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Biography

Ernst Bernard Haas (born 31 March 1924 – died 6 March 2003) fled Nazi Germany with his Jewish family to the United States in 1938. He studied, first at the University of Chicago and then at Columbia University, where he obtained his PhD in public law and government in 1952. He spent his entire academic career (1951-1999) at the University of Columbia, Berkeley. From 1969-73 he was director of the UC Berkeley Institute for International Studies and subsequently Robson Professor of Government in the University of California, Berkeley, Department of Political Science. He was a prominent scholar of political science and the founder of neo-functionalism, a leading regional integration theory.

Summary

The Uniting of Europe’ is not only an empirical study of the dynamics of the early European integration process from the Treaty of Paris in 1951 to the Treaty of Rome in 1957. With this seminal work, Ernst Haas also laid the groundwork for theorizing the European integration process from a neo-functional perspective. He developed the famous concept of 'spill-over', i.e. the idea that integration in one functional area would quasi-automatically lead to further integration in other areas. By choosing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) he could showcase how close co-operation in various economic sectors may trigger the shifting of loyalties, interests and expectations of different political, social and economic actors from national level towards a supranational institution. While focusing on an analysis of selected groups, institutions and ideologies specific to the European setting, he derived from the unique experience of the ECSC some general propositions about the conditions under which the transfer of national sovereignty to a larger supranational political community can happen.