

Political Science

Query paper:

Title: The Path to European Integration: A Historical Institutionalist Analysis

Abstract: Observers of the European Community have criticized “intergovernmentalist” accounts for exaggerating the extent of member-state control over European integration. This article grounds these criticisms in a historical institutionalist analysis, stressing the need to study European integration as a process that unfolds over time. Losses of control result not only from the autonomous actions of supranational organizations, but from member-state preoccupation with short-term concerns, the ubiquity of unintended consequences, and the instability of member-state policy preferences. Once gaps in control emerge, change-resistant decision rules and sunk costs associated with societal adaptations make it difficult for member states to reassert their authority. Brief examination of the evolution of EC social policy suggests the limitations of treating the EC as an instrument facilitating collective action among sovereign states. Rather, integration should be viewed as a path-dependent process producing a fragmented but discernible multitiered European polity.

Candidate papers:

1. **Title:** The state of the (European) Union: from the single market to Maastricht, from singular events to general theories

Abstract: This review article examines four recent volumes on the European Union, each of which takes as its substantive and theoretical starting point the relaunching of the European Community in the mid-1980s around the single market initiative. Taken together, they provide a comprehensive account of the momentous events leading up to the Maastricht summit. They also present an accurate reflection of the current state of the subfield. Their basic research agenda, a continuation of traditional approaches in Community studies, revolves around the “big bangs” of integration and the conventional models of neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism. This scholarly continuity generates unwelcome consequences for the selection of research puzzles and for the robustness and reach of the findings. As a remedy, several strategies—some methodological, others theoretical—are outlined for generating new insights into the growing complexity of the European Union.

2. **Title:** International cooperation and institutional choice: the European Community's internal market

Abstract: The decision of the European Community (EC) members to complete their “internal market” by the end of 1992, as embodied in the 1987 Single European Act (SEA), may represent the most ambitious instance of multilateral cooperation since the construction of the post-World War II international order. The economic objective of internal market completion is the removal of a wide array of nontariff barriers to trade that elsewhere have proved politically intractable, including border controls, national standards, preferential procurement policies, and industrial subsidies. In addition, the internal market is buttressed by an elaborate and powerful legal system. EC law is considered to have supremacy over national laws and to have “direct effect” in domestic jurisdictions, regardless of whether it is explicitly incorporated through legislation.

3. **Title:** The European Court's political power

Abstract: The European Court has emerged as one of the most powerful political institutions in the European Union and the most influential international court in existence. National courts are the linchpins of the European legal system, making European Court decisions enforceable and creating an independent power base for the European Court. This article examines why national courts agreed to take on a role enforcing European law supremacy against their own governments and why national politicians did not stop an institutional transformation of the European legal system which greatly compromised national sovereignty. Politicians proved unable to reverse national court acceptance of European law supremacy, and institutional rules kept politicians from sanctioning either national courts or the European Court for judicial activism.

4. **Title:** Contra contractarianism: some reflections on the new institutionalism

Abstract: CONTEMPORARY work in the fields of economic history, political science, and economics exhibits a renewed concern with institutions. At the core of the new theorizing lies the claim that institutions reconcile rationality on the part of individuals with rationality on the part of society. More specifically, institutions are treated as a means for resolving collective dilemmas. Collective dilemmas arise when choices made by rational individuals lead to outcomes that no one prefers. Social scientists see in collective dilemmas reasons for the existence of institutions: forms of hierarchy in which sanctions are employed to make self-interested choices consistent with the social good. This article reviews and critiques the logic that underlies the new institutionalism. The new institutionalists seek an economic theory of institutions.

5. **Title:** The European Community and regional integration theory

Abstract: The central concern of this paper is a stocktaking of theories of regional integration applied to the European Community (EC). Many will not envy us the task. Given the multiplicity of different approaches, the incommensurability of many concepts, and the arguable historical novelty of the EC, perhaps we would be better off to describe what is happening as best we can, and postpone theoretical explanations until a later day. Without denying either the value of descriptive work or the difficulty of devising satisfying explanations, in the paper we direct our attention to codifying our theoretical past and making some suggestions for the future.

6. **Title:** Theories of international regimes

Abstract: Over the last decade, international regimes have become a major focus of empirical research and theoretical debate within international relations. This article provides a critical review of this literature. We survey contending definitions of regimes and suggest dimensions along which regimes vary over time or across cases; these dimensions might be used to operationalize "regime change." We then examine four approaches to regime analysis: structural, game-theoretic, functional, and cognitive. We conclude that the major shortcoming of the regimes literature is its failure to incorporate domestic politics adequately. We suggest a research program that begins with the central insights of the interdependence literature which have been ignored in the effort to construct "systemic" theory.

Exemplary analysis:

1. **Relevance:** The query paper aims to critique the traditional intergovernmentalist accounts of European integration, and this citation supports that critique by highlighting the limitations of conventional models (neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism) in explaining the EU's complexity. It aligns with the query paper's goal to present a more nuanced, historically grounded analysis.

Reason for Citation: This paper is likely cited because it provides a comprehensive review of the European Union's evolution, particularly focusing on the significant milestones of the single market initiative and the Maastricht summit.

2. **Relevance:** The decision to complete the EC's internal market by 1992, as discussed in this paper, represents a pivotal moment in European integration. This citation supports the argument that European integration is a complex process influenced by both economic ambitions and legal frameworks, which can lead to unintended consequences and loss of control by member states.

Reason for Citation: The query paper might cite this to illustrate a specific instance where member states surrendered a degree of sovereignty to achieve broader economic objectives, challenging the notion of member-state control.

3. **Relevance:** The discussion on national courts enforcing European law supremacy, even against their own governments, exemplifies the kind of unintended consequences and shifts in control that the query paper aims to highlight.

Reason for Citation: This paper is relevant for demonstrating the European Court's role in shaping the political landscape of the EU, which directly ties into the query paper's theme of supranational organizations autonomously influencing the integration process.

4. **Relevance:** The query paper draws on historical institutionalism to analyze European integration, making this citation particularly relevant.

Reason for Citation: It critiques the new institutionalism approach, focusing on how institutions manage collective dilemmas and reconcile individual rationality with societal goals. This theoretical backdrop is crucial for the query paper, as it seeks to understand how European integration, as a process, has been shaped by institutional dynamics, including those that lead to unintended outcomes.

5. **Relevance:** This citation likely serves to contextualize the theoretical landscape surrounding the study of the European Community (EC).

Reason for Citation: By examining various theories of regional integration, the query paper can position its historical institutionalist analysis as a response to the inadequacies or gaps in these existing theories. It underscores the need for a historical analysis to capture the EC's unique development and challenges the reader to consider integration as a path-dependent process.

6. **Relevance:** This paper is cited probably because it offers a critical review of international regimes, which is relevant for understanding the broader theoretical context in which European integration can be analyzed.

Reason for Citation: The query paper might use this citation to argue that existing theories, including those on international regimes, do not fully account for the complexities and nuances of European integration, especially when it comes to incorporating domestic politics and historical processes.

Exemplary ranking: Ranked order: paper 4, paper 3, paper 5, paper 2, paper 1, paper 6

1. **Explanation:** While providing a broad overview of the EU's evolution, this paper might be less directly relevant to a follow-up study focused specifically on the historical institutionalist analysis of European integration. However, it still offers valuable context and a critique of conventional models, making it a useful but not primary source.
2. **Explanation:** This paper's examination of a key moment in European integration (the decision to complete the EC's internal market) would be crucial for a follow-up study focusing on the interplay between economic ambitions, legal frameworks, and the resulting unintended consequences. It provides a concrete case study that complements the theoretical analysis.
3. **Explanation:** The role of supranational organizations, particularly the European Court, is crucial in understanding the dynamics of European integration. This paper's focus on the Court's influence aligns closely with the query paper's emphasis on the autonomous actions of supranational bodies shaping the integration process, making it highly relevant for further exploration.
4. **Explanation:** This paper is foundational for understanding the theoretical underpinnings of historical institutionalism, which is central to the query paper's analysis. A follow-up study would likely delve deeper into the critique of new institutionalism to further explore how historical institutionalism can provide a more nuanced understanding of European integration.
5. **Explanation:** For a research follower, engaging with theories of regional integration is essential to position their work within the broader academic discourse. This paper would provide critical insights into the theoretical debates and gaps that the follow-up research could aim to address, especially in terms of applying historical institutionalism to these theories.
6. **Explanation:** Although this paper offers a critical review of international regimes, which is relevant for situating European integration within a broader theoretical context, it might be considered less directly applicable to a study deeply rooted in historical institutionalism and the specifics of European integration. It would serve as background reading to understand the wider theoretical landscape.