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European Worldviews:
Ideas and the European Union in World Politics

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Abstract

In international politics, what do the leaders of the European Union (EU) want? How do they understand international relations and how do they see the EU in world politics? The goal of this paper is to provide an introduction to the collective research on 'European Worldviews'. This research applies first-image thinking, in particular Nathan Leites' operational code analysis, to five key figures and office holders of the European Union: Javier Solana, Robert Cooper, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Peter Mandelson and Joseph Borg. We explore these EU officials' worldviews, the set of ideas and values about history and politics which shape their political strategies and their action. First, the paper puts the analysis of European worldviews in a wider theoretical context: the revival of idea-based explanation in International Relations and the rise of realist theories of foreign policy taking policymakers' strategic assessments and problem-solving styles seriously. Second, the paper presents the operational code approach, and explain its added value to analyze European worldviews. Third, it focuses on the relations between worldviews and the EU in world politics. Finally, this paper argues that European worldviews matter because they are deeply embedded in political action and provide identity and power to the EU in world politics. They interact with the individual characteristics of policy-makers, with the institutional context of their action, and with the international environment in which they act. The conclusion spells out a research agenda and suggests some policy implications.

Keywords

Introduction[1]:
The EU in World Politics: Policy-Makers' Views from Brussels

In international politics, what do the leaders of the European Union (EU) want? How do they understand international relations and how do they see the EU in world politics? What drives their strategic choices and political calculations? The EU is deeply involved in international politics. Not only does it has, willingly and unwillingly, a variety of impact abroad but, in turn, the international system shapes its development (Hill, Smith in: Hill, Smith, eds., 2005: 3-17). This interplay between the EU and the world covers a wide range of domains, from trade to troop deployments, from regulations to development aid, from sanctions to the promotion of human rights and democracy. Some EU actions, or EU mandated actions, are largely publicized, while others are implemented below the news level. But publicized or hidden, EU actions reverberate in the international system. Furthermore, in December 2003 EU member states agreed on a grand strategy. *A Secure Europe in a Better World. Europe's Security Strategy* defined the EU's grand strategy, identifying European interests and intentions and attempting to relate ends and means. As a consequence, EU policymakers, like the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the President of the European Commission and several Commissioners, the High Representatives of the EU in various countries and regions, the Heads of the European Commission Delegations, the Director Generals in the Council secretariat, some members of the European Parliament, act in response to the emergence, persistence or worsening of international policy problems. They act internationally in the name of the EU or in the name of the European Commission and from the outside, this distinction is often blurred.

EU officials make political calculations regarding international affairs, they decide what objectives to select and what ought to be done in world politics, they seek to balance ends and means, they deal with the uncertainty and the risks pervasive in international relations. Yet, we know little about the ways in which they approach international problems, and make foreign policy. In order to fill this gap we need get a better understanding of EU officials' worldviews, the set of ideas and values about history and politics which shape their political strategies and their action. Only then can we assess how these officials articulate the interests, objectives and intentions of the EU and contribute to its international existence. EU policy-makers conceptualize international relations, and the type of international system they consider desirable. They develop ideas and values about the foreign policies that they believe would be positive and feasible for the EU, about the « roles » that the EU plays, and should play, in international politics. They think about causes and effects in foreign policy. Valuable work on European Commissioners' conceptions of governance, for example, do not deal with international relations (Hooghe, 2001; Joana, Smith, 2002). On the one hand, Europeanists underuse the approaches developed, some of them long ago, in the study of international relations and foreign policy to grasp political and strategic assessments. On the other, international relations and foreign policy specialists do not readily include EU officials among their preferred subject of analysis. We seek to bridge this gap and apply first-image thinking, in particular operational code analysis, to key figures and office holders of the European Union.

European worldviews are important because they shape perceptions, strategic assessments, styles of policy-making and decisions. Differences in worldviews, for instance, underlie divergence in the U.S. and EU approaches to China (Shambaugh, 2005). The politics of worldviews entails unsettling tensions with both international and domestic consequences. Worldviews can provide assurance on strategic priorities, generate and sustain support and facilitate coordination and coherence in foreign

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policy-making. They can help to convince and to influence as well. But worldviews might also raise expectations and generate criticisms. Domestic and international opponents are often keen on raising the charge of inconsistency, and of hypocrisis. When EU officials seek to lift the arms embargo against China, to re-channel the EU support to the Palestinian authority, to defend European values during the Danish cartoons crisis, or to convince Iranian's leaders to abandon their nuclear weapons program, they struggle with contradictions and adjust both their strategic ideas and their policies. Depending on the course of events, an explicit conception of international relations can be an asset or become a liability.

The empirical core of our project is an investigation of how key members of the EU elite understand world politics, and the EU's role in world politics at the beginning of the 21st century. Our objective is to identify and explore their perspective on fundamental aspects of international relations, the ways in which they conceptualize international politics and the EU in international politics. We are interested in their images of international relations, their reasoning, the categories and the language they use. We do not examine the EU's substantive positions as such, but officials' broader ideas which frame those positions. These ideas shape their perceptions, their assessments and their decision-making processes. In sum, we want to know more about how, and why, they think and talk about world politics the way they do. We focus on five EU officials: Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Robert Cooper, Director-General in the Council Secretariat, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations, Peter Mandelson, Commissioner for External Trade, and Joseph Borg, Commissioner for Fisheries. We select those policy-makers for three reasons. First, we include Council and Commission officials: they both contribute to the EU's international action but in different ways. The similarity and differences of their worldviews is an important empirical question. Second, we include actors at different levels of responsibility who hold different positions, and use ideas in different ways. Some are self-conscious about ideas, others less so, some are idea-makers others idea-takers. Finally, we include both officials deeply involved in international politics (like the Commissioner for External Relations), and others who cover an area which is partially internationalized. It is important to cover both aspects because a worldview can exist by implication, it does not have to be stated in a general form. A particular way of thinking about a technical issue reveals just as much about a worldview than a broad statement explicitly designed to present a grand strategy. This case selection is only a first cut, however. Other officials could and should be included and further enquiries would enrich and nuance some of our results. Each paper, devoted to one actor, follows the same outline: first we provide biographical information on each individual as well as a presentation of his/her official role, then we lay out his/her conception of international relations (characteristics of the international system, other actors, ideas about power and threats), and finally we explore his/her ideas about the EU as an international actor (views about the EU as such, its implication in world politics, the characteristics of its foreign policy). We adapt and use the questions commonly used to identify political actors' 'operational code'. However, our research does not examine the making of those worldviews, nor on their evolution over time, be it from the Prodi Commission to the Barroso Commission, for example, or within the mandate of one Commission. Furthermore, while we hypothesize that European worldviews shape decision-making processes, we do not attempt a systematic analysis of their impact in specific policy choices.

As an introduction to the collective research project, this paper is organized as follows. In the first part, I put our analysis of European worldviews in a wider theoretical context: the revival of idea-based explanation in International Relations and the rise of realist theories of foreign policy taking policymakers' strategic assessments and problem-solving styles seriously. In the second part, I present the operational code approach, and I explain its added value to analyze European worldviews. In the third part, I focus on the relations between worldviews and the EU in world politics. I discuss critically three aspects of the notion of 'European worldviews'. To what extent, and in what sense, are these worldviews 'European'? Is this a genuine worldview, or just a label covering a collection of disparate and contradictory beliefs? How uniquely European is it? Then, I argue that European worldviews matter because they are deeply embedded in political action and provide identity and power to the EU

in world politics. They interact with the individual characteristics of policy-makers, with the institutional context of their action, and with the international environment in which they act. The conclusion spells out a research agenda and suggests some policy implications.

I. Realist Ideas: European Worldviews and Foreign Policy-Making

Our project is theoretically located at the intersection of two intellectual trends: the revival of idea-based explanation in International Relations, on the one hand, and the rediscovery of realist theories of foreign policy taking policymakers' assessments and understanding of their situation seriously, on the other. Specifically, we focus on an overlooked dimension of EU foreign-policy making: officials' approaches to policy-making and problem-solving in the EU's international action.

A. Ideas and the Process of Strategic Judgment

In virtually every corner of International Relations (indeed, of political science), not least in the study of the EU, scholars have been busy incorporating the role of ideas in a wide variety of ways. Numerous researches have put the emphasis on ideas and discourses in the study of European integration and public policies in Europe (Parsons, 2003; Schmidt, Radaelli, 2004), and the EU has been called a 'normative power' (Manners, 2002). Our research belongs to this revival of idea-based attempts to analyze foreign policy dynamics. While this renewal of ideational explanations has been enlightening, the result is that the study of the EU (not to mention political science and international relations) is by now awash with ideas-oriented conceptual frameworks. The menu for choice has been expanding, as well as the range of notions available, dealing in each case with distinct questions and problems: ideas, norms, culture, strategic culture, beliefs, belief-systems, cognitive maps, ideology, identity, attitudes, images, policy paradigms, référentiels, social representations, frames, discourses, doctrines, and schematas, etc. By studying policy-makers' worldviews we open the black box of actors' preferences, and most importantly we explore the ways in which they approach policy choice. In international politics, all the actors do not necessarily have the same propensity to maximize their relative power. Resources and political capital can be spend on many different things and in different ways, domestically and internationally. Polities which have the potential to play a significant international role can prefer to play a relatively minor one instead. Competing images of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and competing images of China today, can drive divergent policy preferences. Worldviews are important because they lead policy-makers to perceive and to misperceive, to identify and to label events and actors in international relations. By rendering international events meaningful, these ideas organize their experience and guide their action. Identifying EU officials' ideas and their perceptions of the world help us to get a better sense of how they define the interests of the EU reflected in the EU's foreign policies. European worldviews form the basis from which policy-makers develop and use the political, economic and symbolic power of the Euro-polity, together with military power, in peacetime and wartime, to secure the polity's objectives. European worldviews are also significant because EU officials have an agenda about how international politics should be framed. For example, the EU does not have a military strategy, but a security strategy, it does not have enemies and allies but partners, it does not seek a zone of influence, nor does it pretend to have a 'backyard', but it has a neighbourhood policy. There are two pitfalls in the ways in which analysts usually deal with such ideas. One is to take these categories for granted and to import them directly and uncritically in their analysis. The other is to dismiss them as nothing more than rationalizations or idealist fantasies, and to look beneath the surface for the truly influential factors. We propose instead to take seriously the articulated ideas of policy-makers and to engage with their views of international relations and of the EU in international politics. Knowing more about influential policy-makers strategic ideas helps to get a sense of the interactions among international actors. The international system is not just made of the distribution of material power, but of the distribution of interests and aims as well (Wendt, 1999; Herrmann, 1995: 278). Worldviews matter because an important part of international politics is about conflicting worldviews.

B. Bringing the First Image Back in the Study of the EU as an International Actor

As ideas were becoming more prominent in International Relations, realist theories of foreign policy moved away from Kenneth Waltz's structural realism and focused more on the need to examine carefully how policy-makers see the international context, assess other actors and themselves, define what they want, and decide to act (Rose, 1998). This renewal of interest for policy-makers problem-solving efforts suggests that it is worthwhile to incorporate the first image to the study of the EU as an international actor. The expression 'first image' was coined by Kenneth Waltz to identify one of the levels of analysis that could be used to analyze the causes of war and, by extension, international politics (Waltz, 1959, 12, 16-41, 42-79; Singer, 1961). In the first image, international action is the product of the conceptions and behavior of individual rulers. The second image considers that international action depends on the domestic characteristics of societies and states. The third image implies that international action depends on the nation's relative position, in terms of power and geography, in an anarchic international system. Waltz dismissed explanations of the causes of war grounded in the first image and privileged instead the third image. Since then, however, numerous work explored the psychological dynamics of foreign policy especially in decision-making processes, notably perceptions, analogies, use of information and advise, groupthink, and leadership style (Jervis, 1976; George, 1980; Khong, 1992; Hart et. al., 1997). More recent first-image work discusses different ways to take into account the role of individual decision-makers in international politics, especially inter-group relations, reputation and emotions (Mercer, 1995; Goldgeier, 1997; Byman, Pollack, 2001; Herrmann, 2002; Walker, 2004).

In order to contribute to this renewal of first-image thinking we suggest two developments. First, we connect the growing interest for ideas and first-image thinking by focusing on the ideas embedded in the process of problem-solving and strategic judgement (Hirschman, 1963, 1-7, 227-246; Gaddis, 1982, viii-ix; Johnson, 1995; May, 2001, 448-464; Tetlock, 2005; Jervis, 2006). Second, we argue that the EU in international politics is a fertile ground to bring first image thinking back in, a dimension that has been overlooked in the study of the EU's external relations. At first sight, the EU is a hard case for first image theorizing. The usual focus of the study of the EU as an international actor is its complex institutional and legal framework (Smith, 2004). These institutional and legal constraints are such that they would seem to put considerable limits on what individual policy-makers can envision and implement. This view is coherent with the popular representation of the EU in world politics. Cartoonists regularly represent the EU as a faceless bureaucrat, dressed in a dark suit and carrying his briefcase. These cartoons nicely capture what appears to be an important characteristic: clearly identified policy-makers and their ideas do not seem central in the EU's foreign policy-making. We agree that the ambition and scope of the EU's foreign policy is, in part, the product of its institutional characteristics and of the international system, especially the relative power capacity of the EU. Still, the impact of these institutional and systemic factors on the EU's international action is indirect and complex. The pressures and incentives of institutions and of the international system are translated, and reframed, internally. Policy-makers are not just transmission belts linking material capacities to foreign behavior. Entrepreneurial foreign policy making plays a significant and autonomous role in international action. The EU's foreign policy choices are affected by policy-makers and their ideas regarding the international system and the international role of the EU polity are significant. Still, because the international environment is complex, they are not always able to assess it in a systematic and continuous way. Furthermore, they are sometimes unable to use the full range of their material resources. In sum, there is such a thing as a distribution of power in the international system, but its impact is indirect and problematic. Policy-makers' understanding and evaluation of this context is uneven and erratic. Yet, EU policy-makers seek to control and shape the external environment of the EU. We ask about the processes of judgment and calculation that they use to do so and we hope to contribute to the body of existing scholarship which takes as a serious empirical question policy-makers perceptions and assessments of international relations and of power (Jäckel, 1969; Friedberg, 1988; Wohlforth, 1993). Ignoring motives altogether, and focusing on the EU's behaviour is question begging: it does not answer the question of why EU policy-makers behaved the way they did (on these

difficulties: Herrmann, 1995: 271-272; Herrmann, 2002). Both policy-makers and scholars want to know the thinking behind the behavior (Wohlforth, 1993: 297). In sum, the study of ideas and motives is needed because the alternative, assuming preferences instead of asking what they are, ends-up in a *cul-de-sac* (Simon, 1985).

II. From the Politburo to the European Union: the Operational Code Revisited

To identify and analyze European worldviews, we put to the task the operational code construct as it has been originally defined by Nathan Leites, and reformulated by Alexander George. In this section, I indicate the intellectual origins of this approach, its main characteristics and how we use it, as well as its added-value to get a better grasp of European worldviews.

A. What is the Operational Code Approach?

If he did not invent the expression operational code, Nathan Leites introduced it in the social sciences, and specifically in political psychology, at the beginning of the 1950s with *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (1951) and *A Study of Bolshevism* (1953) (Walker, 1990: 403-404; for an historian's vigorous, but flawed, critique: Robin, 2001: 124-143). Leites identified the Bolshevik elite's general decision rules, as well as the axioms on which these rules were based. The scientific and policy challenge was to do so at a distance. Since in-depth interviews, or field research, were out of question, the beliefs of the members of the Politburo would have to be assessed from what they said, and more specifically, so argued Leites, from the verbal production of Lenin and Stalin (an empirical choice that has been criticized at the time). His main goal was to discover the « political strategy » of Bolshevism and its sources, including its broader intellectual, historical and cultural roots (Leites, 1951: xi). Leites quoted not only Lenin and Stalin but various 19th and 20th century Russian writers as well to indicate the persistence of some psychological characteristics and highlight the Russian context of Bolshevik beliefs. In his other works devoted to the Soviet Union, Leites explored the implications of his findings for specific policy domains, like the Soviet style of military strategy, or particular events, like the Moscow trials (Leites, Bernaut, 1954; Leites, 1982). He also contrasted his findings with other prominent attempts to make sense of the Politburo's behavior at the time, be it the work of James Burnham, or the articles and editorials of *The Economist* from 1946 until 1950 (Leites, 1950, 1952). While not using the operational code construct as explicitly, Leites developed similar analyses of the French political elites during the Fourth Republic as well as the Chinese elite.

After Leites initial research, the notion of operational code disappeared from academia, but not from policy think tanks, for more than fifteen years. When Alexander George, having worked from the RAND Corporation himself, brought the notion back in a RAND publication in 1967, published as a review paper in 1969, he acknowledged that the approach had been neglected (George, 1969). George thought that the expression operational code was a misnomer because it carried the image of a mechanical application of a set of predefined options in a decision-making process. Instead, those beliefs really were 'approaches to political calculation' (George, 1969: 191, 220). George's goal was to extract the maxims of political strategy and to focus on them, thereby putting the emphasis on the cognitive aspects of the operational code. To clarify the notion, he distilled out of Leites' rich, but somewhat confusing, account a number of key philosophical and instrumental questions about politics. These questions in turn would help to identify other policy-makers' worldviews (these questions are included below in the annex. See: George, 1969: 201-216). George seeked to make more explicit the ways in which Leites gathered, and organized, his empirical material. Philosophical beliefs are made of assumptions and premises on the fundamental nature of politics, on the nature of political conflict and on the role of individuals in history. Instrumental beliefs deal with ends-means calculations in the context of political action. Starting in the 1970s, the notion of operational code was reformulated several times and used in numerous empirical case studies (for a recent example, Feng, 2005). Ole Holsti, in particular, focused the analysis on two dimension of the operational code, the nature of

political life and the image of the opponent. He used quantitative content analysis to build a typology of operational codes (Holsti, 1962, 1970-1, 1970-2; Walker, 1990). In more recent years, Stephen Walker made a significant contribution to the research on operational codes by emphasizing the role of framing effects, liking beliefs, motivations and actions (Walker, 1983, 1990, 1999, 2003, 2004; for a critique of the approach, Sjoblom, 1982). Finally, both neo-classical realists and students of strategic cultures recognize the importance of problem-solving ideas in foreign policy making and our project belongs to this latter way to use the operational code construct (Johnston, 1995, 33-39; Meyer, 2005).

B. How Policy-Makers Decide: the Added Value of the Operational Code Approach

The operational code approach is especially useful to examine the EU as an international actor for three reasons. First, the operational code approach specifically focuses on ideas related to problem-solving, strategic assessments and political calculations. The notion is thus well-suited to get a better sense of the process of EU policy-makers' foreign policy judgment, and the ways in which they decide how to act. Scholars, analysts and policy-makers often are interested in a specific decision or in a specific policy, but they ask less frequently how policy-makers arrive at decisions or implements them. Hence, the operational code approach is distinct from other attempts to identify the meaning and the identity of the European project, and the role of norms in the EU's international influence (Guisan, 2003; Manners, 2002. See also, Cremona, 2004). We want to understand why and how bounded-rational policy-makers calculate, decide what is their favoured goal, confront uncertainty, and balance ends and means (see also: Greenstein, 1969, 2000; Neustadt, May, 1986: 157-180). We hypothesize that their worldviews shape the ways in which they process information and calculate. We are not interested in European ideas in the abstract, or only when they are formally enshrined in treaties, but in their relationship to strategy and action. Worldviews are an important element of policy-makers' strategic calculations. Knowledge of an actor's worldview helps to '(…) "bound" the alternative ways in which the subject may perceive different types of situations and approach the task of making a rational assessment of alternative courses of action' (George, 1969: 200. See also: Steiner, 1983; Larson, 1994; Jervis, 2006). Policy-makers ideas and values introduce diagnostic propensities: they shape the scope and direction of information processing and influence the definition of the situation. These beliefs might affect choice propensities as well as, favoring, but not determining, certain types of action (George, 1979; Khong, 1992: 20-21). For example, Japanese decision makers in the 1930s and early 1940s believed that human affairs were ultimately controlled by divine forces. Their fatalism expanded the range of risky choices that they were ready to accept in their relation to the U.S. and made deterrence harder to achieve (Ike, 1967: xxiii-xxvi). The domino theory belief has been a central organizing concept in U.S. foreign policy and shaped many crucial decisions for decades (Jervis, Snyder (eds.), 1991; Ninkovich, 1994).

Second, the operational code approach focuses on policy-makers and their ideas a dimension usually overlooked in the study of the EU as an international actor. Foreign policy choices are made by actual political leaders and elites, and their worldviews matter. Bringing the first image back in does not imply being reductionist and falling prey of a naïve psychologism (Greenstein, 1969, 33-62; Herrmann, 2002). First, Leites original formulation of the operational code did not focus on one individual policy-maker, but sought to capture the spirit of a ruling elite. Second, the operational code construct belongs to an intellectual tradition which emphasizes the interplay between cultural identities, psychological factors and political dynamics. Nathan Leites worked with Lucian Pye, one of the major figures of the political culture and political development *problématique* in the 1960s and 1970s (Pye in: Pye, Verba (eds.), 1965: 7-8). His theoretical and empirical project was closely linked to the efforts of sociologists and anthropologists in the late 1940s and 1950s to study ideas and values and connect them to a theory of action (Kluckhohn, 1955; Parsons, Shils (eds.), 1951; see also Dumont, 1980: 261-266).

Finally, the operational code approach provides guidelines to identify worldviews empirically. George reformulation of the operational code is not a method of analysis as such, but a set of

questions. His framework is helpful because it indicates what to look for, even though how to look for and how to find remain flexible. We use as guidelines both set of questions suggested by George. However, regarding philosophical questions, we put the emphasis on the officials' answers specifically devoted to international relations and international politics. For example, regarding the essential nature of political life we give the answer of the actor to this broad question, but we ask as well if he/she has a specific conception of political life in international relations (which might be different from domestic politics). If officials do not talk explicitly about international relations, we explore the implications of their answers for international relations. Regarding instrumental questions, we proceed in a similar way by focusing on policy-makers images of the EU as an international actor (on national self-images, Kaplowitz, 1990). In sum, when we refer to EU officials' worldviews we focus more specifically on two aspects: their understanding of international relations and their conception of the EU as an international actor.

Our approach is qualitative and based on the interpretation of diverse empirical sources: speeches, biographical information, memoirs, press interviews and interviews either with the individuals or their close collaborators (on methodological difficulties associated to the study of belief systems, Larson, 1985, 1988). We examine not only the words they use, but their categories of thought, and their ideas and values. Foreign policy debates and decisions are not only a matter of rational discussion on the basis of objective categories. The categories themselves embedded in worldviews shape the debate about the right forms of international action. We also use IR theories to discuss the characteristics and limits of the European worldviews. These sources have different limits and the most obvious is that outside observers cannot be sure that EU officials really mean what they say. During the Vietnam War, for example, the public statements of policy-makers were regularly at odds with what they argued in private (Ellsberg, 1972: 52-71). Still, in numerous situations, the ideas publicly presented and argued by the officials represented what they meant. Policy-makers often believe in their myths, or are remarkably consistent in their uses of analogies in public and in private (Pakenham, 1973; Khong, 1992: 63; Bézès, 2000). Even when public discourses do not reflect genuine convictions, the fact that they are public creates a greater need for future consistency and generates constrains (Anderson, 1981). The public articulations of a given set of priorities, or of a set of values, make it more difficult to change of orientation or to adjust that position (Packenham, 1973: xix-xx). Furthermore, journalists, political opponents and interest groups constantly probe the consistency of political actor, remind them their past commitments and underline the gap between the expectations that were raised and the policy adopted. Finally, the EU officials' worldviews resonate with dominant values and political cultures in European societies (on these connections between societal identities and foreign policy decisions-making processes: Hopf, 2002). Our research takes as a starting point the need for a sympathetic and receptive examination of the ideas of the individuals who make the EU's foreign action.

III. The EU in World Politics: Power and Ideas

A. Is There a European Worldview?

While we intend to show how, and why, the notion of European worldviews is useful, three objections might be raised at the onset. First, to what extent, and in what sense, are these worldviews 'European'? By 'European' we refer to the worldviews of EU officials and we focus on the European Union as an international actor. This choice does not imply that the EU is the only source of worldviews in Europe, only that it is a significant one which seeks to be unifying. We acknowledge that the worldviews of EU officials is partially shaped by ideas, values and norms that are prominent and influential in some member states, but less widespread or less officially endorsed in others. In short, the fact that there are different, partially overlapping, worldviews in Europe, does not mean that there are no efforts to build a genuinely European worldview. To what extent the worldviews of EU officials is genuinely 'European', and not the product of other sources like their national background, their role as a

representative of a bureaucracy or as an office-holder, their previous or current party affiliation, the kind of problems that they deal with on a daily basis, or their individual characteristics (gender, class, family, education, etc.)? We acknowledge that policy-makers' worldviews have multiple sources. Indeed, one reason for the difficulty to identify and to evaluate policy-makers' worldviews is that they are intertwined with other salient dimensions of political action. The personal character and professional experiences of each EU official, the specific institutional and legal characteristics of EU decision-making processes, and the international environment in which European actors act all shape their worldviews. No doubt, European problem-solving ideas do not float freely and each of these factors has a part to play in the shaping of the strategic ideas and key assumptions of EU policy-makers (Risse-Kappen, 1995). Still, EU officials' worldviews cannot be reduced to them. A discussion of these factors would lead us in other directions and ultimately would downplay the specifically European characteristics of these worldviews. We show that many elements of these officials worldviews are widely shared in Europe, and we take seriously their conscious efforts to mould a distinctively European perspective as well. In sum, we are not only interested in European worldviews as if they were already fully constituted, but in policy-makers attempt at making, with varying degrees of success, a European worldview.

Second, is it a genuine worldview, or just a label covering a collection of disparate and contradictory beliefs that could provide the language to justify any conceivable calculations and decisions? Given the complexity of the EU institutional framework and the differences and disagreements among member states, EU policy-makers might be unable to articulate anything beyond ideas which only virtue is to be either different from the U.S., or so uncontroversial that they border the trivial because they represent the smallest common denominator within the EU. Hence, there might be less than meet the eyes in European worldviews. Ultimately, this is an empirical question. Our working hypothesis is that there is a significant measure of coherence in the European worldviews. For some policy-makers, like Robert Cooper for example, their ideas are diverse but not disparate and they constitute a largely coherent body of thought. Furthermore, we use worldviews (plural) because we allow for the existence of differences between the worldviews articulated by the EU officials which we shall discuss. In general, worldviews are rarely coherent or free of contradictions (Jervis, 2006: 648-649. For the case of German policy-makers from 1900 until 1918: Dehio, 1955). Policy-makers are constantly seeking out culturally resonant ideas for their own purpose, transposing ideas from one context to another and reconstructing meaning (Skowronek, 2006). In his seminal work Nathan Leites admitted that the Bolshevik operational code was ambiguous, inconsistent and incomplete (Leites, 1953: 17-18). This, however, did not prevent his effort to identify it in a systematic way and to probe its significance. Still, the notion of worldview implies something different from a collection of disparate ideas (Lakoff, 1995: 28). When do we know a worldview when we see one? To characterize EU officials' worldviews, we first explain why the different beliefs which EU officials hold fit together. Why are their positions on some issues related to positions on others? Is there a general idea that unifies the various beliefs, put some order among priorities, and shape their mode of reasoning? If so, what is it? Second, we attempt to understand what account for EU officials' topic choice, word choice, and discourse form. Finally, if European worldviews exist, are they unique, and uniquely European? Again, this is an important empirical question. We do not claim that the European worldviews are necessarily unique, nor that EU officials systematically invented new ideas. It is easy to find both international relations traditions (liberal and constructivist for instance, or functionalism) and foreign policy conceptions (in the United States, in the U.N. or in the WTO for instance) similar to this or that aspect of the European worldviews. Indeed, once these worldviews are better identified, it becomes possible to put them in a broader context and to situate them as a part of a broader category of liberal worldviews, for example.

B. Worldviews and the Sources of the EU International Identity and Power

In each paper, we suggest how circumstances, different types of material factors, interact with worldviews in powerful and innovative ways, and we point out that the 'operational code' approach is well-suited to go beyond the basic ideas-interests dichotomy (Bezès, 2000; Philpott, 2001: 53-54). First, a worldview is shaped by the social characteristics and personal beliefs of each individual. But for EU officials it is just as much a strategic calculation of political advantage. Social origins, personality, professional background and hopes can place limits on an official's capacity to hold and articulate a worldview. But a worldview is purposefully constructed related to political objectives and becomes a framing device. Second, the officials' bureaucratic knowledge and their capacity to skilfully navigate the complex EU institutional environment are likely to have an impact on their international performance. This is particularly significant because the international action the EU has specific characteristics since it is neither a nation-state nor an international organization. Its institutional situation is unusual, somewhat difficult to practice and to analyze in the existing categories of international relations. Yet institutional skills with a weak or ill-defined worldview and a foreign policy agenda could quickly unravel. On the other hand, a powerful foreign policy stand grounded in an articulated and attractive worldview could overcome some institutional limits. Third, a worldview is affected by the characteristics of the international context. It is, in part, a response to the global environment. But articulating a worldview is not just a consequence of international forces, it is an attempt to define what this international context is and, as such, it is an important element of the definition of the EU's international posture. Establish a common sense about what world politics is all about is a key aspect of political leadership. The international context is what European worldviews make of it.

For the EU, worldviews play two significant roles (on the roles of ideas: Yee, 1996; Philpott, 2001: 48-58). First, worldviews shape the identity of the EU as an international actor, and beyond the identity of the EU as such, these worldview directly or indirectly shape the European integration project. They contribute to define what the EU wants to accomplish in international politics and domestically. Since these worldviews are designed to persuade others, both other international actors, but also persuade actors and citizens within the EU, they are one of the international sources of the European construction. They are significant because the EU can value different roles for itself and value different things in, and for, international relations. We suggest that policy-makers are, in different ways and to different degrees, entrepreneurs of ideas. Either they create new ideas, or they invent to versions or new ways to use ideas. Second, these worldviews contribute to the EU's power in international relations. Policy-makers who have the capacity to articulate a worldview, to communicate it clearly, and to defend it as a whole and not just on an issue-by-issue basis, have a major asset in international politics. They seek to influence the inferences others are making about them and one way to do it is by affecting the images others have of them (Jervis, 1970, 1976). The ability of the EU to play a role in international politics is linked to the coherence of the ideological arguments used to rationalize and justify the EU's demands. For the EU, this degree of coherence has increased over time which indicates that EU officials are self-conscious about their worldview, and that they believe that it is indeed important to have one. The ability of the EU to present a coherent worldview provides a rationale for making demands, and helps to set the agenda. EU officials use the capacity of the EU to further the demands associated with their worldview. Success in foreign policy, the capacity to alter the behaviours and choices of other actors, to shape international regimes, to regulate international politics in a different is, at least partially, a function of a polity's ability to formulate a coherent system of ideas, which cements the unity of the policy and help to set the agenda for international negotiations. In addition, policy-makers use worldviews to shame and blame and impose reputation costs on others directly or indirectly. The influence of the worldview could be reversed however. When worldviews are explicit, other actors, domestically and internationally, can exploit contradictions, denounce hypocrisies and engage in symbolic coercion against the EU.

C. The EU in World Politics: Academic Debates and Policy-Makers Conceptions

The study of the EU's external relations is shaped by what we know about international politics and about the EU as an international actor. Yet, both the present characteristics of the international system, and the international role of the EU are deeply contested both analytically and normatively (on this issue, Wohlforth, 1993, 18-26). To what international system are EU officials responding? Should they see a unipolar or a multipolar distribution of power? Should they see the international environment in terms of balance of power, or should they focus instead on imperatives generated by global interdependence? We acknowledge that there is no straightforward answers to these questions because the nature of the international system is contested. And what is true of the international system is true of the EU in world politics as well. Should EU officials see the EU as a 'civilian power', as a 'normative power', as a 'soft power', as having no power at all, or as a complex combination of the above, depends on whether they consult Duchêne, Manners, Nye or Waltz. At the beginning of the 1970s, in an international context shaped by interdependence and *détente*, François Duchêne, then director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and having previously worked for the CECA, suggested the notion of « civilian power » to characterize the EC's international role (Duchêne, 1973). For Duchêne, a civilian power Europe was distinct from two other potential models: the superpower Europe and the neutralist Europe. His conception was close to Karl Deutsch's security community but Deutsch was more interested by the relations between the members of the security community, than by their relations with the outside world. Duchêne thought that in ten or twenty years, the EC could become the first civilian power in the world. Even for great powers, he argued, security policy really aimed at influence the international milieu, particularly by developing international organizations to codify rights and guarantees. He saw military power as devaluated and the values of the Europeans as bourgeois's and a-military. Duchêne did not believe that the EC could become a great power because a federation, or a multi-level governance, would be impossible for nuclear weapons, and because its military capacity were relatively weak. Still, in his view, the EC could « domesticate » inter-states relations by approaching international issues with approaches so far associated to domestic politics: rule of law, common responsibility, contractualism. In a global economy, the rule of law should prevail between nations, and not only within them. Partially inspired by Duchêne, Ian Manners argued that the EU was neither a « civilian power », nor a « military power » but a « normative power ». Its involvement in global causes, like the abolition of the death penalty, created new forms of influence which were not easily captured by state-centric approaches (Manners, 2002). Finally, while Joseph Nye originally developed the notion of « soft power » about the U.S. to criticize the declinist argument at the end of the 1980s, particularly Paul Kennedy's, it became more and more common to qualify the EU as a « soft power » (Nye, 2004).

Conclusion: Extensions and Policy Implications

The European Worldviews project seeks to deal with questions which have been neglected in the researches dealing with the EU as an international actor. Hence, further inquiries are needed and can take several directions. First, the number of EU officials included in the analysis can, and should, be enlarged. The President of the Commission and other commissioners would be obvious choices, but other officials could be included as well, like some members of the European Parliament. Second, the question of the transformation of European worldviews could be tackled by including former Commissioners like Pascal Lamy and Chris Patten for example. Third, by extending the area covered in this way we could provide a better comparison between policy domains and geographical areas. Fourth, the question of the sources of policy-makers ideas, and of the interaction between their ideas and social sciences knowledge would make sense as well. In this regard, the role of 'think tanks' could be of interest. Fifth, outside perceptions of European worldviews as well as the relation between European worldviews and other worldviews are important questions, especially when they are examined on the basis of specific case studies in which one can check the connection between ideas and their implementation. Finally, from a theoretical and empirical point of view, it is important to

improve the 'operational code' approach in order to evaluate worldviews in a more systematic way. In the literature on the 'operational code' the specific and original contribution of Nathan Leites has been blurred and, to a certain extent, forgotten. This is unfortunate since his seminal work made a significant contribution. Revisiting the specific contribution of Nathan Leites to the notion of 'operational code', the theoretical and methodological debates that it raised and its current relevance would enrich the existing debates, often reduced to discussions of methodological techniques. Furthermore, the work of George Lakoff would be a promising starting point (Lakoff, 1987, 1995). To identify the main categories used by EU officials in their reasoning about international relations, we could complement George's questions and add the following (these elements are freely adapted from Lakoff, 1995: 8-11): What are the typical international actors and situations? What are the ideal international actor and situation? What are the anti-ideal actors and situations? What are their international stereotypes? (The warmonger American, for example)? What are their salient, memorable, examples of international events? (for example: lack of forceful action in Ex-Yugoslavia, division over Iraq in 2003) What are the essential properties of international actors and events? A worldview is based on a number of fixed major categories. It would then become possible to identify the EU categories of appropriate international action. These categories provide a simplified, conventional way of putting the worldview into practice. Many aspects of foreign policy would look different through these lenses. It would also become possible to identify who is, for EU officials, the model international actor, as well as the anti-ideal actors: those who violate the above categories.

Finally, our enquiry has potential policy implications both external – regarding the EU's power and influence --, and internal, on the domestic accountability of policy-makers' action. Citizens, journalists and activists have raised important concerns about the democratic accountability of EU's decisions and policies in various areas, and especially in foreign affairs. Within member states, public information on the worldviews of policy-makers, while far from adequate, is generally more widely available than at the EU level. Electoral campaigns, for instance, provide incentives to identify political leaders' worldviews, and expose and discuss the characteristics and potential contradictions of competing worldviews. By contrast, EU officials do not have the same incentives to discuss their worldviews openly. Yet, citizens, journalists or members of the European Parliament can find themselves in the position to probe and test the position of Commissioners and other EU officials regarding international affairs. One of their goals can be to discover from their statements whether EU officials have conception of international relations and of Europe's international role that can filter out national and partisan commitments and policy preferences when they decide what the international context requires. To probe and test as effectively as possible, the counter-powers should encourage candidates to official positions, as well as officials, to lay out their conceptions and convictions, if they have any, about international relations and Europe's international role. It would not be sufficient for officials to claim a robust pragmatism and a willingness to act in the interest of the EU. Their effort to articulate a worldview would not become an academic straitjacket making the specific circumstances of a foreign policy decision and its practical consequences irrelevant. A worldview can show how the characteristics and the consequences of a choice are relevant. In sum, we see these papers as an early step in a systematic analysis of European worldviews that has the potential to make an important contribution to the study of the EU in world politics, and ultimately to the study of the EU as such.

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Annex

The Operational Code: Alexander George's questions (George, 1969: 201-216):

Philosophical content of the operational code:

1 / What is the 'essential' nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or conflict? What is the fundamental character of one's political opponents? 2/ What are the prospects for the eventual realization of one's fundamental political values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other? 3 / Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent? 4 / How much 'control' or 'mastery' can one have over historical development? What is one's role in 'moving' and 'shaping' history in the desired direction? 5 / What is the role of 'chance' in human affairs and in historical development?

Instrumental beliefs in an operational code:

1 / What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action? 2 / How are the goals for action pursued more effectively? 3 / How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled, and accepted? 4 / What is the best 'timing' of action to advance one's interest? 5 / What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?

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