

EURATOM: Bridging ‘Rapprochement’ and ‘Radiance’ of France in the Post-war

Eunjeong Cho*

This article interrogates the question of how France was able to achieve their policy goals, ‘radiance of France’ (nuclear development), in respect to the relations with those in the post-war alliance, ‘rapprochement of France’ (European integration). It argues that France’s membership in EURATOM provided a venue for pursuance of its political autonomy via rhetorical actions which I labelled, ‘agree-and-deepen policy,’ was precisely one such mechanism through which this was done. In so doing, I open the discussion with critiques to the Rationalist Materialist account on the French motivation to become a member of EURATOM; namely that France joined EURATOM to accomplish its nuclear ambition through exploiting all the available sources of EURATOM and the false controversies contained within the EURATOM ‘defence clause’. Next, an alternative explanation is provided in regards to the influence of EURATOM over France by tracing the path in which the French foreign policy identity was reconstructed in the post-war period via EURATOM under the framework of ‘agree-and-deepen policy’. Finally, it concludes that EURATOM provided France leeway for legitimate nuclear development, which satisfied two policy goals demanded by Others and desired by the French Self, without negatively impacting on the French relations with Others.

Keywords: EURATOM, France, Foreign Policy Identification, the Cold War, European Integration, Nuclear Development

1. INTRODUCTION

After the Second World War, obtaining nuclear power was seen as a panacea that can align defence requirements with political realities, especially to those countries located in unstable geo-political positions that made them feel particularly vulnerable in their quest for legitimacy and existence. For an obvious example, new-born countries that needed to create a ‘statehood’ such as India, Pakistan, Israel, and South Africa sought to possess nuclear weapons. Likewise, it is understood that atoms were strongly attached to national identities and international recognition in Western Europe after the Second World War. The most well-known example can be found from De Gaulle’s dominating policy idea of ‘Radiance of France (*le rayonnement de la France*)’ and its policy implementations across the Third and the Fourth Republic. Unlike the newly independent countries, however, France’s nuclear ambition has been dominantly explained by its material interests—nuclear arms race is a popular among many. While it succeeded to demonstrate some external dimensions of French motivation of nuclear development, such view failed to provide a deeper analysis of post-war France’s nuclear obsession, an obsession that aligned with the persistent discourse on ‘Grand France (*la grandeur de la France*)’. To explain this, it is necessary to engage in the discussion of the path of identity construction, which is associated with the concept of

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‘ontological security’ (‘security of the self’), understood as ‘a prior confidence’ to ‘the condition for being able to construct differences between self and other, us and them’ (McSweeney, 1999:157). It is because, to emphasise, identity is a ‘social act’, enabling individuals to build and maintain a story about Self/Selves, as well as a ‘structure of meaning’, being embedded in the sustained story and drawing the members to enact identity (Goldschmidt, 1982:125-144; Skogmar, 2004:192-4).

In this context, this article examines France and its motivation for participating in the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), the twin institution of the European Economic Community (EEC) established by the Treaty of Rome in 1957, with a focus on the political implications embedded in the relations between nuclear technology and ‘Frenchness’ after the Second World War (WWII). More specifically, this article asks the question of what led France to join EURATOM despite its strong national sentiment attached to atoms. In this article it is argued that French participation in EURATOM enabled France to ease the tension between the imposed roles and desired roles for itself in the post-war period.

To provide a brief overview of EURATOM, it is located in the conjunction of three key historical moments: the emergence of atomic power, the Cold War confrontation, and moves towards regional integration in Europe. Indeed, the historical implications of EURATOM are no less significant than those of other organisations created during the same period regarding the subjects examined in three realms respectively. In European Studies, Deubner emphasised that ‘the Atomic Community was neither an irrelevant peripheral affair in the shadow of the Common Market negotiations, nor was it merely a vehicle for the realization of EEC. On the contrary, the concept of, and the negotiations toward Euratom seems to have been indispensable stepping stones to the development of the Common Market’ (Deubner, 1979:207).¹ Indeed, its ‘tactical pairing’ with EEC played an important role ‘in initially persuading and eventually convincing a sceptical French Government to engage with European integration after the embittering experience of the aborted European Army’ (O’Driscoll, 2001:1). Hence ‘Euratom’s underlying motive was political’: EURATOM was a political dynamo of “supranational” regional organisations designed to transcend the system of sovereign nation states in one corner of the world and to restructure the relations among those states’ (O’Driscoll, 2001:1; Scheinman, 1967:5). In this respect, its origins are ‘closely intertwined’ with the post-war political landscape of the Western European countries, and among the Six members, France would be the exemplary state that can best depict political dynamics around the establishment of EURATOM (O’Driscoll, 2001:1).

When explaining French membership of EURATOM, it has been popularly explained through a Rationalist Materialist lens (Mykle, 2009; Andreini, 2000; Gordon, 1993; Kohl, 1971; Ambassador of France, 1960). Through such lens the possession of nuclear weapons was key to explaining French participation in order to enhance France’s international influence. Along this line, the major concerns of Rationalist Materialist discussions have developed into two main arguments: first, whether EURATOM failed; and second, whether France’s contribution to the failure was not small. Despite controversies, these Rationalist Materialist arguments still have circulated among EURATOM researchers without being thoroughly examined since its establishment in 1957. While Rationalist Materialist approaches contributed to identifying external influences that would have affected the

¹ Deubner puts this as ‘an apparently realistic short-to-medium-range objective for European integration when prospects for a general common market seemed dim.’

France-EURATOM relations, they are unable to provide an explanation on the endogenous origins of the motivation of French interests in EURATOM, which in relative terms have been understudied. In this respect, the study introduces Constructivist approaches to provide a more balanced view. Note that it does not mean to deny the usefulness of Rationalist Materialist theories, rather, redress the existing gap between different ontological and epistemological traditions in International Relations (IR) and seek to fill in the cleavage in the discussion of nuclear politics.

Indeed, Constructivist approach can contribute to understanding France's motivation to join EURATOM by focusing on the internal dynamics of post-war France. After the Second World War, France was challenged by a changing international environment including the decline of its imperial influence, and the emergence of two new great ideological power blocks in the Cold War. In order to maintain its international influence, France sought to repair relations with its neighbouring countries and accept its role of leading regional integration in post-war Europe ('Rapprochement'). This reduced the attendant risk of diminishing its national sovereignty. On the other hand, regardless of different political identities, French cabinets were constantly captivated by nuclear power after the war and ran a national programme for nuclear development and research ('Radiancé'). This programme, however, was not effectively militarised until 26 December 1954, when the French Prime Minister, Mendés-France, approved a secret nuclear programme to build a nuclear bomb (Baylis, 1975:289). Whereas the former (integration) was encouraged by the international community including the Benelux countries and the US, the latter role (nuclear power) would not be permitted by Others under any circumstances in the post-war period. For example, the US maintained a strict nuclear non-proliferation policy even towards the Cold War allies. The Soviets also would have not permitted French possession of nuclear explosives under their nose. In addition, the costs for nuclear experiments and the manufacture of nuclear bombs would not be cheap for France. Hence, France struggled between the two roles, one accepted, 'Rapprochement', and the other not, 'Radiancé', in the first decade of the post-war period in particular. EURATOM, however, seems to have provided France with a solution for its dilemma between demands and desires. EURATOM, the community for regional nuclear cooperation, must have appeared as an ideal combination of both roles in one task. Also, France, I argue, contributed to the creation of EURATOM by offering its rich intellectual tradition that could have helped legitimise the presence of EURATOM as an alternative nuclear norm discourse to the dominant one provided by the US.

To demonstrate this argument, the article is structured as follows. First, I challenge the Rationalist Materialist account of the French motivation to become a member of EURATOM; namely that France joined EURATOM to accomplish its nuclear ambition through exploiting all the available sources of EURATOM and the false controversies contained within the EURATOM 'defence clause'. In the second section, to provide an alternative explanation I analyse the influence of EURATOM over France by tracing the path of reconstructing post-war French foreign policy identity ('change') via EURATOM under the framework of 'agree-and-deepen policy', a tactical behaviour to minimise (emotional) harms to overall relations with counterparts in pursuing a policy goal.

2. THE LIMITS OF RATIONALIST MATERIALIST EXPLANATION OF THE MOTIVATION OF FRENCH MEMBERSHIP OF EURATOM

EURATOM has been criticised for its obscure wording on the provisions which prohibited the military use of nuclear technology and radioactive materials. Article 84 of the EURATOM Treaty specifies that ‘controls shall not extend to materials intended for the purposes of defence which are being specially processed for such purposes or which, after being processed, are, in accordance with an operational plan, deposited or stocked in a military establishment’. This article, the so called ‘defence clause’, was popularly understood as the major loophole of EURATOM which gave the French a way of carrying on their nuclear experiment: ‘Euratom security control stops where military uses begin’ (Polach, 1964:96; Scheinman, 1965:185-6 and 1967). When France succeeded with its first nuclear experiment in 1960, EURATOM was perceived as impotent as it was not able to stop French nuclear development for military purposes: ‘No article of the Treaty limited a nation’s right to use atomic energy for military purposes’ (Scheinman, 1965:186). Simultaneously, France was heavily criticised for abusing EURATOM for its own sake. To verify the reputation of EURATOM’s ‘failed’ mission for nuclear non-proliferation, it would be inevitable to conduct a deeper examination of the French motivation for membership of EURATOM. If France benefitted from EURATOM in terms of its nuclear bomb manufacture, it would be appropriate to attribute EURATOM’s early failure to it, unless such claims are baseless.

Regardless of whether EURATOM is a success or a failure, it seems that the dominant view in this case is that EURATOM directly contributed to the creation of a French nuclear arsenal. For example, Skogmar argues that France joined EURATOM because the European nuclear pool could have resolved three problems which the French faced in proceeding their nuclear development project. Primarily, the French would have been able to supply a sufficient amount of uranium to proceed with their national nuclear development. While France was reported to possess substantial reserves of uranium and thorium in metropolitan France and African territories, it was regarded as underdeveloped and not ready for immediate use. Instead, Belgium—one of the Six—was regarded as a key player to supply France cheap uranium if the US allowed Belgians to deliver to other parties (Skogmar, 2004:116-7). Second, to produce a plutonium bomb, particularly chosen to compete with the hydrogen bombs (H-bombs) of the US and the UK, France needed high-enriched uranium fuels, which would be unavailable to France without external financial and technological support. In February 1955 a French request to construct an enrichment plant was refused by the UK with reference to the Anglo-American Agreement, which underlined that nuclear cooperation with continental European countries should be seen as the only option available for France at that time (Goldschmidt, 1967:225-7). Finally, French concerns over German nuclear control could be resolved through a common nuclear regulation body, again a ‘control through integration’ after the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) (Skogmar, 2004:116-7).

On the contrary, it was estimated by the experts in the 1950s that ‘financially and technically France was capable of making an atomic weapon’ (Scheinman, 1965:114-5). Explicitly, Pierre André contested that France did not need EURATOM to develop a full range of atomic industrial activity and Foreign Minister of Belgium Henry Spaak’s moratorium proposal was also not acceptable because France needed to ‘proceed immediately to establish an atomic force’ (Scheinman, 1965:162). In fact, as mentioned

earlier, Mendés-France approved a secret nuclear programme for military use in December 1954 (Baylis, 1975:289). While the first national authority for nuclear development, the Commissariat à l'Énergie Atomique (CEA), was first organised by the French government in 1945, France's first entry into the nuclear field goes back to 1900 (Kohl, 1971:16). Also, French physicists Irène and Frédéric Joliot-Curie's discovery of artificial radioactivity in 1930 opened up the possibility of developing the discovery into invention of atomic explosives, which actually led the US and its allies to victory in the war in 1945 (Mongin, 1997:15-27). During the German occupation, French nuclear scientists continued their research in collaboration with the Anglo-American and Canadian nuclear scientists (Mongin, 1997:22-27). In addition, France acquired resources necessary for nuclear laboratories at a very early stage: even after the outbreak of the Second World War, French scientists obtained the entire Norwegian stock of heavy water and the Belgian Congolese uranium oxide necessary to fuel an atomic device (Kohl, 1971:16). By 1955, French uranium deposits were sufficient to supply an isotope separation plant even though France lacked the technological data necessary for isotope separation (Scheinman, 1965:153).

Aside from this, there is a view that the 'obscure' wording of the EURATOM defence clause was designed on purpose (Howlett, 1990:97-98). While originally the Treaty draft contained details of controlling operations on special fissile materials and designs for nuclear weapon manufacture, they were removed after review (Howlett, 1990). This was first because focusing on nuclear control in civil use was regarded as a more realistic and practical option. To avoid the failure experienced over the European Defence Community (EDC), at the time near to national ratifications it was essential to prevent any potential controversy which would stop the launch of EURATOM and European community.² Second, and in relation to content, the drafters had confidence in the inspection process of EURATOM which they had designed (Errera et al., 1958:161). There is a substantial difference between the level of enrichment of Uranium necessary for civil and military purposes. Hence even if the proposed EURATOM isotope separation plant produced U₂₃₅, it would be of little use for military purposes (Scheinman, 1965:156-7). If France insisted on building an independent enrichment plant specifically for military purposes apart from that of EURATOM, French membership of EURATOM, the CEA concluded, would only cause 'double expense' and sacrifice French nuclear sovereignty (Scheinman, 1965:157). In addition, as every moment of nuclear energy development of the six member countries would be under the same security measures within EURATOM, in principle it would be able to distinguish between civil and military purposes through the Commission's corps of inspectors who were guaranteed free access to nuclear facilities, equipment, and materials throughout the territories of the Six (Errera et al., 1958:161; Howlett, 1990:96-8). For example, the ownership included all such substances either produced in the Community or imported to it as long as they were produced under the common nuclear safeguards of EURATOM except materials prepared for the purpose of national defence and 're-exported after being processed in the Community' (Polach, 1964:77).³ In this context, it seems less convincing to argue that French membership of EURATOM was motivated by potential benefits from building independent uranium enrichment plants under the auspices of

² While EURATOM Treaty is often attacked by its obscure wording but succeeded to be issued, the EDC treaty was filled with all the specific details of technical conditions but failed to be ratified.

³ Related articles: (Article 84, 86, and 75 (c)). To remind, the EURATOM Treaty was modeled after American legal frameworks on nuclear safeguards.

EURATOM. The enrichment level of the nuclear energy fuel which the US and the UK produced for sale were not high enough to use for plutonium production anyway.

Crucially, the concept of safeguards changed substantially after the Atoms for Peace speech of Eisenhower in 1953: safeguards in this framework 'are not intended to seek out clandestine operations or undeclared activities or to govern or regulate national action' any more (Fischer, 1997:123). Instead, safeguards in the Atoms for Peace era aimed to provide 'a specific means of verification for a more particular application' (Fischer, 1997:122-3). The role of safeguards in this framework was limited to verifying whether the member states violated their voluntary accord, not to divert nuclear materials and facilities under safeguards to military purposes by monitoring, auditing, and reporting. In this respect, it can be understood that 'national accumulation of safeguarded weapons-usable material' was not the major concern of the safeguards after the speech of Atoms for Peace. Thus, it seems groundless to blame EURATOM for failing to stop the French nuclear experiment, which was not safeguarded by EURATOM as specified in Article 84. Indeed if this was the case, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the European Nuclear Energy Agency (ENEA), of which France was also a member, would be equally responsible for the French nuclear experiment. Actually, whereas EURATOM member countries remained non-nuclear-weapon-possessed countries, except for France and Britain which joined as nuclear states, IAEA repeated the same problem in terms of nuclear proliferation: after its launch in 1958, nuclear proliferation continued in France, China, India, Pakistan, and North Korea.

As a result, it seems less plausible to uphold the dominant views that have prevailed in academia: that the French nuclear bomb development project benefitted from EURATOM; and thus that EURATOM failed its mission. However, this does not resolve all the issues in relation to France and EURATOM. Indeed one key question remains unresolved: if material needs cannot explain the motivation of French membership of EURATOM, then what else persuaded France to decide to join EURATOM in 1956? In this respect, this study draws attention to the international relations that France closely associated with in the following section.

3. FRANCE'S MEMBERSHIP OF EURATOM: BRIDGING DEMANDS AND DESIRE

This section turns to interrogate the question of despite opposition from neighbouring countries how France was able to achieve its policy goal, 'radiance of France' (nuclear development) and coordinate it with policy demands of Cold War allies, 'rapprochement of France' (European Integration). It is argued that France's membership of EURATOM provided a venue for pursuance of its political autonomy via rhetorical actions of, I labelled, 'agree-and-deepen policy' was precisely one such mechanism through which this was done. Basically, 'agree-and-deepen policy' is tactical (and usually tentative) behaviour performed to minimise (emotional) harm to existing relations with counterparts by emphasising two contrasting actions, *assimilation* and *differentiation*. Indeed, despite their collaborative contribution to constructing identities, assimilation and differentiation run after different mechanisms: while similarities tend to pull actors together, differences tend to push their identities apart from each other. Inspired by this psychological effect, tactical behaviours may develop over three steps of identity modification, as follows:

- (1) To draw some degree of trust, one emphasises similarities and demonstrate agreement to the audience and it does not necessary mean real acceptance (Coicaud, 2008:289). Such temporary lip service is usually introduced because a ‘working’ acceptance is usually sufficient enough to prevent instant repercussions from the counterparts and to save ‘face’ for both parties (Goffman, 2005a:11). Also, it helps ‘avoid the hostility that may be directed towards’ oneself, and saves time in which one may be able to develop a more concrete plan for the next move (Goffman, 2005a:12).
- (2) Next, one turns to legitimise their being by emphasising their difference from the counterpart and later re-identifying the Self in respect of Key Others. This is the stage in which the truth of any agreement previously paid emerges from the ‘vener of consensus’ and accordingly the underlying identity of the margin is revealed to the audience (Goffman, 2005b:134).
- (3) Finally despite some power asymmetry that would possibly exist between any two parties, one may seek room to enlarge one’s autonomy by aligning the identity of Others in a parallel line of similarities and differences of the Self and, hence, attempt to reconstruct the relations between Self and Others by changing their options and self-identities and at the same time impacting on the identities and values of the Others.

3.1. Accepting Demands: ‘Rapprochement’

After the World Wars ended, the new international situation soon prompted serious thinking about the French role in Europe and the world. Indeed, it was a difficult time within which the French had to cope with embarrassment both internally and externally, especially under the bland, divided leadership of the political parties in the Third Republic. Economically, whilst the French considered American Marshall economic aid ‘for the margins only,’ France had to find an appropriate measure for the economic aid in order to break the vicious circle of French dependence on imports by removing Communists from its government and welcoming American businessmen who had thus far found their way blocked in resuming operations (Wall, 1991:76). Politically, regardless of some privileges which France managed to preserve, such as permanent membership of the UN Security Council, in reality France did not have a decisive role in shaping the new order after 1945 (Scheinman, 1965:xviii). Even worse, as soon as the World War ended, France, unlike Britain, became involved in new wars with its colonies and humiliated itself by losing some of them such as in Indo-China and North Africa.

Consequent on the foregoing, French self-identification in the post-war period was directly affected by its changing international status and its domestic environment. Post-war France was, as Pierre Bourdieu puts it, ‘poor’ due to the loss of its ‘centrality and empowerment within a social formation that has changed around’ (Kelly, Fallaize, and Ridehalgh, 1995:101). France was, according to Rapkine, ‘definitely poor and ill—and proud,’ and its pride did not come because of its success, but was ‘born of defiance,’ which ‘compensates certain feelings that they would rather hide,—the feeling of having been overrun by an all-powerful enemy; the feeling of having been crushed into silence for five long years’ (Krige, 2006:83). Another unmistakable symptom of post-war French fragility was the ‘nostalgia’ for the Golden Age, which ‘leads to *optimistic denials* that it has come to an end’ (Kelly, Fallaize, and Ridehalgh, 1995:104). In this respect, nostalgia was not a denial of

reality, but rather the reluctance of its acceptance (Godin and Chafer, 2004:xx).⁴ As a result, the dominant feelings shared among the contemporary French then were ‘modernisation losers,’ ‘feeling alone,’ ‘alienated’ and ‘powerless’ (Godin, 2004:65). Also, the material and spiritual decimation left the French vulnerable to seeing external support as a form of ‘charity,’ which would be ‘resented’ and ‘rebuffed’ (Krige, 2006:83). No wonder then that the Third and Fourth Republics were marked by a great deal of frustration; between the reluctance to accept the reduced status of France among allies and heavy reliance on Anglo-American support for successful economic recovery after the war.⁵ Indeed, France’s post-war foreign policy goal was always to preserve political leadership by improving ‘Europe’s client status to the US and the unequal nature of the transatlantic partnership,’ which was, de Gaulle argued, ‘detrimental to the advancement of both French and European interests’ (Bryant, 2004:125).

To *repair* relations, there was a policy option immediately available for post-war France: ‘rapprochement’. When the two great World Wars finally ended in 1945, West Europeans regarded the reconciliation of Franco-German relations as the first task to be completed for a swift European war recovery. However, it did not begin as soon as the war was over. For the first few years after the liberation of Paris in August 1944, France was particularly preoccupied with the pursuit of Nazi collaborators inside the country and the international institutionalisation of strict control of Germany outside. ‘Yet as recently as 1947 there had been no question in most French minds, and probably in most British minds as well, that the main enemy was still Germany’ (Bell, 1997:96). For example, the Treaty of Dunkirk (March, 1947), agreed upon ‘Alliance and Mutual Assistance’ between the UK and France against a possible German attack, and was ‘explicitly anti-German’ (Bell, 1997:96).⁶ In addition, in the early years after the war France was too busy coping with war recovery to think beyond issues within its national boundary. Also, de Gaulle and his followers were not convinced by the idea that a supranational institution could replace national states due to the lack of its historical legitimacy; indeed its creation was not seen as natural (Gordon, 1993:10). They would favour supranational cooperation only as a means to enhance national interests, not as an end (Gordon, 1993:11). Overall, in the early post-war years France was not particularly enthusiastic about supranational integration in Europe, but French ‘*relance (revival)*’ and the punishment and containment of Germany.

Nevertheless, such hard-line French policy strands towards the ‘German question’ were soon mitigated by the decision to include West Germany as a Marshall Aid beneficiary in 1948. In the preparatory conferences for creating a Federal Republic of Germany in 1948, France, despite some safeguards against potential German menace, also failed to separate the Ruhr from the rest of Germany and abandoned its former strict German policy. A crucial change, however, took place and it shook up the whole process of post-war power reconstruction in Europe: the Soviets imposed the Berlin blockade in June 1948. The Soviet provocation spontaneously increased the tension between the East and the West, and it also strengthened the American determination to establish an independent government of liberal democracy in Western Germany. The East-West division was finalised by the creation of the

⁴ Emphasis is mine.

⁵ Indeed, ‘there were few commitments that France could undertake and carry out successfully without Anglo-American supports’ (Macridis, 1962:59). See also, (Duroselle, 1963:57-88).

⁶ The original title of the treaty is ‘Treaty of Alliance and Mutual Assistance between the United Kingdom and France’.

two new independent governments in Germany in 1949. From this series of historical events, West Germany, though hardly independent, became the most strategically important focal point in the US vision of Western European defence throughout the Cold War. Regardless of French complaints that 'restoration of Germany was moving too far and too fast', the historical urgency thus pushed the new state to move towards greater sovereignty and wider international acceptance (Bell, 1997:97). Nevertheless, in the end, the general direction of the post-war reconstruction process in Europe was heavily influenced by French interests.

Succinctly, as the Cold War confrontation mounted, US President Truman wanted the European allies to take their own responsibility for European defence and thus threatened the withdrawal of the US military on the one hand, and supported the idea of 'one Europe' on the other hand. Domestically, the Truman administration was put in a difficult position in terms of convincing Americans why, despite the end of the 'European' war, US armies should remain in Europe funded by the American tax payer. France strongly opposed US military withdrawal from Europe because of the potential German threat after the war as well as the Soviet threats when the Cold War confrontation increased. In this respect, the US expected France, which did not hesitate to hide its hatred towards Germany for some time after the war, to take initiatives which lead to reconciling with Germany and the 'revival' of West Germany to let it play its responsibility in near future (FRUS, 1948). France was unsatisfied with the Alliance's relatively quick pardon of Germany and also frightened by US withdrawals from Europe which it feared could be imminent. France, however, did not refuse the opportunity to check German industry and militarism within the framework of 'a common Franco-German destiny' which would be able to enhance the long-term security of France. As a part of its efforts, West Germany was included in the idea of 'one Europe' or 'European revival' under strong French initiatives. It first materialised through the project for coal and steel produced in the Ruhr and Saar, discussion of which had been stalled since November 1948. On 9 May 1950, French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman presented a plan for establishing the European Coal and Steel Community as 'the first concrete foundation of a European federation' (Poidevin, 1986:208); (Schuman, 1950).

Whilst the emergence of French leadership can be explained in relation to the post-war international environment and the increasing demand on France to be led by others (i.e. the US), this does not imply that France was reluctant to accept the role. Indeed it simply emphasised the importance of the French role in Europe at the time. Demands for a leading French role in European integration also corresponded well to the French post-war policy objective of '*relance*', seeking a revival of grand French glory, underpinned by notions of French exceptionalism and the idea that 'France was the natural leader of this Europe' (Gordon, 1993:44). French politician George Pompidou, for example, later stated that France was 'condemned [chosen] ... by her geography and by her history... to play the role of Europe' (Ambassador of France, 1960). In terms of outcome, if successful, European integration would also provide an important political arena for defending European interests in terms of not only economic prosperity but also one's own self-identification in the external relations of Europe. Moreover, the political leadership of the established international organisation would expand room for more autonomous French policy actions in relation to others, either greater power(s) such as the US, or fellow rivals such as the UK. In relation to the US, there was nothing to lose for France: by accepting the role which others, including the US, 'demanded', France was able to gain more credit from the centre with regard to its loyalty to the US. This would also provide geostrategic benefit in relation to the

US; that is, France could also construct its leadership role through the institutions of European integration (Parker, 2008:13-14).⁷

3.2. Deepening Desires: Radiance of France

A gap existed between the demands and desires of French foreign policy in the post-war period. Whereas the policy of ‘rapprochement’ was an option that France happily took with international support including from America, French interests also lay in nuclear development that would potentially be able to achieve a nuclear weapon (the policy of ‘radiance’), but this gained little support from the international community. In the post-war period French debates over issues such as Americanisation, modernisation, immigration, and colonisation, also connected to discussions on the role of national identity (Hecht, 2001:288). In this respect, ‘technologies served as important symbols for national identity after the war’ in France bridging ‘a mythologized past and a covered future’ (Hecht, 2001:254-255). In particular, the mutual construction of nuclear power and national identity in France seems like the most obvious example of post-war French ‘technopolitics’, ‘the strategic practice of designing or using technology to constitute, embody, or enact political goals’ (Hecht, 2001:256). Technologies were perceived by French politicians as an important ‘ability to imprint our [French] mark on this civilisation’ and thus a whole discourse about *le rayonnement de la France* (the radiance of France) was synonymous with the *grandeur* of France, referring back to glorious days in the past (Hecht, 2001:260). Indeed, the discourse of French radiance was not an ‘empty promotional or nationalist rhetoric’ but achieved more than that: the discourse actually provided room for technologists being legitimately involved in politics (Hecht, 2001:261). French nuclear policy thus entailed a strong political and ontological motivation to identify Frenchness in the post-war period.

There were several episodes that provoked the French nuclear ambition. During the war, for example, France took part in a secret joint atomic bomb making project (a.k.a. the Manhattan Project) in the US with other allied countries such as Britain, but its involvement was not as extensive as that of Britain (Hunabelle, 1958:110). In fact, French scientists, unlike their British counterparts who have maintained special relations with the US, did not earn enough credits to gain access to laboratories with the high-stake experiments and information in Los Alamos regarding the military applications of nuclear energy (Scheinman, 1965:23; Howlett, 1990:41). After the war, contrary to the expectations of France that the wartime efforts would guarantee intimate military cooperation with the US by sharing military information at some point, these concessions did not materialise (Scheinman, 1965:23). Instead, the French had to face a reduced international status as well as a change in its relationship with the US. When de Gaulle went to Washington in August 1945 to complain about Anglo-Saxon arrogance in denying France an equal place at the conference table, ‘Truman brushed de Gaulle’s complaints aside as unimportant and said that “The United States possessed a new weapon, the atomic bomb, which would defeat any aggressor”’ (Gardner, 1986:184).⁸ Whilst the assumption that the bomb could defeat any aggressor was highly questionable, Truman’s word was clearly provocative enough to impel de Gaulle into embarking on an immediate national nuclear development strategy (Gardner,

⁷ Specifically, it refers to the seventh strategy which margins would be able to be defined as ‘alternative centre’ by centre(s).

⁸ Recited.

1986:184). In this respect, perhaps it was not by accident a programme called *Alerte à l'atome* was broadcast in France in February 1946, which was a horrifyingly realistic programme simulating an atomic attack. The result of this programme was to provoke panic around the country, and it provided the basis for a national consensus on the need for France to develop its own nuclear weapons against future nuclear threats, even though the US was the only nuclear-weapon-possessed country at that time (Kelly, Jones, and Forbes, 1995:145).

After the war, the exclusively 'special' partnership of America and Britain frightened France and led Paris to conclude that the present circumstance was a malicious attempt on the part of America to claim hegemony over nuclear weapons and strategic doctrine within the NATO Alliance. In the meeting of the NATO Council in December 1957, for example, French ministers were determined to preserve France's great power status within the alliance and resist any plans Britain and America might harbour to use their monopoly of nuclear arms within the Western camp as a means of enhancing their military role (Furniss, 1960:248). The French Premier, Galliard, threatened that '[I]f in the division of tasks within NATO in research and manufacture, and if, in the precise conditions of use of these arms, France has the feeling of being treated as a subordinate partner, it is evident that this will lead France much more easily to undertake its own effort' (Scheinman, 1969:840). He also emphasised the EURATOM agreements for pooling their efforts in the field of nuclear research and manufacture which might enable France to benefit from an equal position in NATO. Again, in 1959 de Gaulle of the Fifth Republic proposed a tripartite (Britain-France-US) directorate to break the Anglo-American nuclear dominance of the alliance which had persisted since the war. Based on his observation of how the Anglo-American nuclear directorship of NATO effectively excluded France from a position of actual influence and confident after the development of French nuclear deterrence achieved in the 1950s, de Gaulle was convinced that this ought to be taken into consideration by the US, and the stature of France in the alliance needed to be modified in the light of this new reality (Nuenlist, 2007:67-69). In a memorandum sent to President Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan on 17 September 1958, he argued for the creation of a tripartite directorate that would put France on an equal footing with the US and UK (Nuenlist, 2007:67-69). Eisenhower, however, rejected the French proposition on the direction of strategy, control of NATO's nuclear weapons and tripartite commands around the world (Bryant, 2004:126). The exclusion of France from the inner circle increased the French desire for 'recognition' as participant in nuclear weapon development.

3.3. EURATOM: Bridging Demands and Desires

Given the earlier discussion on the inter-subjective nature of identity formation, I argue that French achievement of recognition as a 'nuclear weapon possessed country', promoted the further reconstitution of French identity, and that this endogenous change in Self would be reflected in relations with the centre, the US. Indeed the changed Franco-American relationship, crafted the opportunity for France to claim further 'recognition' as 'another centre', or in other words, an equivalent centre to that of the US. The source for being able to claim recognition as 'another centre' rather than just an 'alternative centre', was in the field of nuclear technology. It thus seems more appropriate to explain the motivation for French membership of EURATOM and more fundamentally French nuclear ambition in terms of the 'identity crisis' that France found itself experiencing after the war. As well known, the US ran a strict nuclear non-proliferation policy and the first nuclear cooperation between France

and the US was available only through the bilateral agreement in 1956, just as it was for Germany and Italy. In terms of the French nuclear development programme, the US was cautious about the real purpose of the development. In this respect, EURATOM appeared to satisfy two main policy objectives of post-war France at once, nuclear development (radiance) and regional integration (*rapprochement*), which ultimately contributed to improving French self-esteem. In this respect, EURATOM, I argue, was an effective policy medium satisfying both the demands of others and the desires of the French self. Based on the credence received from the centre in the first stage, margins may claim further recognition, treating themselves almost equally as ‘another centre’.

To explain further, whilst the most popular approach to examining nuclear programmes is as a symbol of national sovereignty and modernity, French nuclear ambition was unnecessarily equated to de Gaulle’s personal desire to restore tarnished French *grandeur*. Indeed, while the greatest discord between allies regarding French policy directions on atoms occurred during the Fifth Republic of de Gaulle, the original decision to develop French nuclear deterrence was made during the Fourth Republic when de Gaulle was out of power (Kohl, 1971:5). For example, ‘On 11 April 1958, just before the demise of the Fourth Republic, Premier Félix Gaillard signed the official order authorizing the manufacture of an atomic bomb and preparations for the first French atomic tests in the spring of 1960’ (Ambassador of France, 1960:11; Kohl, 1971:19).

4. CONCLUSION

France was regarded by many academics and analysts as one of the countries that benefited most from the EURATOM project. Such a judgement was premised on the argument that the French abused the ‘obscure wording’ of the ‘defence clause’ of the EURATOM Treaty in order to establish its own nuclear experiment for military use after joining EURATOM. In turn, EURATOM was then criticised as an impotent institution that was not able to stop the French nuclear experiment. However, as shown in this article, such arguments are less convincing if we consider the broader evidence, which suggests that the decision to launch the French nuclear experiment was made before the discussion of building EURATOM, and France possessed a sufficient level of radioactive materials and technologies to produce nuclear explosives, before the discussions for the EURATOM project even started.

Such evidence then begs a further question of why France was willing to join EURATOM. To answer this question, this article drew attention to the unique foreign policy identity of post-war France, and the dilemma between the policy option imposed on France and that desired by France. Whilst the US encouraged a leading role for France in the regional integration of Europe through improved Franco-German relations, French efforts created nuclear explosives were not permitted under the strict policy of American nuclear non-proliferation. In this respect, EURATOM appeared to satisfy two main foreign policy goals in the post-war period for France: European integration and nuclear development, which both ultimately aimed to resolve the post-war French identity crisis. EURATOM provided France leeway for legitimate nuclear development, which satisfied two policy goals demanded by Others and desired by the French Self, without negatively impacting the French relations with Others.

Despite opposition from other players like the US, France legitimately succeeded in achieving both policy options of ‘rapprochement’ and ‘radiance’ through EURATOM. This can also be said of the accomplishment of the desired policy option of ‘radiance’. The ‘agree-and-deepen policy’ played a central role to minimising damages to be made to the relations among allies whilst France’s pursuing what it desires. In this respect, EURATOM contributed to resolving the French identity crisis in the post-war period by exploiting the given condition around France. The reidentification of Self as ‘alternative centre’ in the first stage provided a platform for pursuing what France wanted to further achieve. Indeed, ‘radiance’ France contributed to the revival of post-war France in terms of discursive power. Representing critical views towards the centre allowed France to establish itself as ‘alternative centre’ and beyond this, as ‘another centre’. Consequently, EURATOM provided room for extending French marginality to an ‘another centre’.

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