

Macron, Trump, and Biden: Shaping French Foreign Policy with the U.S. from 2016-2022

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Abstract

This thesis will examine French foreign policy towards the United States starting in 2016 through early 2022, considering the entirety of Emmanuel Macron's presidency in France, and spanning both the Trump and Biden administrations in the United States. The first goal of this investigation is to understand the primary directions of French foreign policy towards the U.S. The second is to establish who in France is primarily responsible for determining foreign policy towards the U.S. The third is to examine whether France's behavior changes when working with a Republican or Democrat administration within the U.S. This research will aid academia, as part of an effort to provide a better understanding of French foreign policy towards the U.S., while also providing U.S. decision makers with information on what drives French foreign policy and whether the ideology of the U.S. President matters.

Introduction

What drives France's foreign policy with the United States? In this paper I will seek to answer the question: does the ideology of the U.S. president, Republican versus Democrat, have an effect on French foreign policy towards the U.S. during President Emmanuel Macron's administration? Research will focus on French foreign policy towards the U.S. from 2016 through 2022, looking at the first five years of Macron's presidency, while spanning the entirety of Trump's administration in the U.S. into the first two years of the Biden administration.

This research question is important to answer because it provides a better understanding of French foreign policy towards the U.S., especially in regards to how various ideologies and beliefs impact the ability of the two countries to work together. Additionally, this understanding will provide more information on what motivates French foreign policy, and if the ideology of the U.S. President has an effect.

In order to answer the research question, I formed three hypotheses. First, I hypothesized that Macron will continue to be the dominant actor in foreign policy between the U.S. and France from 2016 through 2022. This hypothesis was included in order to determine the primary actor in foreign policy towards the U.S. Second, I hypothesized that Macron will show consistency in his rhetoric towards both Republican and Democratic administrations, with a focus on themes of "friendship" and "non-alliance." Third, I hypothesized that there will be no difference in French foreign policy actions towards a Republican and a Democrat during Macron's presidency.

This paper begins with a review of current literature on the subject of French foreign policy towards the U.S. The literature review will examine the existing scholarship on the foreign policy of Macron, as well as some of his recent predecessors, while identifying the gaps this research will cover. Following the literature review, I will discuss the methods of analysis I

will be using in considering my hypotheses. After this section, I will provide an analysis for each of the three hypotheses, all of which are confirmed through looking at Macron's behavior and rhetoric in French foreign policy. Finally, the paper will end with some concluding thoughts about my findings, along with considerations of future research and policy implications.

Literature Review

What does existing scholarship say about French foreign policy?

Since the start of France's Fifth Republic, when Charles de Gaulle restructured the French government, their foreign policy has been characterized as one of exceptionalism, or "grandeur" (Reiker, 2018). Reiker's research determined that de Gaulle believed France should be ambitious in its foreign policy in order to become a great international power. While the level of "grandeur" in foreign policy has fluctuated amongst French presidents since de Gaulle, Reiker does note that de Gaulle's ideas have driven the foreign policy of each following president.

Additional research by Alarcon (2013) shows how 'Gaullist' foreign policy demonstrated continuity through the presidency of François Mitterrand, contrary to the expectations of some analysts and scholars. When Mitterrand was elected there were fears that France's foreign policy would shift significantly, as he was the first president from a left wing political group since pre-de Gaulle (Alarcon, 2013). Despite holding different political ideals, Alarcon notes that Mitterrand continued to promote de Gaulle's ideas of independence and grandeur in France, through a strong military, while also integrating France into NATO and European affairs.

It can be noted that throughout France's foreign policy, the president is a primary actor, as intended by de Gaulle, who gave the executive dominant power over the military, negotiations, and signing treaties (Reiker, 2018). Research from Weinstein (2014) demonstrates that even French diplomats, who are given a notable amount of freedom in their work, are highly loyal to the executive and state interests. The French government is not very susceptible to public opinion either, as journalists and policy organizations lack influence on foreign policy (Weinstein, 2014). Institutionally, the French president answers to no one else when it comes to foreign policy.

Does the French President dominate foreign policy towards the U.S.?

With the president as the primary actor of French foreign policy, it would be expected that they are the dominating force in foreign policy with the U.S. A lot of the literature on French foreign policy towards the U.S. focuses on the President. Weinstein's research (2014) considers how other actors in French foreign policy towards the US are subservient to the President. Even newspapers and magazines only focus on the French President, as seen through an article by the Economist (2007) comparing French Presidents Nicholas Sarkozy and François Hollande's foreign policy towards the U.S.

Even more recent literature about Macron, such as Gheciu's research (2019) and Reiker's work (2018), tends to focus on his interactions with the US. In light of this previous scholarship it is hypothesized that the President will continue to be the dominant actor in making foreign policy towards the U.S. from 2016 through 2022. .

The Content of French Foreign Policy towards the U.S.

A common theme seen in the rhetoric of French foreign policy towards the U.S., is that they are friends and allies who have the ability, and responsibility, to criticize one another. Hollande sought to establish this friend and ally partnership with U.S. President Obama, calling their relationship "friendly, ally, non-aligned" (Weinstein, 2014). Alongside this partnership, however, Hollande still spoke against the U.S. war in Iraq, advocating for the promotion of a liberal international order through NATO (Reiker, 2018).

Before Hollande, Sarkozy echoed a similar set of ideas, adopting the European attitude that the countries could be friends in a way that their disagreements don't cause a crisis (Rowdybush & Chamorel, 2012). Sarkozy had managed to maintain a friendship with President

Bush, despite speaking out against the conflicts in the Middle East, and worked towards building a similar relationship with Obama, although with less success (Weinstein, 2014).

Jacques Chirac, the President before Sarkozy, also had a similar rhetoric pattern. He described the French-U.S. relationship as being “excellent but conflictive” elaborating that France believed the U.S. to be too hegemonic, while the U.S. felt that France was too pretentious as it began to contest U.S. international policies to build French diplomacy (Kuisel, 2011). Chirac recognized the U.S. as a powerful ally, yet also spoke in a way that emphasized the French desire to avoid being overpowered by the U.S. (Kuisel, 2011).

The actions of French foreign policy reflect a similar idea, although with slightly more tension when it comes to issues of defense. Sarkozy demonstrated France’s alliance with the U.S. by sending support to U.S. troops in Afghanistan (Rowdybush & Chamorel, 2012). Hollande’s efforts to aid the U.S. in Mali also reflect on the military alliance and friendship these countries have (Weinstein, 2014). Even further back, Francois Mitterand sent military aid to the U.S. in Saudi Arabia in 1990 to show French solidarity with the U.S. (Kuisel, 2011).

Despite these instances of support, France is not always willing to support the U.S., and has fought against its military might. Both Sarkozy and Hollande disapproved of the war in Iraq, refusing to send troops (Weinstein, 2014). France argued that international military action needed the support of the UN or another international organization to be legitimate (Weinstein, 2014). As a result, France refused to respond to any calls for assistance from the U.S. in the Iraq war. This lack of support under Sarkozy caused the U.S. to find France unreliable, as they would help in some conflicts, but not all. Before Sarkozy, Chirac’s France promoted the idea that Europe needed to create a military free of U.S. aid to act as a counterweight to U.S. military force (Bowen, 103).

In light of this research, it is hypothesized that Macron will maintain a similar rhetoric of France's "friendship" with the U.S. alongside statements of non-alignment and independence, as France pursues the status of being a great power. Additionally, Macron will continue the pattern of only supporting the U.S. in legitimate uses of force, which are endorsed by international organizations.

French Reactions to Democrat vs Republican Administrations in the U.S.

There is little research surrounding how France interacts with Democratic administrations compared to Republican administrations in the U.S.. However, research by Rowdybush and Chamorel (2012) gives some insight to Sarkozy's interactions with the Republican Bush administration compared to the Democratic Obama administration. Upon taking office in 2007, Sarkozy wanted to improve France-U.S. relations with the Bush administration, after disagreements over policy concerning Iraq (Rowdybush & Chamorel, 2012).

However, like other European leaders at the time, Sarkozy struggled to build a similar relationship with Obama (Rowdybush & Chamorel, 2012). Increased tensions over French opposition to the war in Iran could have also contributed to this (Weinstein, 2014). This scholarship indicates that France seeks to maintain friendly relations with the U.S., while not being afraid to articulate their own national interests and only support the U.S. when its actions are endorsed by international organizations. It is hypothesized that the attitude of French foreign policy, based on behaviors and rhetoric will be the same towards both a Democrat and Republican during Macron's presidency.

Existing Scholarship on French Foreign Policy 2016-2022

As for more recent French foreign policy, the current French president, Emmanuel Macron, has made himself known for his ambition to make France the global leader in foreign

policy with Europe and the U.S.. Research by Tiersky (2018) presents the idea that Macron believed it is part of France's destiny to be the leading European power, as seen through some of his writings before coming into power.

Macron's policies had a role in his election as well. Gheciu's research (2019) highlights that a large part of Macron's campaign platform was elevating France to a global power, especially as his opponent sought to reduce France's international efforts. Despite being a relatively unknown politician at the start of his campaign, Macron rose above many other more experienced politicians (Tiersky, 2018). Tiersky attributes Macron's success to his similarities to de Gaulle, as he held similar ideas of French grandeur, and showed potential to be transformative in France's foreign policy.

After winning the election, Macron began his work to elevate France's foreign policy, as he took on a leading role in European negotiations with the U.S.. Early in his presidency, Macron began to build a relationship with U.S. president Trump, seen through the 2017 Bastille Day celebrations where Trump was an honored guest (Tiersky, 2018).

Despite his ability to charm the former U.S. president, Macron did not withhold criticism about some of Trump's policies. On numerous occasions, the French president spoke against Trump's American nationalist policies (Tiersky, 2018), and presented American military force as a threat to French, and European, sovereignty (Gheciu, 2019). Throughout his relationship with Trump, Macron promoted his own efforts to make France the global leader he wanted it to be.

Macron's ability to negotiate with Trump not only impacted policy directly between the two countries, but he was also able to encourage negotiations between Trump and other nations that benefit France. As mentioned previously, Macron was the lead mediator between Trump and

the rest of Europe, especially as German Chancellor Merkel had an icy relationship with Trump and Britain's Prime Minister was too wrapped up in national issues (Tiersky, 2018).

Further than this however, Macron also mediated negotiations between the U.S. and the Middle East. Macron spent considerable time working to set up negotiations between Trump and Iran in order to ease tensions between the countries, and prevent France from being affected by further conflicts (Mallet, 2019).

This scholarship suggests that Macron tries to serve as a bridge between Trump and other European and non-European politicians, maintaining a consistency with his predecessors in rhetorical friendliness and criticism of Trump's arguments that international organizations are illegitimate. Macron has also continued to assert France's aspirations to be a great power in relation to the U.S. Overall, existing scholarship suggests that all three hypotheses could have validity. Through my research, I intend to provide significant evidence in regard to the validity of my hypotheses.

Methodology

First, the primary direction of French foreign policy towards the United States in terms of behavior will be examined through Beach's (2017) "explaining-outcome process tracing" approach, where the outcome is the nature of French foreign policy towards the U.S. during Macron's presidency, and the causes are the President's pursuit of national interests. This approach consists of contrasting empirical materials with theories to provide an explanation of the outcome (Beach, 2017). To do this I will be identifying entities, nouns, and their actions, verbs, using Beach's (2017) mechanism for defining outcomes through their causes.

In this instance, the outcome I will be looking to explain is French foreign policy actions, with the cause being a shift from Trump to Biden. Entities will be identified as Macron, and France as a whole, and actions will be examined in two categories, before and after Biden. France's behavior towards the U.S. over the course of Macron's presidency will be analyzed year by year, with major French actions towards the U.S. being identified during each year. I will then examine whether certain actions continued throughout the period of analysis, creating a causal chain to see how these actions evolved.

The primary direction of French foreign policy towards the U.S. will also be examined in terms of rhetoric through content analysis, a qualitative research method used for analyzing a set of texts (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Content analysis is especially intended to be used in analyzing political documents (Elfrinkhof et al., 2014). I will be reading statements and speeches made by the French President from 2016 through 2022, and analyzing them for various themes over time.

Second, in order to determine if the French president continued to be responsible for foreign policy towards the U.S. from 2016 through 2022, the degree to which Macron dominates foreign policy behaviors will be recorded each year. In this process, major events like

negotiations with the U.S. involving the Middle East, the 2017 Bastille Day Celebration, and the 2021 diplomatic crisis will all be examined. This will provide insight into the extent to which Macron is leading various foreign policy decisions.

Additionally, rhetoric will be examined through content analysis to determine if the French president continues to dominate foreign policy towards the U.S. during Macron's presidency. To do this, the sources of rhetoric on French foreign policy towards the U.S. will be noted, comparing the frequency of the President's rhetoric versus other officials.

Finally, in order to determine if France behaved differently with a Republican versus a Democratic administration in the U.S., process tracing will again be used to track the interactions between the French president and U.S. presidents Trump and Biden. Process tracing will lead to finding patterns in Macron's behavior during each administration, providing data on similarities and differences in interactions with the different administrations. In particular, I will examine the nature of French actions toward the U.S. during the Trump administration, on the one hand, and the Biden administration, on the other hand, and examine whether actions in select issue areas (such as international cooperation) change. I will be looking at this data year by year in order to track actions, and then see how they continue throughout the years, and whether there is a shift as U.S. administrations change.

Additionally, an investigation will be conducted to determine if French rhetoric was different when working with a Republican versus a Democrat administration in the U.S. To do this, summative content analysis, as described by (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) will be used to examine statements made by the French President. Hsieh & Shannon (2005) detail that summative content analysis starts with recording the frequency of words or concepts. I will do this by identifying patterns of similarities and differences in French rhetoric towards Republican

and Democrat administrations. Summative content analysis also requires an interpretation and analysis of the content (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). To do this, I will group the patterns I found into themes in French rhetoric. Based on my analysis of the scholarship, I will be looking for themes of friendship and non-alliance with the U.S., where non-alliance is defined as France pursuing its national interests. These themes will then be used to determine if there were shifts in French foreign policy towards the U.S. based on the U.S. President's ideology.

For my analysis of French actions, I will be utilizing the French Presidency website, Élysée, as one of the sources for tracking behavior. This website provides news on the French President's international involvement through travel and interactions with other world leaders, including the U.S. I will also be using the French Foreign Ministry website, the U.S. Office of the Historian website, the U.S. Department of State website, journal articles, and Reuters to track behavior. For these sources I will conduct searches for "Macron" and "Trump", as well as "Macron" and "Biden."

For the analysis of rhetoric, I will again use the French Presidency's website, as well as the French Foreign Ministry website, the French Ministry of the Armed Forces website, the White House website, and the United Nations website. I will also be using various news websites which include France 24, USA Today, CBS News, the New York Times, Reuters, and US News. On these websites I will conduct searches for "Trump," "Biden," and "the United States" in order to identify themes in speeches and statements from the French President.

Empirical Data

This section of the paper will examine three main hypotheses. The first hypothesis predicts that Macron is expected to be the dominant actor in foreign policy between the U.S. and France from 2016 through 2022. The second hypothesis predicts that Macron is expected to maintain a consistent rhetoric of “friendship,” combined with a theme of non-alliance. The third hypothesis predicts that there will be no difference in French foreign policy towards a Republican and a Democrat during Macron’s presidency. Preliminary research indicates that Macron does dominate foreign policy throughout France, while maintaining the above-mentioned rhetoric, and consistencies in interactions with the different U.S. administrations. Through the empirical research conducted, all three hypotheses have been confirmed.

The first hypothesis: Macron dominates foreign policy with the U.S.

Upon his election in May of 2017, Macron can be seen continuing the French tradition of the President dominating foreign policy. I looked at Macron’s behavior and rhetoric during the following major episodes: response to the US pulling out of the Paris Climate accords in 2017, speaking to US Congress in 2018, G7 negotiations in 2019, conversations regarding global security in 2020, the AUKUS diplomatic crisis in 2021, and US-Russian negotiations in 2022.

Just a month after his election in 2017, Macron launched France’s “Make the Planet Great Again” initiative, in response to U.S. president Trump’s decision to opt out of the Paris Climate Agreement (Élysée, 2017). The French president’s choice to personally give a speech on the initiative, rather than having a minister of state or a press advisor announce it, is an indicator of his dominance in foreign policy. While it may not be uncommon for a state leader to give a

speech like this, it does show an intentional choice on Macron's part to lead France's foreign policy on the issue of climate change.

Additionally, in his speech on the initiative, Macron further shows his dominance in foreign policy, by sharing that he personally spoke with Trump, and other world leaders, and plans to continue conversations about the U.S. decision (Élysée, 2017). These conversations and agreements involving climate change and the Paris Climate Agreement could have been left up to lower-ranked diplomats. However, Macron's choice to take the lead further shows how he dominates foreign policy with the U.S.

In 2018, Macron spoke to the U.S. Congress (Élysée, 2018). While it is not uncommon for presidents of other nations to address the U.S. Congress (Office of the Historian, 2020), Macron could have sent his foreign minister instead, which is also a customary practice. Additionally, Macron could have followed in the footsteps of his predecessor, François Hollande, and not addressed the U.S. Congress at all (Office of the Historian, 2020). His choice to address Congress is an indicator of his dominance in foreign policy with the U.S.

At the 2019 G7 summit, Macron worked with Trump to prepare him for negotiations with Iranian president Hassan Rouhani (Mallet, 2019). Macron also held preliminary negotiations with the Iranian president, in an effort to broker foreign policy that would benefit all three countries (Mallet, 2019). Macron could have easily sent a French diplomat, or left it up to the two states, to handle negotiations, but instead led negotiations himself.

In January 2020, Macron spoke with Trump to discuss tensions with Iraq and Iran, and attacks that had recently occurred in the area (Diplomatie, 2020). This conversation alone does not fully demonstrate Macron dominating foreign policy, as it is not uncommon for world leaders

to have conversations like these. However, it is an additional conversation in November of 2020 that helps to demonstrate Macron dominating.

In November 2020, Macron met with the U.S. Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, to further discuss global security, and the threats in Iran (U.S. Department of State, 2020). Macron's choice to meet with Secretary Pompeo himself provides him with the ability to directly control the relationship between the two countries. This direct involvement in meeting with Pompeo, coupled with the initial conversation in January, suggests Macron's domination of the process of foreign policy towards the U.S.

In 2021, Macron dominated foreign policy with the U.S. through his response to a submarine deal between the U.S. and Australia. Upon learning of the deal, which was originally meant to be between France and Australia, Macron brought the French ambassador back to France from Washington (Rose & Mason, 2021). In the reconciliation between the two countries, Macron did not leave the conversations to the diplomats. Rather, he spoke with President Biden personally (Rose & Mason, 2021). The two Presidents also issued a joint statement on the matter in September 2021 (Élysée, 2021). Macron and Biden spoke again in October of 2021 to strengthen trust between the two countries and address challenges they continued to face (Élysée, 2021).

Similar to his involvement in the U.S. negotiations during the Trump administration in 2019, Macron also had a hand in U.S. negotiations during the Biden administration. In February 2022, Macron held discussions with the U.S. president and Russian President, Vladimir Putin (Élysée, 2022). The French President called for a meeting between the two presidents, as well as other European stakeholders, to discuss security and stability (Élysée, 2022). This is another case that could have been managed by sending diplomats to work with the two countries. However,

Macron chose to get involved himself, taking a more dominant role in creating foreign policy with the U.S.

Not only does Macron dominate through his behavior, but his dominance can also be seen through France’s rhetoric towards the U.S. For the purposes of this analysis, rhetoric consists of interviews, speeches, joint statements, and phone calls that directly involve a French official, and directly mentions French policy towards the U.S. or involves a U.S. official. While analyzing pieces of French rhetoric, few speeches or policy documents regarding foreign policy with the U.S. are from French officials other than the President. In a comparison of fifty-two pieces of rhetoric produced between 2016 through 2022; sourced from the French President’s website “Élysée,” the French diplomacy website “Diplomatie,” and the French Ministry of the Armed Forces website “Ministère Des Armées,” thirty-three pieces of rhetoric can be attributed to Macron, while 19 come from lower-ranking, French foreign ministers, as seen in table 1.

	Interviews	Speeches	Joint Statements	Phone Calls	Total
Macron	2	8	11	12	33
Other French Officials	1	9	3	6	19
Total	3	17	14	18	52

Of the fifty-two pieces of rhetoric, two came from the Ministère Des Armées website, neither pieces originating from Macron. This is a stark comparison to Élysée and Diplomatie, which had twenty-four and twenty-six pieces of rhetoric respectively. As seen in table two, all of the rhetoric on Élysée originated from Macron, while Diplomatie had a mix of rhetoric from

Macron and other French foreign ministers. The combination of Macron’s rhetoric on Élysée and Diplomatie demonstrates his domination of rhetoric on French foreign policy towards the U.S.

Table 2: Macron vs Not Macron Foreign Policy Rhetoric Across Three French Ministry Websites

	Interviews Macron	Interviews Not Macron	Speeches Macron	Speeches Not Macron	Joint Statements Macron	Joint Statements Not Macron	Phone Calls Macron	Phone Calls Not Macron	Total
Élysée	1	0	5	0	10	0	8	0	24
Diplomatie	1	0	3	9	1	3	4	5	26
Ministère Des Armées	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Total	2	1	8	9	11	3	12	6	52

Additionally, when it comes to major global developments involving the U.S., Macron is usually the one to respond. The first example of this is the previously mentioned response to the U.S. pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement. Within hours of Trump withdrawing, Macron issued a statement and launched the “Make Our Planet Great Again” initiative (Élysée, 2017). Macro also issued the French response to the January 6th 2021 Capitol riots in the U.S., issuing a statement on January 7 (Élysée, 2021).

The second hypothesis: Macron’s rhetoric of “friendship” and non-alliance

For the purposes of analyzing Macron’s rhetoric toward the U.S., I studied eleven speeches to identify themes of “friendship” and non-alliance. These speeches were used as they are comments on major foreign policy issues from 2016 through 2022. I looked at Macron’s 2017 Bastille Day Speech, 2017 Make Our Planet Great Again speech, remarks from the September 2017 European Initiative, 2018 speech to the U.S. Congress, 2018 speech at the World Economic Forum, 2019 remarks at a D-Day celebration, 2019 UN debate, 2020 interview with Le Grand Continent, response to the January 6th, 2021 riot in the U.S., statements on the

2021 AUKUS deal, 2022 speech at a U.S. state luncheon, and two statements on Ukraine from 2022.

Out of the eleven speeches, five had clear rhetoric of friendship. For the purpose of this analysis, “rhetoric of friendship” refers to the explicit use of the words “friendship” and “friend” and their variations. It also includes references to a long-standing positive relationship. For this, I looked at the above mentioned 2017 Bastille Day speech, 2018 speech to Congress, 2019 D-Day celebration remarks, 2021 response to January 6th, and the 2022 U.S. state luncheon remarks.

At the 2017 Bastille Day celebrations, which Macron had invited Trump to attend, Macron made the statement that "The United States is our friend — nothing will ever separate us" (Bhatti & Onyanga-Omara, 2017). A day before the celebration Macron and Trump held a joint press conference, at which Macron spoke of how Trump was a “natural choice” to attend the celebrations, as a symbol of the long history between France and the U.S. (Élysée, 2017). The rhetoric from the press conference is an example of Macron reflecting on the long-standing positive relationship between the countries. This reflection, along with the explicit use of the word “friend” at the celebration, demonstrates Macron’s “friendship” rhetoric.

When Macron spoke to Congress a year later, in April of 2018, he began by reflecting on the battles that the U.S. and France have fought in together, noting it has led to a “special bond deeply rooted not only in our history, but also in our flesh” (Élysée, 2018). He continued to weave this rhetoric throughout the speech, referencing the “special relationship” the two countries share, and ending with the statement that the French, “cherish the friendship of the American people” (Élysée, 2018).

The theme of friendship present at Bastille Day and in Congress continued into 2019, when Macron and Trump held a joint D-Day celebration in Normandy. Macron shared his

respect for the U.S. troops that fought on D-Day, and how the French “live this history of friendship in the current day” (CBS News, 2019). In this speech, Macron again reflects not just on the friendship between the countries, but the long history between them.

There was a lack of rhetoric on friendship between the countries throughout speeches given by Macron throughout 2020. However, in 2021, after the events on January 6th in the U.S., Macron issued another statement of friendship, condemning the insurrectionists and stating “I just wanted to express our friendship and our faith in the United States” (Élysée, 2021).

In December 2022, Macron again expressed rhetoric on the friendship between the U.S. and France, at a U.S. state luncheon with U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris. Macron reflected on the historic links between the countries, ending with the statement “this history and the friendship between the United States of America and France, on both sides, is part of our soul, our roots, but, as well, part of our future” (White House, 2022).

Throughout each instance of friendship rhetoric, it can be seen how France, through Macron, places a heavy emphasis on their friendship with the United States. In all but one of the five speeches with friendship rhetoric, Macron is speaking of friendship between the two countries in conjunction with their long history of alliance. This relationship, based on this history, is used to maintain unity and alliance between the two countries. Macron used the rhetoric through Bastille Day to begin building a relationship with Trump, as both presidents had assumed office within the year prior. He then continues this appeal through his speeches to Congress and US citizens on D-Day, using friendship rhetoric to boost cooperation between the countries.

In Biden's term, Macron uses this rhetoric early on, condemning insurrectionists, but also showing support and aid from France during a tumultuous time. This rhetoric continues as Macron works with Biden and Harris, strengthening the relationship between the countries.

But is friendship, and historic ties, the only focus of French rhetoric towards the U.S.? Going back to the eleven speeches mentioned at the beginning of the section, seven had a rhetoric of non-alliance. For the purpose of this analysis, rhetoric of non-alliance refers to the idea of France acting in its own self-interest, even when that is in opposition to U.S. interests. For this I looked at the 2017 Make Our Planet Great Again and September European Initiative speeches, 2018 World Economic Forum speech, 2019 UN speech, 2020 interview with *Le Grand Continent*, 2021 response to the AUKUS deal, and two statements on Ukraine in 2022.

Separate pieces of rhetoric were used to analyze friendship and non-alliance as speeches with these themes have different audiences. Rhetoric with themes of friendship focus on a primarily U.S. audience, such as Congress and American citizens. On the other hand, rhetoric with the theme of non-alliance tends to have a primarily French and European audience.

As previously mentioned, after Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Paris Climate Agreement, Macron was quick to respond, giving a speech to launch his Make Our Planet Great Again initiative that same day. In his speech, Macron states his respect for the U.S. decision, but that he is disappointed by it, and finds that it is wrong (Élysée, 2017). His quick verbal disagreement on the decision shows the non-alignment between the two states on the issue of climate change.

The issue of climate change was just the start of non-alliance rhetoric from Macron during the Trump administration. Later that same year, in September 2017, Macron gave a speech that urged Europe to work together in order to compete with the U.S. in economic and

technological development (Élysée, 2017). The urge to form a more united Europe that competes with the U.S. further shows non-alliance as Europe, and France, would need to rely less on their alliance with the U.S. and more on themselves.

Macron's non-alliance rhetoric of European independence continues into 2018, when he speaks at the World Trade Forum in Switzerland. At the forum, Macron encourages Europe to be more united, in order to "avoid the fragmentation of the world," as he believes the US approach can create (Élysée, 2018). Here Macron is promoting themes of non-alliance by presenting the idea that European values are superior and more just than U.S. values.

In the same 2018 speech, Macron also promotes technological independence in Europe. He discusses how Europe needs to create its own strategy for technological change, and move away from the privatized U.S. strategy (Élysée, 2018). This shows how Macron is looking to make France, and Europe as a whole, less dependent on U.S. innovation, and more of an independent actor.

In 2019, Macron's rhetoric of non-alliance continued, and began to spread into issues of international security. At a UN debate, Macron called out the U.S., urging them to rejoin negotiations with Iran and the JCPOA (United Nation, 2019). Macron's promotion of the JCPOA to the U.S. is a demonstration of the two countries' non-alliance in their approach to preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Macron again shared a similar rhetoric of non-alliance in a 2020 interview with Le Grand Continent. In the interview, Macron discussed the need for European autonomy and sovereignty, especially in terms of trade and global security (Diplomatie, 2020). Macron shared how the U.S.'s withdrawal from the JCPOA, and the lack of European economic autonomy, made it difficult to continue doing business with Iran and that Europe needs to become autonomous from

the U.S. to remedy this (Diplomatie, 2020). This demonstrates non-alliance rhetoric through the idea that as Europe becomes more independent, the U.S. loses influence, making it a weaker ally.

In 2021, after a diplomatic crisis between the U.S. and France, where the U.S. signed a submarine deal with Australia that canceled an existing France-Australia deal, tension arose between the two countries. Macron made the statement that “cooperation cannot be dependence” (Cohen, 2021). This is a clear example of non-alignment rhetoric from Macron: while France and the U.S. should cooperate and work together, one should not depend on the other and vice versa.

Macron’s rhetoric in this case is a stark contrast to his rhetoric of friendship with the U.S., indicating a serious focus on non-alliance at the time. In statements and press releases about the deal, Macron does not refer to France’s relationship with the U.S. as a friendship. Instead, terms such as partnership and allies were used instead (France 24, 2021). Additionally, Macron told Biden that for a strong alliance the countries needed to be “autonomous partners” (Cohen, 2021) and that France's trust needed to be won by “deeds not words” (Rose & Mason, 2021).

Macron’s rhetoric in this situation shows a push for strong French non-alliance with the U.S. The calls for less dependence and more autonomy in cooperation with the U.S. can be seen through previous rhetoric, but the U.S.-Australia agreement led to Macron being more clear in this separation. This push for non-alliance is made even stronger by the lack of “friendship” rhetoric made by Macron during this time.

Going into 2022, tensions and non-alliance rhetoric began to lessen as France and the U.S. worked together in their efforts to stop the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In March 2022, Macron addressed the people of France about their efforts, sharing the willingness to work with the U.S. in negotiations with Russia (Élysée, 2022). Later that same month, Macron shared that

France and the U.S. would jointly increase sanctions in their condemnation of Russia's actions (Élysée, 2022). Macron's rhetoric in regard to the Ukraine situation reflects a higher degree of cooperation and alliance with the U.S. as they address this global conflict.

The third hypothesis: There will be no difference in French foreign policy towards a Republican and a Democrat during Macron's presidency

While U.S. foreign policy may have differed when the administration changed from a Republican to a Democrat, French foreign policy did not. In 2017, when Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Paris agreement, Macron spoke out against this choice, establishing France's stance on the environment and international involvement (Élysée, 2017). When Biden changed the policy in the U.S., rejoining the agreement, France maintained their stance, welcoming the U.S. back (Diplomatie, 2021). Due to Macron's response to the two administrations decisions on the Paris Agreement, it may seem that French policy towards the U.S. is different in each case. However, their policy is the same: they want the U.S. to be a signatory member of the Agreement. It is just Macron's response, based on the U.S. adherence to the Agreement, that is different.

French foreign policy on multilateralism and international organizations (IOs) with the U.S. also showed no differences between a Republican or Democrat. Early in 2018, Macron emphasized the importance of a treaty backed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, while encouraging the U.S. to sign (Élysée, 2018). That same year, Macron spoke to the U.S. Congress, encouraging the U.S. to become more involved in multilateralism: "The United States invented this multilateralism. You are the one now who has to help to preserve and reinvent it" (Élysée, 2018). This policy of multilateralism was reiterated in 2019, when Macron spoke at the UN, encouraging the U.S. to rejoin the JCPOA agreement by saying

“we must reinvent a strong, pragmatic multilateralism” (UN, 2019). In 2020, the French foreign affairs minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, pushed the French policy of multilateralism and supporting IOs when he issued a statement of support for the International Criminal Court in response to an executive order against it by Trump (Diplomatie, 2020). Macron again spoke on the importance of multilateral cooperation with the U.S. in 2020, sharing that there needed to be more engagement with multilateralism on the global level, especially with the U.S., which had withdrawn from international programs: “We have to re-engage with multilateralism” (Diplomatie, 2020).

Macron’s encouragement of U.S. multilateralism and cooperation with IOs continued into the Biden administration, with Biden re-engaging the U.S. in multilateral cooperation. In January of 2021, Macron welcomed the U.S. back into the UN backed Paris Climate agreement via a tweet after Biden signed an executive action to rejoin (Lardieri, 2021). That same year, the U.S. and France issued a joint statement on their commitment to multilateral cooperation between the U.S. and the EU focusing on “continued U.S.-EU cooperation to strengthen the multilateral, rules-based order” (Élysée, 2021). This continued in 2022, when another joint statement was issued by the U.S. and France which restated their commitment to multilateralism, this time in terms of trade: “The United States and France reaffirm their commitment to an open and rules-based multilateral trading system” (White House, 2022). Additionally, throughout 2022, Macron worked with Biden and supported U.S. efforts in Ukraine, as they worked together to support NATO (Élysée, 2022). While the U.S. ’s engagement with multilateralism was different between a Republican, withdrawing from multilateral agreements, and a Democrat, involved in multilateral cooperation, France’s foreign policy on it does not change. Macron wanted the U.S.

to be engaged and committed to multilateralism, and working with IOs throughout both administrations in the U.S.

During a Republican and Democratic administration in the U.S., French foreign policy of European autonomy from the U.S. also showed no differences. Macron first began promoting the idea of European autonomy at a speech in September of 2017, where he emphasized the need for autonomy in technology: “rather than bemoaning the fact that the current leaders in the digital technology are American, to be followed by the Chinese, we must create European champions, we must invent in this global upheaval fair securities and efficient regulations.” Later in the same speech, Macron also presents the idea of European autonomy in their economy: “our challenge within the eurozone is to work out how to make it an economic power which can compete with China and the United States” (Élysée, 2017). Here Macron is pushing the idea of a Europe that is independent of the U.S. in its technological developments, and its markets.

This idea of autonomy continued into November 2020, during the Trump administration, but after the election that determined Biden to be the next president. In an interview, Macron reiterated the idea of European technological independence, as well as more European autonomy in foreign policy, especially as European companies found it difficult to work with Iran without fear of retaliation from the U.S. (Diplomatie, 2020). While knowing that political ideology was soon going to be changing in the U.S. with a new president, Macron still maintained his same foreign policy. This policy was even upheld still during Biden’s term, as best seen through Macron’s response to the AUKUS deal, where Macron stated that the U.S. and France needed to be “autonomous partners” (Cohen, 2021). This further pushes for less reliance on the U.S. within France and Europe as a whole.

Overall, Macron can be seen articulating the same French interests of protecting the environment, encouraging multilateralism and cooperation with IOs, and European autonomy throughout both the Trump and Biden administrations, even when they clash with U.S. interests. This demonstrates his indifference to a Republican or Democratic president. He maintains the same policies regardless of the U.S. President's ideology. Macron's foreign policy towards the U.S. stems more from the individual U.S. president's actions, than their political party.

Conclusion

This research paper considered how the ideology of the U.S. president affected French foreign policy towards the U.S. during Macron's presidency. In my analysis, the first hypothesis, that Macron was expected to continue Presidential dominance of French foreign policy, was confirmed. In various instances where a lower ranking French diplomat could have handled a situation, Macron could be seen taking charge and controlling the French policy. The second hypothesis was also confirmed, as Macron could be seen maintaining a theme of "friendship" combined with the theme of non-alliance through his rhetoric during both the Trump and Biden administrations. Finally, the third hypothesis was also confirmed, as Macron maintained the same French interests during both the Trump and Biden administrations, regardless of whether or not they clashed with U.S. interests and if the President was a Republican or Democrat. Even when policies changed between the two U.S. administrations, Macron maintained his position. Combining these hypotheses suggests that the ideology of the U.S. president does not have a significant impact on foreign policy towards the U.S. from countries like France.

These findings contribute to a greater understanding of French-U.S. relations. While France is a great international player, their policies are based on their own national interests, and don't seem to be swayed by the shifting politics in the United States. Due to France basing policies on national interests, when certain aspects of U.S. ideology clash with French policies it can increase tensions. So although Macron was consistent in rhetoric and behavior regardless of the general ideology of both a Republican and Democratic administration, Trump's policies of withdrawing from multilateralism caused tension between the countries, while Biden's policies on multilateralism did not.

Further research should be done on the French pursuit of being a more powerful international player, and how that motivates Macron's foreign policies, both with the U.S. and beyond. A general perception of this can be gathered through this research, based on Macron's calls for autonomy of both France, and the European Union as a whole. However, there is potential for this to be explored further, through Macron's foreign policies with countries other than the U.S. Further research could also be done through expanding the timeline considered, looking at whether French foreign policy differs towards a Republican or a Democrat starting in 1959, when the Fifth Republic of France began. While there needs to be more data collected on whether France reacts to the ideological identity of U.S. Presidents, it does seem that this may only have a minor role in the way French leaders engage with the world. This would suggest to policy-makers that it is not ideology that affects relations with other countries, but rather it is the consequences of their policies that elicits reactions from other world leaders.

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