: Random House, 1993). Though they disagreed on most things, political scientists Stanley Hoffmann and even Ernst Haas (a neo-functionalism indelibly associated with economic welfarism and technocracy) both stressed geopolitics in precisely this context. Stanley Hoffmann, "Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe," *Daedalus* 95, no. 3 (Summer 1966): 862–915; Ernst Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social and Economic Forces, 1950–1957* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), 155.

ideological accounts with revisionist economic interpretations. Yet we maintained an explicit role for geopolitical balancing. Milward proposed a synthesis in which “national strategy” subsumes both.⁹ In *The Choice for Europe*, I tested economic and geopolitical factors against each other, concluding that in nearly half (seven of fifteen) of national negotiating involvements, geopolitical and related ideological factors had an important impact, and in three cases—including German policy in the EEC negotiations, the only case where my work overlaps with Rosato’s—they fundamentally altered the outcome. Without realist balancing against the USSR and Germany, I argue, there would have been no Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and less institutional centralization.¹⁰ The last decade of EU historiography has continued to stress economic factors as most important, but also to include geopolitics alongside them.¹¹

In proposing to return to a moncausal realist account, to be tested against other single-variable alternatives, *Europe United* poses an anachronistic question. The scholarly debate has moved on. It transcended debates among moncausal positions, including realist ones, decades ago. Today the issue is how to weigh competing factors. The proper question underlying *Europe United* is whether existing empirical evidence confirms the prevailing economic explanation, which recognizes a secondary role for geopolitics, or confirms a moncausal realist account some scholars favored decades ago.

INTERNAL VALIDITY: AN ACCURATE EXPLANATION OF THE 1950S?

The failure of *Europe United* to situate itself accurately in the existing historical and social scientific literature makes it tricky to assess its empirical contribution. Since scholars do not contest that realist concerns have had some impact on European integration decisions, simply assembling a book’s worth of evidence that such factors may have played some role tells us little

⁹ Alan Milward, *The Rise and Fall of a National Strategy: The UK and the European Community*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge, 2002).

¹⁰ Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 137, 474, also, 90–95, 102–103, 135.

¹¹ For recent literature interpreting the 1950s and 1960s in an increasingly commercial light, see N. Piers Ludlow, “The Green Heart of Europe? The Rise and Fall of the CAP as the Community’s Central Policy, 1958–1985,” in *Fertile Ground for Europe? The History of European Integration and the Common Agricultural Policy Since 1945*, ed. Kiran Klaus Patel (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2009), 79–98; Laurent Warzoulet, *Le choix de la CEE par le France: L’Europe économique en débat de Mendès France à de Gaulle (1955–1969)* (Paris: Comité pour L’Histoire Économique et Financière de la France, 2010). For an overview of recent trends, see Andrew Moravcsik, “De Gaulle and European Integration: The New Revisionism,” *Journal of Cold War History* 14, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 53–77. Craig Parsons also adopts a synthetic approach, arguing that ideological causes were important in the negotiation of various EU treaties, but economic interest locked them in. See Craig Parsons, *A Certain Idea of Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

about European integration that is novel or interesting. An original contribution would need to show that realist factors dominated other causes, and that the existing literature understates that role. Due the mischaracterizations noted above, even such claims would be hard to evaluate, since we cannot take *Europe United*'s word for the content of that existing scholarly literature.

Still, there is no doubt that the empirical case for moncausal realism advanced in *Europe United* is unpersuasive. What is right empirically (realist balancing played some role) is not new theoretically, while what is apparently new theoretically (we should return to moncausal realism) is not right empirically. We see this because, generally, *Europe United* makes the case vis-à-vis the existing literature not by advancing new arguments or evidence, but by omitting arguments and evidence that scholars agree must be incorporated to strike a balanced judgment.

This “bias by omission” occurs in various ways. *Europe United* relies largely on circumstantial evidence, while often neglecting explicit process-tracing evidence elaborated in existing scholarship. Moreover, the sampling of the secondary literature and existing theories is biased toward realism, to the point where the most prominent historians and social scientists, and their arguments, are ignored. In addition, primary sources are cherry-picked to favor realism, while neglecting critical documents and facts. Primary sources are also unambiguously misread, distorting the text or context so as to favor a realist account. Final conclusions consistently ignore disconfirming evidence, when it is reported in the empirical analysis. Let me be clear: These inaccuracies are not small ambiguities in paraphrasing, inadvertent clerical slipups, or the type of trivial or random mistakes in interpretation that scholars can reasonably debate or overlook. They are major errors that distort significantly, if not misstate outright, the unambiguous meaning of evidence—and they invariably lean heavily in the direction of realism. The overall effect is so great that it dictates the final realist conclusions of the book. Let us consider each bias in turn.

First, in many cases *Europe United* relies on circumstantial evidence rather than process-tracing. Rosato acknowledges that circumstantial evidence alone—which he felicitously terms showing “motive, means, and opportunity”—is insufficient to establish causality.¹² Since we already know that a *prima facie* case can be made for a realist claim, additional process-tracing evidence showing a direct causal mechanism and weighing it against

¹² Rosato maintains (correctly) that in case study analysis the provision of circumstantial evidence, that is, evidence of structural conditions that give actors “motive, means, and opportunity” consistent with a theory, only establishes “correlation” or “initial plausibility,” not “causality.” Demonstration of causality requires direct evidence of real-world “causal mechanisms” linking concrete causes and mechanisms to outcomes (in this case specific decisions on European integration) working in ways that support one theory above others. The analogy is to criminal law, where “motive, means, and opportunity” are sufficient to indict but not to convict a particular suspect. See, for example, Rosato, *Europe United*, 16–19, 42–43, 50, 175–176. See also fn. 13.

alternatives is required. Yet *Europe United* seldom provides this kind of testing.¹³ We rarely find detailed and explicit process-level evidence of a realist link and never find testing of competing theories based on explicit hypotheses.

Two examples illustrate the poverty of the resulting analysis. One is the treatment of the United Kingdom, which comprises fully one-third of the variation reported in the book. *Europe United* asserts that Britain consistently hesitated to join integration efforts because the English Channel afforded it a greater sense of military security. According to the realist account, less need to balance means less support for integration. Yet the sections of *Europe United* on Britain and the ECSC and EDC contain only well-known circumstantial facts: the British were concerned about the Soviets (motive), felt that the Channel protected them (means and opportunity), and were skeptical toward European institutions (outcome). In thirty-five pages, not a single distinctive process-tracing observation *directly* links Britain's greater confidence in its security (whether due to the Channel or something else) to any specific policy choice regarding the ECSC or EDC. A handful of the sources in *Europe United* do link British geopolitical beliefs to EEC decision making. Yet this evidence confirms the opposite of the realist prediction: London's geopolitical considerations led it to take a *more favorable* attitude toward Europe—an anomaly for realist theory that *Europe United* is forced to explain away ad hoc. Yet this outright disconfirmation is not acknowledged in the final concluding sections, which favor realism.¹⁴

A second example is the conjecture in *Europe United* about why the EDC failed and the ECSC succeeded, even though the former, a military alliance, seems more essential from a realist perspective. *Europe United* argues it was because defense institutions could be established quickly if needed in the future security crisis, while economic cooperation could not.¹⁵ Though again ad hoc, rather than derived from the general realist theory presented in the opening of the book, this claim is intriguing and original. It is also critical to the realist case, since it removes a theoretical anomaly concerning

¹³ Rosato, *Europe United*, 50. *Circumstantial* evidence (or “data-set” observations) comprises facts and texts about the endpoints of a process—cause and consequence (independent and dependent variable). *Direct* evidence (or “causal-process” observations) comprises detailed “process-tracing” observations of the “causal mechanism” linking cause and effect. This includes explicit hypotheses about actor intentions, the nature of domestic coalitions, the timing of policy change, and policy consistency. In a small-n research design, circumstantial evidence is invariably easy to find for any hypothesis plausible enough to test, and thus represented in the secondary literature. It is often employed to select and specify theories and hypotheses. Claims about process multiply the predicted observations many times and tend to be more specific, concrete, and varied, and involve collecting data of which the analyst is unaware when selecting hypotheses. For this reason, it is prudent to use circumstantial evidence to select and specify plausible theories, but rely on direct process-tracing evidence to test them, using explicit hypotheses. Collier, Brady, and Seawright, “Sources of Leverage.” For an example in this area, see Moravcsik, *Choice for Europe*, 28, 55, 69.

¹⁴ Rosato, *Europe United*, 83–96, 153–63, 209–18.

¹⁵ Ibid., 151–53.

one-quarter of the variation reported in the book. Yet *Europe United* offers not a single piece of direct process-tracing evidence—not one view of a national leader, decision-making memo, or policy process—to show a causal connection.

Second, rather than offering space and presumption to all alternatives equally or in accordance with their standing in historiographical debates, *Europe United* samples available arguments and evidence of secondary sources in a manner biased toward realism. An essential methodological standard in reinterpreting secondary work is that attention to competing arguments be unbiased. In the case of European integration, it is particularly important, for with a fifty-year scholarly debate totaling over twenty thousand works on which to draw, a scholar could advance a *prima facie* case for nearly any plausible interpretation simply by cherry-picking supportive secondary sources. *Europe United*, which is based largely on secondary sources, does just this. How else could it confirm a realist conclusion from an essentially hostile scholarly consensus? As Ian Lustick reminds us, this kind of procedure illustrates nothing except selection bias.¹⁶

The magnitude of the resulting bias may be crudely estimated: 84 percent of the empirical chapter of *Europe United* on the EEC is devoted to evidence and argument about geopolitical factors, almost all of it favorable to realism, while only 16 percent of it is devoted to evidence and argument about alternative theories, almost all unfavorable to those arguments.¹⁷ More evidence of bias: *Europe United* emphasizes older histories, while almost entirely ignoring the most recent ones. This is troubling since the geopolitical hypothesis was more popular thirty years ago, before being superseded by multicausal, more strongly economic accounts based on more extensive archival materials. One prominent example is Alan Milward's *Reconstruction of Western Europe*, universally considered the most important extant scholarly work on the ECSC. *Europe United* makes no mention of it at all. Milward famously argues that Jean Monnet, in charge of French economic planning in 1950, supported the Schuman Plan more to further French economic planning than for ideological or geopolitical reasons. In a famous bon mot: "The Schuman Plan was invented to safeguard the Monnet Plan [an economic

¹⁶ Ian S. Lustick, "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias," *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 3 (September 1996): 614–16. Lustick points out that we need to sample secondary sources the same way we do other data. However, he overlooks one implication of this, namely that no secondary-source based analysis can be truly revisionist on an issue already treated by historians. The only way to be a revisionist, as Rosato aims to do, is to reinterpret the underlying primary evidence.

¹⁷ By comparison, in the corresponding chapter of my *Choice for Europe*, 56 percent of empirical space is devoted to economic factors and 44 percent to geopolitical evidence. In each case, the strongest arguments and evidence in favor and against the theories are weighed. This method was selected even though *Choice for Europe*, unlike *Europe United*, introduced an interpretation that was at the time genuinely novel, so perhaps greater attention to new documentation supporting the economic case might have been justified. See footnotes 12 and 13 above.

planning scheme].”¹⁸ Milward’s economic revisionism revolutionized European Union historiography. In a few places, *Europe United* cites other works of Milward’s, but only where he rejects non-realist explanations; it consistently ignores evidence and arguments for his own economic explanation. *Europe United* may be the only serious historical work on the EU in a quarter century to entirely ignore Milward’s seminal book.

Third, in the relatively few cases where *Europe United* does analyze primary sources in detail, it cherry-picks from a body of sources most scholars now believe support the mainstream (multicausal) economic view to create apparent confirmation for (monocausal) realism. To see selective citation at work, consider *Europe United*’s account of German policy toward the EEC. Here the target is my *Choice for Europe*, which provides a useful point of comparison in the existing literature: I argue that commercial concerns were very important to German business executives and politicians, but geopolitical motivations (Adenauer’s desire to secure the Western alliance against the USSR, defend Berlin, and stabilize Franco-German cooperation) had a significant impact as well. Without realist concerns, the German government probably would not have favored the customs union or the CAP, but rather a competing proposal for a Free Trade Area (FTA).¹⁹

Should readers accept the prevailing multicausal, primarily economic explanation or Rosato’s “geopolitics only” revision? What empirical justification does *Europe United* give? On German policy, *Europe United* departs from the mainstream not in citing new evidence, but in ignoring (or, as we shall see, misinterpreting) decisive facts central to the existing literature. *Europe United* reiterates evidence originally presented decades ago in geopolitical accounts, and expanded further in my *Choice for Europe* and other multicausal accounts. Simply stated, Adenauer favored integration to bolster the Western alliance and German security and sided with Jean Monnet against

¹⁸ Explication added. Alan Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe* (London: Methuen, 1984), 395, on the Schuman Plan generally, 362–420. Though twenty-five years old now, *Reconstruction* post-dates much of the historiography *Europe United* cites.

¹⁹ *Europe United* seeks to dismiss my claim that geopolitical arguments mattered by stating that “the little supportive evidence [Moravcsik] does find [for noneconomic arguments] validates ‘liberal constructivist’ variants of the argument, rather than ‘Realist power-balancing’ ones.” Rosato, *Europe United*, 13. This misreads my argument. True, over fifty years of integration, most of which *Europe United* does not analyze, most noneconomic factors I observed at work were ideological. But in “early European Community history,” the only period where the two studies overlap, I argue that realist balancing was the dominant noneconomic factor. Moravcsik, *Choice for Europe*, 478, also 474–79. Specifically in the case of Germany in the EEC negotiations: “Some argue backwards from Adenauer’s support for integration to . . . federalist idealism . . . [But] Adenauer does not appear to have believed strongly in European political union . . . Adenauer did, however, consistently exploit the domestic and international legitimacy of integration . . . to promote geopolitical objectives. From 1948 onward, Adenauer’s central geopolitical objective appears to have been to assure Germany’s defense, control over West Berlin, and opposition to the Soviet Union . . . One means of committing a wide range of allied governments to German goals was to embed Germany in . . . various schemes for European integration . . . Without geopolitical concerns, Germany would surely have supported a British-style FTA . . . ” Moravcsik, *Choice for Europe*, 91, 102, 477, also generally 99–103.

German business and Minister of Economics Ludwig Erhard, both of whom preferred a Free Trade Area. Scholars agree about this.

Yet *Europe United* stops there. In doing so, it fails to mention that after 1952 German business, far from opposing a customs union like the EEC, insisted that a customs union was the sole integration proposal that they would not veto. It fails to mention that during the run-up to the Messina Conference in 1955, far from being unwilling to confront Adenauer, top business leaders blocked the chancellor from pursuing his first-choice geopolitical strategy: a new sectoral agreement in atomic power, conventional energy or transport, and agreements with centralized institutions (like the ECSC) rather than more decentralized ones (like the EEC). In addition, *Europe United* fails to mention that within hours the threat by big business to withdraw their support led Adenauer to reverse his policy, break his alliance with Monnet, and promote the EEC. Finally, it fails to mention that business, backed by Erhard, successfully insisted that any customs union be General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)-compliant, which meant the EEC's external tariffs and quotas would be low—i.e. very similar to an FTA—thereby putting Erhard and business in a win-win situation.²⁰ In sum, the reader of *Europe United* has no inkling that the final German position—a GATT-compliant customs union, weak agricultural provisions, decentralized institutions, and only symbolic provisions on atomic power—marked a deep compromise of Adenauer's geopolitical ambitions and an outright defeat for his ally Monnet, who for this reason continued to oppose the EEC for some time. These facts are recounted in the recent historical and social scientific interpretations Rosato challenges, including my own book, but the reader of *Europe United* would have no idea they exist. *Europe United* makes its major empirical point on German policy by omission.

Fourth, where *Europe United* does cite primary sources, it surprisingly often fails to interpret them accurately—either with regard to text or context. Two documents concerning German EEC policy illustrate this tendency to misread. Each reverses the unambiguous meaning of the source.

Europe United, we have just seen, incorrectly holds that German big business opposed the EEC. A German government document Rosato cites to demonstrate this opposition actually reports the contrary: the peak German employers' association "gave its opinion in favour of political action such as the customs union."²¹ In addition, *Europe United* dates this report from 1955

²⁰ These facts are documented in Moravcsik, *Choice for Europe*, 90–103, 137–39.

²¹ Rosato, *Europe United*, 218–19. Four errors are evident here: the content of the document is misread to mean the reverse of what it actually says; Milward's gloss on the document, which clarifies this, is ignored; the document is misdated; and it is cited to the wrong page of Milward's book (page 200); cf. Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 1992), 175. The underlying source of the confusion appears to lie in part in Rosato's lack of familiarity with contemporary usage of the term "partial union"—which appears in all these sources. In *Europe United* Rosato consistently interprets it to mean unions among a small number of countries (e.g. among the six, like the EEC, rather than larger

or 1956 (after Messina), critical to Rosato's claim that Adenauer held the policy initiative and compelled his business allies to follow, rather than dating it correctly to 1952, three years before the chancellor showed any interest in the Messina package, which would suggest instead that business took the lead. On the same page, *Europe United* misconstrues a second source, a well-known May 1955 memo from the French Ambassador in Bonn, André François-Poncet, to Minister of Foreign Affairs Antoine Pinay. Rosato cites this memo as further evidence that Erhard and German big business opposed a customs union, yet the quoted passage reports only opposition to sectoral schemes ("partial integration on the coal and steel pool model"). Just a few sentences further, François-Poncet notes support for "the goal of a common market" by German big business and even by the arch-liberal Erhard, who, "instead of partial integration, strongly advocates . . . an economic and customs union limited, at first, to the Six."²² These are just two of many flagrant misreadings of sources found in *Europe United* that reverse their meaning.²³

Fifth and finally, Rosato's undisciplined weighing of evidence cited for and against alternative views permits even greater bias toward realism to creep in. Even in the few cases where—to its credit—*Europe United* acknowledges empirical anomalies and difficulties with a realist account, or reports ambivalent bodies of evidence, these ambiguities do not influence the final, entirely realist conclusions. This disconnection is in part, I suspect, because the research design of *Europe United* operates without explicit hypotheses, which might have obliged the analyst to tally evidence about policy consistency, timing, or motivation more systematically, or to balance any evidence for competing theories more transparently and fairly.²⁴

groupings, like the FTA). But in the 1950s the term was used specifically to designate Monnet's sectoral schemes, such as the coal and steel community, transport cooperation, or an atomic energy union. The EEC was in fact seen as an alternative to these. For example, see the discussion of the François-Poncet quotation in Rosato, *Europe United*, 219.

²² Rosato, *Europe United*, 219. *Documents diplomatiques français* (1955, tome 1), docs. 297, 684, 685.

²³ The misreadings cited here do not appear isolated or exceptional. I checked several dozen citations. Nearly half, well beyond those reported above and the misread secondary authorities cited later in this essay, were misrepresented seriously. For some more detailed examples, see "External Validity" below. To be sure, I selected citations that seemed suspicious, but I also focused only on citations central to the core theoretical claims in *Europe United*. For example, Rosato similarly misreads a statement about sovereignty in the only other major source he cites to support the very point discussed above, from historian Werner Bührer, to state that German business supported only the "OEEC [Organisation for European Economic Cooperation] type of integration," not the EEC. Rosato, *Europe United*, 218–19. In fact, Bührer states unambiguously that business "commented favourably on the common market negotiations" and a page later concludes, "to sum up, German industry supported the common market." Werner Bührer, "German Industry and European Integration in the 1950s," in *Western Europe and Germany: The Beginnings of European Integration, 1945–1960*, ed. Clemens Wurm (Oxford: Berg, 1995), 104–6. This leaves *Europe United* with no credible evidence on this vital point of contention with economic interpretations.

²⁴ Another serious issue of causal inference is that some of the critical claims in the book, as we have seen, are ad hoc. *Europe United* concedes that conventional realism does not predict, for example,

Consider *Europe United*'s account of French policy. The discussion of the EEC contains eleven pages discussing bargaining over economic gains between Germany and France, yet not a word on geopolitics.²⁵ Moreover, it acknowledges a decade-long anomaly: France "rejected economic integration in the late 1940s and early 1950s," when realism predicts it should have been intensely integrating. In the empirical section, France's aloofness is attributed to its lack of economic competitiveness.²⁶ A similar anomaly of nearly two decades arises after the end of the Cold War threat in 1989, when realist balancing theory predicts that the EU should have been falling apart, yet it continued to integrate apace. Rosato attributes this, too, to economic factors.²⁷ Overall, for more than thirty of just over sixty years covered in the book—about half the period—France is acting in a manner diametrically opposed to the realist prediction, which *Europe United* itself can only explain by invoking economic interest. Yet this confirmation of an alternative interpretation is neither reflected in any conclusion to a section, chapter, or the book as a whole, nor in the introduction, all of which misleadingly report unambiguous empirical support for "balance of power" theory.²⁸

These realist biases in *Europe United* are pervasive. They affect the empirical analysis of Britain, Germany, and France. They infect the choice of evidence (circumstantial versus process-tracing), the sampling of alternative secondary arguments, the selection and interpretation of primary evidence, and the weighing and reporting of the results. In the end, they drive the overall findings. This is no basis on which to revise the prevailing multicausal economic interpretation of European integration in favor of a decades-old monocausal realist account.

that governments will support the ECSC and not the EDC; it predicts the opposite. It offers an addendum, not derived from anything in the initial theoretical chapter, to explain this, with no further empirical confirmation from independent data—then counts it as full confirmation for realist theory. One might question, on this basis, whether any observation could have disconfirmed realism. But I remain here focused on the central concern, namely the reporting of evidence.

²⁵ Rosato, *Europe United*, 183–97, 226.

²⁶ *Europe United* seeks to clarify matters with two pages of selected quotations from leaders purportedly relating the final decision in 1958 to underlying geopolitical motivations. Selection bias calls any such effort into question. Yet even specially selected evidence proves ambivalent. The first, from Antoine Pinay, states that the policy goal is to save "Europe's economy and its freedom." It seems odd to interpret this as entirely supportive of realism, as *Europe United* does, rather than the conventional multicausal economic account. Crisper process-level hypotheses designed to distinguish between explanations might have helped here. Rosato, *Europe United*, 185–86.

²⁷ Even more succinct in Rosato's more policy-oriented *International Security* article: "The answer is simple: Europe kept moving toward monetary union despite the end of the Cold War because of prosperous economic conditions." Sebastian Rosato, "Europe's Troubles: Power Politics and the State of the European Project," *International Security* 35, no. 4 (Spring 2011): 73.

²⁸ Rosato, *Europe United*, 183, 226. Indeed, there is a consensus in the newer historiography, which *Europe United* does not acknowledge, that concerns about French competitiveness by economic actors were important on their own terms until 1958, when de Gaulle devalued the currency and reformed the budget. Warzoulet, *Le choix de la CEE par le France*; Moravcsik, *Choice for Europe*.

EXTERNAL VALIDITY: AN ACCURATE EXPLANATION OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION IN GENERAL?

What would have been the implications if Rosato's realist interpretation of eight years in the 1950s had been empirically correct? Recall that *Europe United* is not just advancing an argument about Europe in one period. Its larger purpose is to generalize about European integration overall and to "tell us a lot . . . about the future."²⁹ This heroic ambition to leverage broad social scientific generalizations out of a small sample (more commonly associated with statistical methods) deserves close methodological scrutiny. To generalize in this way, the first eight years (13 percent) must be representative in some way of the entire sixty-two-year history of European integration. Is this so?

Common sense and political science lean against it. How much confidence would we have in an explanation of the fundamental problems and future prospects of the US federal government today based solely on a study of 1789 to 1818 (13 percent of US history), thereby neglecting all presidents after James Madison and every important event from the Jacksonian era through the reelection of Barack Obama?³⁰ Rosato insists that the issue is ultimately empirical. He earnestly defends his effort to generalize with a counterintuitive claim, namely that nothing important happened in the European integration process during the fifty-five years from 1958 to the present.³¹ Everything was already contained in the Treaty of Rome. Only if this is true, *Europe United* asserts, can we draw valid causal inferences about Europe's present and future from the experiences of the 1950s.³²

²⁹ Rosato, *Europe United*, 9. Rosato's recent article in *International Security* is framed as a reflection on Europe's current state. Rosato, "Europe's Troubles."

³⁰ Any scholar who has studied policymaking processes closely, or any who has experienced it firsthand while serving in government, will surely need little convincing that implementation, interpretation, adjudication, adaptation, legal process, constitutional adjudication, and political bargaining often intervene between broad legal provisions and outcomes. This is even more true of international regimes, which, according to our best theories, are meaningful precisely because the intervening process is highly uncertain, much as is the case with constitutional delegation. Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

³¹ This subsequent half-century witnessed " . . . no further moves toward political or military unification. The various economic agreements worked out in these years simply strengthened and extended the structure put in place in the 1950s. Even the decision to negotiate a single currency did not signal a seismic shift of the existing system, only a modification of it." Rosato, "Untied States of Europe," *Stephen M. Walt's Blog at ForeignPolicy.com*, June 23, 2010, http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/06/23/guest_post_the_untied_states_of_europe.

³² It is unclear whether this is a valid claim: standard qualitative methods do not generally recommend selecting on the dependent variable (where integration decisions occur), on a single value of the independent variable without controls (where the Soviet threat is high), but especially not on both at once, as appears to be the case here. Most would recommend selecting on the independent variable alone, comparing the effect on decision making of the treatment (high Soviet threat in the 1950s) with its absence (low Soviet threat in the 1990s), with process-tracing to increase observational evidence throughout. Even if one believed that later attempts to promote integration were substantively unsuccessful or

Yet scholars of EU integration reject this claim. Almost unanimously they believe subsequent evolution after 1958 did matter. A brief thumbnail history shows why. Even a basic policy such as the Common Agricultural Policy was only hinted at in the original Treaty of Rome: it required twelve years of hard bargaining and major treaty change to create, more than once almost triggering the collapse of the EEC. Enlargement debates, in which a Europe of Six became twenty-eight countries stretching today from Portugal to Estonia, were just as acrimonious and their outcomes just as uncertain, starting with President Charles de Gaulle's two vetoes of British accession. The Single European Act of 1986 unexpectedly revolutionized the EU regulatory system under the principle of "mutual recognition." Europe emerged as a regulatory superpower in areas like phytosanitary, competition, environmental, service provision, and financial policies—some of which existed nowhere before 1960. The three-decade process of creating the European monetary system and the European Monetary Union (EMU) was unforeseen in the founding treaties, as was the establishment of the Schengen zone eliminating border controls. The revolutionary doctrinal assertion by the European Court of Justice of the supremacy of EU law, and its acceptance by domestic courts, has no basis in black-letter law. The habit of diplomatic coordination (now 90 percent of UN positions are taken in common by EU members), cooperation in internal security, and the recently expanding coordination of defense policy were all unforeseen. This was in large part a response to unforeseen exogenous shocks, such as ascension of President de Gaulle in France, shifts in regional and global competitiveness, expanded capital mobility, the oil shocks and debt crises, and the collapse of Communism. The 1957 Treaty of Rome has been altered unrecognizably. Scholars debate why these decisions were taken, but none doubt their significance.

Europe United's effort to address this issue is odd. Rosato neither engages (nor even displays familiarity with) the massive literature on EU policymaking, nor challenges the existing interdisciplinary consensus with new facts or theoretical arguments. Instead, he cites exceptional statements from a few secondary scholars claiming that nothing changed in the EU since 1958. As we have seen, challenging a hostile scholarly consensus by cherry-picking exceptional quotations is methodologically improper; it simply introduces sampling bias.³³

insignificant, one should still seek to explain these "nondecisions." *Europe United* itself concedes that such comparisons would not favor realism, since the EU is far more ambitious and successful for most, if not all, of the post-Cold War period, but they are set aside because decisions subsequent to 1958 do not matter. Two analysts sympathetic to selecting on the dependent variable for process-tracing purposes, Andrew Bennett and Alexander George, point out that "the most damaging consequences [of case selection bias] arise from selecting only cases whose independent *and* dependent variables vary as the favored hypothesis suggests, ignoring cases that appear to contradict the theory, and overgeneralizing from these cases to wider populations." Bennett and George, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 24, emphasis in the original.

³³ Lustick, "History, Historiography, and Political Science."

Yet even the authorities Rosato specially selects to appear in *Europe United* in support of this counterintuitive claim are misread so badly as to reverse their actual meaning. Three remarkable examples follow. In all three, *the next sentence of the original source, left unquoted by Rosato, unambiguously states the exact opposite of the view he attributes to the author.*

The first is from a classic article, “The Transformation of Europe,” by legal scholar Joseph Weiler. Rosato defends the exclusive focus of *Europe United* on the initial interstate decisions in the 1950s that founded the EEC as follows: “I seek to explain events in Europe prior to 1960. … The early cold war was a time of revolutionary change in the construction of the EC, whereas the period since then is best described as one of incremental development. Joseph Weiler makes the point well: “The importance of developments in this early period cannot be overstated. They transcend everything that has happened since.”³⁴

Citing Weiler in this context is utterly inappropriate. He is not referring to “events prior to 1960” at all but to a period, Weiler says, “starting in 1963 and continuing into the early 1970’s [sic] and beyond.”³⁵ Nor is he referring to the importance of treaty decisions by the member states, as *Europe United* claims, but to autonomous legal decisions subsequently taken by the European Court of Justice within the context of the existing treaties. This is not surprising, because Weiler’s central thesis is the diametrical opposite of what *Europe United* ascribes to him. In implementing the Treaty of Rome, Weiler’s central argument runs, the Court of Justice did not implement previous formal commitments to promote “incremental development,” but took unexpected, precedent-setting decisions that fundamentally altered the Treaty’s content. In the very next sentence Weiler writes: “It is in this period that the Community assumed, *in stark change from the original conception of the Treaty*, its basic legal and political characteristics.”³⁶ This claim is not obscure; Weiler’s article has been taught to a generation of students, driving a quarter-century of academic work. Nearly all EU legal scholars now accept that the singular trajectory of EU law was not implicit in the Treaty of Rome, making the EU’s constitutional trajectory the most striking example of exactly the type of significant unintended consequence in world politics *Europe United* seeks to rule out with this example.

The second source is cited to defend the view that exchange rate changes after 1958 did not matter because no subsequent change in European monetary relations was significant. Fixed rates without capital mobility under the European Payments Union, pegged rates under Bretton Woods,

³⁴ Rosato, *Europe United*, 6.

³⁵ Joseph Weiler, “The Transformation of Europe,” *Yale Law Journal* 100, no. 8 (June 1991): 2413.

³⁶ Ibid., 2410 (emphasis added). After 1963, Weiler explains, “the European Court of Justice in a series of landmark decisions established four doctrines that fixed the relationship between Community law and Member State law and rendered that relationship indistinguishable from analogous legal relationships in constitutional federal states.” Weiler, “Transformation of Europe,” 2413.

floating exchange rates, the Snake, the European Monetary System (EMS), and the Euro, Rosato argues, are essentially equivalent. For anyone trained in economics or international political economy—or any informed citizen attentive to current headlines—this assertion might seem too idiosyncratic to debate seriously.³⁷ Indeed, *Europe United* does not really do so. Rather it again cherry-picks a secondary authority out of a hostile consensus. Former Deutsche Bundesbank and IMF official Horst Ungerer is quoted as writing: “it has often been said that the EMS was not much more than an enlarged snake and a regional Bretton Woods system.” Ungerer’s next sentence is not quoted: “Both views, while understandable, are not correct.”³⁸

The third source cited to support the claim that decisions after 1957 are relatively unimportant came as a surprise to me: my own book, *Choice for Europe*. The citation from my book is: “The most fundamental puzzle confronting those who seek to understand European integration [is] to . . . explain why sovereign governments. . . have chosen repeatedly to coordinate their core economic policies and surrender sovereign prerogatives within an international organization.”³⁹ Yet I am actually arguing—the decisive words being “repeatedly” and “within”—that scholars should seek to explain the intergovernmental decisions that propelled integration forward for a half century after 1958. As with Weiler and Ungerer, the next sentence is unambiguous: “The most important choices are five treaty-amending sets of agreements that propelled integration forward. . . . They punctuate EC history at a rate of roughly once per decade.”⁴⁰ In any case, there can be little ambiguity about the intent of a statement on the first page of a five hundred-page book subtitled “From Messina to Maastricht,” four-fifths of which seeks to explain decisions after the Treaty of Rome. Here for the third time on the same point *Europe United* twists a source to signify precisely the contrary of its unambiguous meaning.

Such self-incriminating errors and biases of evidence, argument, and method found in *Europe United* reaffirm the scholarly consensus: European decisions after 1958 were indeed significant. Rosato’s main argument for generalizing its empirical findings about Europe in the 1950s to integration fails. It can only be resurrected if one assumes that the four cases of integration between 1950 and 1958 constitute an unbiased sample of all decisions in EU history—a safer assumption that a sympathetic reader might perhaps see as implicit in Rosato’s incorrect premise that nothing important happened

³⁷ Further citations to articles by Jeffry Frieden and William Bernhard, Lawrence Broz, and William Clark similarly do not do justice to the basic literature in international political economy. None of the cited authors believe, as *Europe United* attributes to them, that the choice of an international monetary regime is insignificant; indeed, all have committed their careers to the opposite proposition.

³⁸ Rosato, “Europe’s Troubles,” 67; Horst Ungerer, *A Concise History of European Monetary Integration: From EPU to EMU* (Westport, CT: Quorum Books, 1997), 164.

³⁹ Rosato, *Europe United*, 9.

⁴⁰ Moravcsik, *Choice for Europe*, 1.

thereafter. *Europe United* might have been stronger had it argued explicitly for this more modest claim.

Yet even this claim lacks empirical support. The three 1950s cases in *Europe United*—the ECSC, EDC, and even the EEC—are in fact atypical of European integration. Focusing solely on them imparts a case selection bias that, properly understood, actually reverses its realist conclusion. This is so because these cases share a characteristic precisely opposite to that *Europe United* ascribes to them: far from being the highpoint of European integration, they were all, in one respect or another, failures. At least two of the three initiatives never amounted to much substantively, and even the third, the EEC, was not expected to.⁴¹ Historians now concede that the ECSC never achieved much of substantive significance.⁴² Obviously French opposition prevented the EDC from ever coming into being—a fact, we have seen, that *Europe United* explains ad hoc.⁴³

True, the EEC contained potentially more significant elements that did eventually bear fruit. Yet even it was radically incomplete, and its success was largely due to subsequent decisions. In 1957, it was greeted with skepticism: it was expected to remain unimplemented in France, and perhaps elsewhere, due to protectionist opposition, generous safeguard clauses, and postponement of critical decisions—all of which needed to be overcome by major political decisions. Indeed, its perceived insignificance may well have smoothed its negotiation, and only President de Gaulle's unexpected policy reforms the following year, Europe's macroeconomic turnaround, and the brinksmanship of CAP negotiations over the next decade rendered it viable.⁴⁴ In any case, even the modest successes these three projects recorded were narrower and less ambitious than what followed. The EU widened and deepened over time, transforming a thin arrangement in coal and steel and the unfulfilled promise of industrial and agricultural tariff reduction among six countries into a tariff-free zone with common trade positions, expanding centralized regulatory powers, a common legal system, a single currency, and other non-economic functions, among twenty-eight members. By comparison, the decisions of the 1950s seem less ambitious and less successful.

⁴¹ Hence I start my empirical analysis in *Choice for Europe* with the sentence: “The history of the European Economic Community begins with a failure.” Moravcsik, *Choice for Europe*, 86.

⁴² This consensus includes Jean Monnet’s sympathetic collaborator and preeminent biographer, François Duchêne. Of course some might argue, with Duchêne, that the impact of the ECSC was symbolic, that is, despite its substantive unimportance, it created an enduring institutional template. Yet an argument about symbolic or transaction-cost reducing institutionalist framing is neither advanced in *Europe United*, nor consistent with realism. François Duchêne, *Jean Monnet: The First Statesman of Interdependence* (New York: Norton, 1980), 393, 396–99.

⁴³ The European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), the other major initiative of the 1950s—unaccountably ignored in *Europe United*, since one would expect it to be of security interest—was also a failure.

⁴⁴ This is not a controversial claim. See, for example, Warzoulet, *Le choix de la CEE par le France*.

Thus the case selection in *Europe United* inadvertently demonstrates the opposite of its central thesis: it reveals a negative correlation between intensity of geopolitical motivation and European integration. What require explanation are the increasing ambition, success, and functional depth of integration over time. Balance of power theory has no explanation for this, while functional economic theories do, by assuming that integration responded to exogenous shifts in intra-industry trade, financial integration, regulatory change, and the geographical scope of Europe.⁴⁵

THE METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The theoretical and empirical lessons of *Europe United* are straightforward. Against its intent, the book's analysis tends to confirm the prevailing interdisciplinary consensus: over six decades, economic interest dominated European integration, with geopolitics playing a secondary role. Nothing in this new book budges this conventional wisdom. Any plea to return to a monocausal interpretation based on anti-Soviet and Franco-German balancing, a view that scholars relegated to secondary status decades ago for sound evidentiary reasons, seems a step backward. More broadly, this finding underscores a widespread conviction in the field of international relations that, while the realist theory of coercive power balancing is an essential tool for understanding world politics, scholars should take care not to exaggerate its scope and power.⁴⁶

Yet the more important lessons of *Europe United* concern proper qualitative methods. Working without minimal methodological standards leaves research such as that reported in *Europe United* with little protection against bias. We have seen that the analysis contains major errors in the selection and interpretation of existing scholarly literature and theoretical arguments, primary sources, and conflicting evidence. The most obvious way in which this is true is in sining by omission: *Europe United* reaches realist conclusions by citing evidence of geopolitical motivations that existing works (even non-realist ones) cite, but systematically omitting (or misreading) the best countervailing arguments, evidence, and sources for economic and ideational accounts. This is not nit-picking: the apparent divergence between realist theory and the conventional wisdom is driven not by new theory or evidence, but almost entirely by this bias. Moreover, the striking number of

⁴⁵ Indeed, functional economic explanations can even account for, and predicted, the plateauing of European integration in the 2000s, but that takes us beyond the scope of this essay. Andrew Moravcsik, "The European Constitutional Settlement," *World Economy* 31, no. 1 (January 2008).

⁴⁶ A more narrowly defined and thus more robust realist theory would provide an essential and "salutary correction to those liberal, institutionalist and epistemic theories that ignore or attempt to implicitly smuggle power into their analysis." Legro and Moravcsik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?" 53.

outright misquotations, in which well-known primary and secondary sources are cited to show the diametrical opposite of their unambiguous meaning on major points, should disqualify this work from influencing the debate on the fundamental causes of European integration.⁴⁷

The proper response to such work is not to reject historical case study analysis, but to improve it. Qualitative studies offer great potential to revise our conventional understandings of world politics. Moreover, scholars should be encouraged, as Rosato seeks to do, to deploy those results to speak to the concerns of citizens and policymakers. Yet there is no point in doing this if the empirical conclusions (no matter how theoretically provocative they might seem to nonspecialists) are arbitrary and unreliable. Methodologically unsound theory-testing undermines the quality of scholarship, the prestige of historical social science, and the value of social science as a guide for policymaking. International relations scholars must redouble their commitment to rigorous case study analysis. Encouraging adoption of clearer and more rigorous qualitative standards for text-based analysis should thus be a high priority for the field of international relations.

⁴⁷ Citation is never perfect, but I know of no prior case of a work in EU studies or international relations (including my own) criticized for repeatedly attributing to cited sources the opposite of their unambiguous meaning. One way to make such errors transparent, and thus nearly impossible, would be to adopt “active citation,” whereby fifty to one hundred words (or more) of supporting original source material (in an appendix) is connected to the citation by a hypertext link. See Andrew Moravcsik, “Active Citation: A Precondition for Replicable Qualitative Research,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 43, no. 1 (January 2010): 29–35; Moravcsik, “Active Citation and Qualitative Political Science,” *Qualitative and Multi-Method Research* 10, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 33–37. For corresponding transparency norms now found in the American Political Science Association ethics requirements see http://www.apsanet.org/content_2483.cfm. Making data transparent in this way is also the best way to respond to criticism about sources. For example, in response to some criticisms of clerical errors in my *Choice for Europe*, full source material for every citation in a twenty-page section on de Gaulle in *Choice for Europe* is scheduled to be posted later this year online in “active citation” form at a new NSF-funded Qualitative Data Repository based at Syracuse University, which I codirect, along with similar “active citation” versions of articles by numerous other scholars. On that basis, I am preparing a further response to those critics at the invitation of the *Journal of Cold War Studies*. I will also post an active citation version of this article on my website at <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs> with fully activated citations from *Uniting Europe* and its sources. If Rosato believes any characterization of his sources in this debate is inaccurate, I encourage him to defend his position using the same transparent primary-source based active citation method.