

Europe's Compromising Union: an introduction

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Paper prepared for the workshop on sovereignty and European integration
Edinburgh Law School
29th May, 2009

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Introduction

This paper traces an outline of the EU as an international actor and some key features of its foreign policy. The paper argues for an approach to understanding EU foreign policy that puts the emphasis on the changing nature of the nation-state in Europe. This challenges the conventional wisdom of viewing EU foreign policy from the perspective of traditional 19th century nation-states, bargaining with each other in order to reach a lowest-common denominator policy on international issues. It also challenges the view of the EU as an embryonic sovereign, with its own foreign policy standing above the national foreign policies of EU member states. To paraphrase Stanley Hoffmann, the nation-state in Europe is *neither* obstinate nor obsolete. It has been transformed into a 'member state', a social phenomenon rather different from the egotistical bourgeois states of the 19th century. This transformation has implications for how we understand the concepts of national interest, foreign policy and sovereignty, all of which should feed into our analysis of EU foreign policy.

The paper begins by identifying two major limits to existing approaches to EU foreign policy: the 'adjectival war' and the concern with effectiveness. The former leads to analyses that exaggerate individual aspects of EU foreign policy at the expense of a more holistic view. The latter forces the study of EU foreign policy into a *de facto* comparative framework, where the EU is measured against the effectiveness of national foreign policies and is inevitably found wanting. Rather than ask the question 'does EU foreign policy work?', this paper tries to understand it on its own terms. Having identified these limitations in the existing literature, the paper explored three features of EU foreign policy connected to the process of state transformation identified above. These are (1) a retreat from war-making and conflict; (2) the attenuation of national interests and their transformation into what we might call 'national particularities'; (3) the marked preference for compromise over a defence of particular principles or values, what is labelled here the EU's 'pragmatic power'. The paper ends with the suggestion that the concept of sovereignty, and the balance it identifies in the relationship between politics and bureaucracy within the state, could help us tie together in a holistic fashion our approach to EU foreign policy.

Beyond the adjectival war

A feature of the existing debate around the EU's foreign policy is the proliferation of qualifying adjectives, each laying claim to identifying the particularity of the EU as an international actor. There exist in fact a dizzying number of such adjectives. A brief list would include: civilian power, civilizing power, ethical power, normative power, evanescent power, model power, postmodern power, responsible power, smart power, transformative power, quiet superpower and even metrosexual power.¹ Whilst each contains some truth to it, such an approach exaggerates certain

* This paper is an attempt at synthesizing an ongoing book project. Work is at an early stage and comments are very welcome.

¹ Duchêne, F. (1973). The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence. In M. Kohnstamm, and W. Hager (Eds.), *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign Policy Problems before the European Community*. Basingstoke: Macmillan; Duchêne, F. (1972). Europe's Role in World Peace. In

aspects of the EU's behaviour, at the expense of others. It also introduces false oppositions into a field which – by its very nature – is marked by contradictory phenomena. For instance, Ian Manners' term, "normative power", was originally coined as an attempt to engage with some of the ideas of the English School in International Relations theory.² Manners' original 2002 article was a play on Hedley Bull's famous 1982 article, 'Civilian power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?' As such, Manners did not intend the term 'normative' to be opposed to that of 'hard power'. Instead, normative power was a feature of international society, which co-existing alongside more 'realist' elements. This methodological pluralism, a mark of the English School's attempt to trace all the different and often contradictory tendencies within the international system, was ignored.³ Subsequent debates in EU studies have focused on the question of whether 'normative power' is being challenged by the growing militarization of the EU's foreign policy actions. This kind of argument opposes normative to 'hard' or 'military' power and forces scholars and practitioners to choose between them.⁴

Zaki Laïdi recently highlighted the limits of the adjectival war.⁵ He remarked that in Joseph Nye's original conception, hard power referred to the 'power of coercion', not the use of military tools. Soft power, in contrast, referred to the 'power of attraction'. As Laïdi observed, in the EU's case civilian instruments such as competition policy can be associated with hard power, as the EU has certainly acted coercively in areas such as the breaking up of monopolies in Europe. Its use of military capabilities, however, has been for the pursuit of civilian goals, and is therefore an exercise in soft power. A battle of qualifying adjectives leads the study of EU foreign policy into the cul-de-sac of pure taxonomy, with each scholar seeking to clarify definitions in the false hope of eliminating real-world contradictions.

R. Mayne (Ed.), *Europe Tomorrow: 16 Europeans look ahead*. London: Fontana; Maull, H.W. (2006). The Perils of NOT Conceiving EU Foreign Policy as a Civilizing Project. *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft* 1; Aggestam, L. (2008). Introduction: ethical power Europe? *International Affairs*. 84(1): 1-11; Manners, I. (2002). Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms? *Journal of Common Market Studies*. 40(2): 235-58; Balibar, E. (2003). Europe, médiation évanouissante. In E. Balibar (Ed.), *l'Europe, l'Amérique, et la guerre*. Paris: La Découverte; Miliband, D. (2007) 'Europe 2030: Model Power Not Superpower', Speech to the College of Europe, Bruges, 15 November, 2007; McCormick, J. (2007). *The European Superpower*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; Mayer, H., and Vogt, H., Eds. (2006). *A Responsible Europe? Ethical Foundations of EU External Affairs*. Basingstoke: Palgrave; Rehn, O. (2008). The EU's smart power in its region and the world. Speech to St Anthony's College, Oxford. 1st May, 2008; Grabbe, H. (2005). *The EU's Transformative Power: Europeanisation Through Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave; Moravcsik, A. (2002) 'The Quiet Superpower' *Newsweek*, 17 June. Available at: <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/quiet.pdf>; Khanna, P. (2004). The Metrosexual Power, *Foreign Policy*. Vol. July/August.

² My thanks to Ian Manners for his insights into the original development and intentions behind his 'normative power' concept.

³ On the methodological pluralism of the English School, see Bull, H. (1977) *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Basingstoke: MacMillan). See also Suganami, H. (2006) 'The English School and International Theory' in A. Bellamy (Ed.) *International Society and its Critics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

⁴ See for example Smith, K.E. (2005) 'Beyond the Civilian Power EU Debate' *Politique Européenne* 17 (autumn) pp63-82.

⁵ Laïdi, Z. (2009) Presentation at the conference 'The Power of Europe: Affirming the EU as a Global Actor', Palais d'Egmont, Brussels, 7th May, 2009.

Beyond effectiveness

Another feature of the study of EU foreign policy is the focus on effectiveness. One of the most common approaches in discussions of CFSP and ESDP is to detail the institutional stalemate and blockages and to lament the EU's inability to meet expectations. In the case of ESDP, the most common complaint is that member states fail to provide the EU with adequate military and civilian capabilities. 'Force generation' is an ongoing frustration for analysts of EU foreign policy. Daniel Keohane recently remarked that the troop contributions to ESDP missions, by EU member states, represent in fact only a very small percentage of overall troop numbers. Keohane calculated that together the numbers of troops deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Chad amounts to no more than 5% (5,000) of 5% (100,000) of the total number of soldiers in Europe (over 1 million). And yet, in spite of these small numbers, the EU struggles to generate the military and civilian capabilities necessary to fulfil its ESDP goals. In the recent Chad mission, Russia provided 200 hundred extra soldiers and 4 Mi-8MT helicopters.⁶

Lying behind this concern with effectiveness is a crypto-normative assumption that the EU and its foreign policy should be judged in comparison with the performance of nation-states.⁷ This assumption lies behind the popularity of Henry Kissinger's famous question: is there a single telephone number with which I can get through to Europe?⁸ The comparison here is between the EU and the institutionally centralized nation-states. Leon Brittan, former British trade Commissioner in Brussels, summed up his discussion of the EU's international role by writing that "there is a long way to go before Henry Kissinger's successor in the State Department in Washington will have a completely satisfactory answer to the old question about whom to telephone in Europe to talk foreign policy".⁹ T.R. Reid quotes Irwin Selzer's acerbic view of the telephone number question, given in response to France's opposition to the 2003 US-led Iraq War: "When we encouraged the Europeans to set up one telephone number that we could call, we did not intend it to be answered by a French policymaker whose most frequent response would be 'non'".¹⁰

The end result of such a concern with effectiveness is that research on EU foreign policy tends to ignore deeper questions about the dynamics driving foreign policy cooperation, oriented as it is towards solving the problem of ineffectiveness. In his seminal article on the capabilities-expectations gap, Chris Hill aimed to provide a "more realistic picture of what the Community does in the world than is presented by

⁶ ISIS European Security Review, March 2009.

⁷ For instance, Asle Toje argues that "a main strength of the actorness concept is that it allows one to hold the EU to some of the same yardsticks as the other principle actors in the international system. After all, the EU operates in an international system constructed and inhabited by states... The fundamental premise for the CFSP-ESDP nexus is the agreement that if the EU is to become an effective force in international affairs, it will need to control credible diplomatic, economic and military instruments". Toje, A. (2008) 'The European Union as a Small Power, or Conceptualizing Europe's Strategic Actorness' *Journal of European Integration* 30(2) pp199-215, p204.

⁸ This lament has even given birth to a blog, entitled 'whodoicall.eu'. Run by a British and a German blogger, Jon Worth and Jan Seifer respectively, the blog is aimed at raising the debate around an election for a combined role of President of the European Council and President of the European Commission. For more details, see <http://www.whodoicall.eu/2008/02/kissinger-gives-cryptic-answer-to-the-one-call-question/en/>

⁹ Brittan, L. (2000). *A Diet of Brussels: The Changing Face of Europe*. London: Little, Brown & Co. p154.

¹⁰ Reid, T.R. (2004). *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*. New York: Penguin. p230.

either its more enthusiastic supporters or by the *demandeurs* beyond its borders”.¹¹ Hill was addressing a policy problem – high expectations, low levels of delivery – rather than answering an analytical question. Hartmut Mayer recently stated that his purpose in writing on EU foreign policy was to develop “a new rhetoric, a more mature and responsible narrative by and for the EU on its future global role”.¹² Mayer argued that “a more responsible rhetoric would... allow for a more realistic translation of ethical principles and political goals into successful practical action”. The result of such approaches is that academic analysis becomes indistinguishable from policy recommendations and the pursuit of understanding is replaced with the goals of advocacy. Recent work on cross-pillarization, which highlights the growing complexity of EU foreign policy, still retains the concern with effectiveness and a tendency to compare EU foreign policy to national foreign policy. Stephan Setter, writing on cross-pillarization, argues that the expansion of foreign policy issues “give shape to an emergent EU sovereignty”.¹³ The concern with effectiveness is evident in the attention given to coherence by those who write on cross-pillarization: the more complex EU foreign policy becomes, the more coherence and consistency are a challenge.¹⁴

1. What is EU foreign policy?

If we study EU foreign policy closely, we find that it does not signal the birth of a European state. Rather, we see an intensification of cooperation between national actors, but in the absence of the creation of supranational structures. This is what Keohane and Hoffmann have called “supranationality without supranational institutions”.¹⁵ They noted that in Ernst Haas’ original conception of supranationality, he did not mean the creation of new institutions at the pan-European level, able to enforce authoritatively their decisions upon member states. Rather, for Haas, supranationalism was *a kind of politics*: an orientation on the part of national governments and its representatives towards the pursuit of compromise and accommodation with other member states. As Keohane and Hoffmann defined it, supranationalism refers to “a cumulative pattern of accommodation in which the participants refrain from unconditionally vetoing proposals and instead seek to attain agreement by means of compromises upgrading common interests”.¹⁶ Supranationalism is therefore much more about the *subjective orientation of national political elites towards the pursuit of compromise and consensus* than it is about the creation of new pan-European political institutions. What we observe in the case of EU foreign policy is precisely this kind of subjective orientation and its impact upon

¹¹ Hill, C. (1993) The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role. *Journal of Common Market Studies*. 31(3): 305-328, p306.

¹² Mayer, H. (2008). Is it still called 'Chinese Whispers'? The EU's rhetoric and action as a responsible global institution. *International Affairs*. 84(1): 61-79, p61

¹³ Stetter, S. (2004) ‘Cross-pillar politics: functional unity and institutional fragmentation of EU foreign policies’ *Journal of European Public Policy* 11(4): 720-739, p720.

¹⁴ On the importance of coherence, see Pilegaard, J. (2003) Relations between trade, development policy and the CFSP: Analysing incoherence in EU external policies. Paper presented to the FORNET working group, 7/8 November, 2003; Missiroli, A. (2001) European Security Policy: The Challenge of Coherence. *European Foreign Affairs Review* 6: 177-96 ; Duke, S. (1999) Consistency as an Issue in EU External Activities, *EIPA Working Paper* 99/W/06.

¹⁵ Keohane R., and Hoffmann, S. (1991) ‘Institutional Change in Europe in the 1980s’ in R. Keohane and S. Hoffmann (Eds.) *The New European Community: Decisionmaking and Institutional Change* (Westview: Oxford) p15.

¹⁶ Keohane and Hoffmann, ‘Institutional Change in Europe in the 1980s’, p15.

policymaking. There is no distinctive shift from the national to the pan-European level, but rather a transformation in the way in which national executives and their representatives pursue and understand their interests.

This is evident in the way in which the CFSP and the ESDP operate and in the kinds of institutions and policies which have accompanied their development. Terms such as the “Brussels-ization” of foreign policy in Europe refer to the growing intensity with which national representatives interact with each other, but not to any shift of executive power to supranational institutions.¹⁷ As Frédéric Mérand points out, “Brussels-ization” does not mean transferring foreign policy to the pan-European level. It refers instead to changes in the relations between national diplomats and the variety of other actors involved in the foreign policymaking process.¹⁸ Evidence of this “Brussels-ization” has been the growing number of working group meetings, where national experts work together on specific policy issues. Dividing Council activities into working groups, COREPER and the Council of Ministers, Kassim identified a significant increase in working group meetings, compared to an unchanging number of COREPER and Council of Ministers meetings. In 1958, the number of days spent in working group meetings was around 300. By the 1970s, it had risen to almost 2,500 and in the early 1990s it peaked to almost 3,000.¹⁹ Looking more closely at key EU foreign policy ‘institutions’, we can see more evidence of this “supranationality without supranational institutions” or “co-idigration” as Howorth rather clumsily put it. Whilst this paper looks at the COPS in more detail, other institutions tell a similar story.

Le ‘COPS’

One good example of ‘supranationality without supranational institutions’ is the Political and Security Committee, most often referred to by its French acronym, COPS (*Comité politique et de sécurité*). When ESDP was first launched in 1999, it was thought that the British wanted to focus on the development of military and civilian capabilities, whilst the French and the Germans wanted to concentrate on the development of new institutions. In the minds of some, this reflected the traditional struggle between intergovernmental and federalist visions of European integration. In fact, the COPS was a British initiative. Moreover, it strengthens rather than weakens the hold of the Council of Ministers over foreign policymaking.²⁰ The COPS functions essentially as an advisory body to the Council of Ministers. Its obligations defined in article 25 of the TEU are that of monitoring the international situation, the implementation of agreed policies, contributing “to the definition of policies by delivering opinions to the Council” and the exercise of “political control and strategic direction of crisis management operations”.²¹ Made up of national diplomats of ambassadorial rank, the COPS is permanently based in Brussels. It meets twice a week and is the place where foreign policy issues are settled between member states,

¹⁷ Allen, D. (1998) ‘Who speaks for Europe?’ in J. Peterson and H. Sjursen (Eds.) *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe? Competing Visions of the CFSP* (London: Routledge)

¹⁸ Mérand, F. (2008) *European Defence Policy: Beyond the Nation-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) p82.

¹⁹ Figures taken from table in Mérand, ‘European Defence Policy’, p86.

²⁰ Juncos, A.E. and Reynolds, C. (2007) ‘The Political and Security Committee: Governing in the Shadow’ *European Foreign Affairs Review* 12 pp127-147, p133.

²¹ Juncos and Reynolds, ‘The Political and Security Committee’ pp135-6. For a more exhaustive account of the COPS’s role, see Duke, S. (2005) ‘The Linchpin COPS’ 2005/W/05 *EIPA Working Paper* (Maastricht: European Institute of Public Administration).

in anticipation of formal executive-level approval by national foreign ministers in their meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations Council. In essence, the COPS functions much like COREPER II, though with a more restricted mandate to deal only with foreign and security matters. This isomorphism explains in part the competition between these two bodies.

The COPS's predecessor was the PoCo, the Political Committee, set up as part of the European Political Cooperation framework in 1969. The PoCo had been tied to the rotating Council presidency; foreign ministers would therefore meet in national capitals, in line with whichever member state was acting as President. Juncos and Reynolds claim that

The creation of a Brussels-based committee to deal with 'all aspects of the CFSP/ESDP' was intended to represent a significant improvement over its predecessor, the somewhat peripatetic PoCo... [T]he creation of a permanent committee in Brussels and the gradual displacement of the political directors (based in the national capitals) as the gatekeepers of the CFSP/ESDP decision-making process best exemplified the move to a more 'Brusselized' and operational CFSP/ESDP.²²

The COPS, however, is more a product of intensified cooperation than it is an expression of any definitive transfer of power to Brussels. The significance of the COPS lies in the manner in which national representatives accept to cooperate closely together, to the point where national interests are often formulated in line with, and in response to, what other member states argue for around the Council table. The COPS is not the advent of an EU sovereignty. In some respects, by virtue of its sheer workload and the expansion in the number of EU member states, it represents a retreat from the more intensive and clubby atmosphere of the PoCo.²³ What it exemplifies, however, is a de-structuring of the national interest in Europe, with a shift from representative and collective forms of diplomacy towards more individuated diplomacy, based around reciprocity and compromise.²⁴

A similar study of other CFSP and ESDP institutions leads to the same conclusion. About ESDP, Mérand argues that it "is not a policy and it has little to do with defence". Instead, as stipulated in the 2000 Treaty of Nice, "[ESDP] is first and foremost a decision-making structure that enables the EU to launch crisis management operations".²⁵ The ESDP missions are therefore not the harbingers of a European army but rather the unsurprising result of a shift in the focus of European armed forces away from self-defence and towards global crisis management tasks. It comes as no surprise therefore that in line with the development of ESDP – but often independently of any direct pressure from Brussels – member states have been reforming their own militaries, bringing them into line with the priorities of a post Cold War order that focuses on global crisis management instead than national defence.²⁶ Other institutions, such as the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs, and the expanding role for the Council Secretariat in foreign policymaking,

²² Juncos and Reynolds, 'The Political and Security Committee', p135.

²³ Juncos and Reynolds, 'The Political and Security Committee', p138.

²⁴ Vaïsse, M. (2009) *La Puissance Ou l'Influence? La France dans la monde depuis 1958* (Paris: Fayard) p32..

²⁵ Mérand, 'European Defence Policy', p28.

²⁶ See Irondelle, B. (2003) 'Europeanization without the European Union? French military reforms 1991-1996' *Journal of European Public Policy* 10(2) pp208-226; Forster, A. (2006) *Armed Forces and Society in Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave).

all point to the same phenomenon: intensified cooperation between national representative and national bureaucracies. For all the talk of a European Foreign Minister, the Lisbon Treaty preserves the existing institutional hierarchies, at least in terms of the limited roles for the Commission, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice in the making of foreign policy.²⁷

What we can conclude from this brief account of the institutional workings of EU foreign policy is that it makes little sense to situate foreign policy within the traditional debate between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism. The former presumes the endurance of traditional nation-states whilst the latter identifies the emergence of sovereignty at the EU level. As we have seen, neither position accurately captures EU foreign policy. Taking instead EU foreign policy *as it is*, we are presented with an unprecedented degree of cooperation between national executives and national foreign ministries, and between national representatives at the level of Council working groups. Our starting point should therefore be with nation-states and the growing preference for transnational policy formation. Taking EU foreign policy as it is, what are its main features and how can we connect these to an understanding of the transformation of the nation-state in Europe?

2. Three aspects of state transformation

Taking the above conclusion as its starting point, this paper focuses on the three different aspects of the transformation of the nation-state, connecting each to developments in EU foreign policy. Having explored each aspect in turn, the paper will in its conclusion consider whether the changing relationship between politics and bureaucracy within the framework of the nation-state – a relationship that goes to the heart of our understandings of sovereignty – can provide us with a unifying framework for the study of EU foreign policy.

2.1. Europe's "refusal of power"

In his 2008 book, *Norms Over Force*, Zaki Laïdi begins his analysis of the EU by noting that its foreign policy is characterized by what he calls Europe's "refusal of power" or "power avoidance". By this, Laïdi means that the EU does not seek to become a superpower or a great power, and that this should be the starting point of our analysis of EU foreign policy.²⁸

Laïdi is right to emphasize this "refusal of power": it is a recurrent feature of EU foreign policy and is a source of much frustration for scholars, analysts and enthusiasts more generally of the EU and its foreign policy.²⁹ Barack Obama's visit to Europe in April 2009 ended in failure when he was unable to secure a commitment on the part of European states to boost their troop levels in Afghanistan. As Irwin Seltzer put it, 'President Barack Obama is going home with non, nein and no ringing in his

²⁷ Whitman R. and Juncos A.E., (2009) 'The Lisbon Treaty and the Foreign, Security and Defence Policy: Reforms, Implementation and the Consequences of (non-) Ratification' *European Foreign Affairs Review* 14 pp25-46, p30.

²⁸ Laïdi, Z. (2008) *Norms over Force: The Enigma of European Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave) pp7-34. For a review of Laïdi's book, see Bickerton, C. (2009) 'Norms versus politics', *International Affairs*, July.

²⁹ For a recent *plaidoyer* for a stronger EU foreign policy, see Ash, T.G. (2009) 'We need a European foreign policy. Improbable? Yes. Impossible? No' *The Guardian*, 14th May, 2009.

ears'.³⁰ Earlier in the same year, Obama's decision to close Guantanamo Bay posed a problem for European states as it meant that they would may be asked to take some of the camp's former inmates. European states refused, signalling an unwillingness to involve themselves in the diplomatic initiatives of the new US president. In the words of *The Economist*, "Europe's mood of euphoria over Barack Obama masks anxiety about what the new president will demand".³¹

Earlier examples of this "refusal of power" abound. Prominent among them include the evolution of European security after the Cold War. Many, including US policymakers, expected Europeans to refashion European security entirely, jettisoning the NATO model and creating new security institutions of their own. Quite the opposite occurred and Europe was mired in uncertainty as to how it would adapt to the end of the Cold War.³² In lieu of European leadership, and to the surprise of many Americans, NATO expansion emerged as the chosen path, with the EU's own expansion lagging behind. As John G. Ruggie put it, "all the attention that the possibility of NATO expansion has attracted has let the EU off the hook".³³ In Williams, Hammond and Brenner's terms, "NATO has been saved from a real legitimacy crisis only by the inability of other European institutions to do any better".³⁴

Explanations as to why "power avoidance" characterizes the EU's relationship to international affairs vary. Structural realists read the actions of states as flowing from the distribution of capabilities in the international system. A European continent marked by its lack of military power will therefore tend to bandwagon with more powerful actors, notably the United States. In a 2004 article, Barry Posen argued that whilst such "bandwagoning" represents the predominant European position, some evidence of "balancing" against the unipolarity of a post-1989 international order exists.³⁵ In his view, the ESDP can be understood as the EU's response – pushed above all by French concerns about the danger of American "hyper-power" – to American unilateralism. A similar argument is made by Seth Jones in his 2004 book, *The Rise of European Security Cooperation*.

Relatively few scholars, however, take military capabilities as a given in their explanations. They appreciate the need to explain why Europeans are so unwilling to increase defence budgets in order to achieve military self-sufficiency. Robert Kagan, in his controversial essay, *Of Paradise and Power*, accepts that the relative military

³⁰ Seltzer, I. (2009) 'President Barack Obama is going home with non, nein and no ringing in his ears'. *Daily Telegraph*, 8 April, 2009. For a similar message, see Peel, Q. (2009) 'Afghan war: what is wrong with the Europeans?' *Financial Times*, 8 April, 2009.

³¹ 'Waiting for the Messiah', *The Economist*, January 31st, 2009, p41.

³² As Ronald Steel put it, "The American guardianship, which had at the time seemed so onerous, now became problematical. Europeans, who had come to take the American presence for granted, began to voice concern that the European pillar, such as it was, was in danger of standing alone". Steel, R. (2003) 'Europe: The Phantom Pillar' in Moore, R.L. & Vaudagna, M. (2003) *The American Century in Europe* (London: Cornell University Press) p70.

³³ Ruggie, J. G. (1998) *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalization* (London: Routledge) p237. See also Lundestad, G. (Ed.) *No End to Alliance, The United States and Western Europe: Past, Present and Future*. Basingstoke: Macmillan; Kissinger, H. (1994) *Diplomacy* (London: Simon & Schuster) pp822-5 and Miller, L.B. (1994). 'The Clinton years: reinventing US foreign policy'. *International Affairs*. 70(4): 621-634.

³⁴ Williams, P., Hammond, P. and Brenner, M. (1993) 'Atlantis lost, Paradise regained? The United States and Western Europe after the Cold War', *International Affairs* 69(1): pp1-17, p11.

³⁵ Posen, B. (2004) 'ESDP and the structure of world power' *The International Spectator* 39(1) pp5-17. For a more general realist approach to world politics, see Mearsheimer, J.J. (2001) *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton).

weakness of Europe can be an explanatory factor. In his words, the different “psychologies of power” can be easily understood in terms of power disparities:

A man armed only with a knife may decide that a bear prowling the forest is a tolerable danger... The same man armed with a rifle, however, will likely make a different calculation of what constitutes a tolerable risk.³⁶

However, Kagan also asks what lies behind the EU’s willingness to be satisfied with a knife rather than to seek a rifle. As he puts it, “there is more to Europe’s unwillingness to build up its military power than comfort with the present American guarantee”.³⁷ Kagan’s own answer is that the European continent has developed an aversion to power politics due to its own experiences. In particular, the Second World War was a turning point for European attitudes to power: the phrase ‘never again’, usually directed at the Nazi Holocaust, was also applied to the pursuit of *realpolitik* and *raison d’État*. As Kagan argues, “the modern European strategic culture represents a conscious rejection of the European past, a rejection of the evils of European *Machtpolitik*. It is a reflection of Europeans’ ardent and understandable desire never to return to that past”.³⁸

Though Kagan has been much criticized, not least by Europeans, his analysis of Europe’s avoidance of military confrontation is in line with much of the writing of European scholars and policymakers.³⁹ In 2000, in his famous Humbolt speech, Joscha Fischer – German foreign minister at the time – argued that “the core concept of Europe after 1945 was and still is a rejection of the European balance-of-power principle and the hegemonic ambition of individual states”.⁴⁰ In developing his own account of Europe’s “refusal of power”, Zaki Laïdi points to the legacy of the Second World War and argues that the historic *raison d’être* of the EU has been the eschewal of power politics. Asle Toje, a professed realist, also argues that the reason why the EU should be considered strategically as a “small power” rather than a great power or superpower is that – along with its limited military capabilities – “the historical experience of Europe has significantly impacts its strategic actorness notably in the deep-seated scepticism towards reintroducing *real-politik* into intra-European politics”.⁴¹ He goes on to note that “the experiences of the world wars have left a lasting dread of uncontrolled escalation which leads on the one hand to a deep reluctance to consider the use of force to achieve non-altruistic policy objectives and, on the other, to an emphasis on exit strategies”.⁴² Finally, it is worth noting that whilst Ian Manners’ notion of the EU as a “normative power” is often seen as an alternative to Kagan’s formulation, they share the same assessment with regards the impact of the Second World War on European consciousness. Manners’ definition of normative power emphasizes the EU’s origins as a post-national and post-Westphalian political project, an offshoot in other words of the legacy of the Second World War.⁴³ Indeed, part of the popularity of Manners’ concept stems from the fact that it provides an

³⁶ Kagan R. (2003) *Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (London: Atlantic) p31.

³⁷ Kagan, ‘Paradise and Power’, p54.

³⁸ Kagan, ‘Paradise and Power’, p55.

³⁹ See for instance the contributions in Lindberg, T. (Ed.) (2005) *Beyond Paradise and Power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership* (London: Routledge).

⁴⁰ Cited in Kagan, ‘Paradise and Power’, p56.

⁴¹ Toje, ‘The European Union as a Small Power’, p206.

⁴² Toje, ‘The European Union as a Small Power’, p208.

⁴³ Manners, I. (2002) ‘...’ pp236-7.

intellectually more appealing account of the EU's role than Kagan's vulgarized use of Roman mythology.

There can be no doubt that the legacy of the Second World War looms large in the European preference for consensus and compromise. However, tracing Europe's refusal of power back to 1945 leaves us unable to account for both the endurance of national sentiment after 1945 and the fact that EU foreign policy cooperation only really began in 1970 and only in earnest after 1992. For instance, in 1954, in contrast to the successful establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community, and also in contrast to the signing of the Treaty of Rome three years later, the European Defence Community was voted down by the French National Assembly.⁴⁴ A sign that nationalism at that time still played a central role in political life, at the announcement of the vote against the EDC communist and Gaullist deputies locked arms and sung the *Marseillaise*. In 1956, both Britain and France sent troops to Suez in response to Nasser's nationalization of the Canal: an action whose imperial ambitions were so evident that it incurred the wrath of President Eisenhower for whom old European imperialism was a stain on America's claim to represent the free world against the tyranny of Soviet communism. Indeed, though it is rarely mentioned, the 8th May celebrations in France, signalling the end of war in Europe in May 1945, fall on the same day as the outbreak of Setif massacre: the uprising against French colonial rule in Algeria which was ruthlessly put down by French soldiers.

As for the development of EU foreign policy itself, it was not until 1970 that foreign policy cooperation was institutionalized, in the form of European Political Cooperation, and even then foreign policy matters were kept separate from the rest of Community business in the name of respecting national sovereignty and its control over security and defence matters. In 1992 the Common Foreign and Security Policy was introduced as part of the Maastricht Treaty, but defence cooperation does not begin until 1998 with the St Malo agreement. Whilst the legacy of the Second World War might serve as the ideological backdrop to foreign policy cooperation, it is cannot on its own explain the timing or the form taken by EU foreign policy.

Europe's "refusal of power" is obviously rather more complex than the account given by Kagan and others would suggest. Rather than simply tracing it back to 1939-45, it is the result of a drawn-out and uneven process of political and social change in Europe *since 1945*. Europe's "refusal of power" is not just a reaction to European history, it is a product of a transformation in the European state itself and the political conflicts that shape national strategies, national interests and national foreign policies. In particular, we can see in the decline of nationalism as a political force within Europe a broader struggle between the competing political philosophies of collectivism and individualism. As Eric Hobsbawm and others have argued, a feature of nationalism is its claim upon individuals qua members of a wider group, namely the nation.⁴⁵ In this respect, nationalism competed with other collectivist ideas and ideologies, above all that of social democracy.⁴⁶ It was both part and parcel of what the late Samuel Beer labelled politics in "the collectivist age".⁴⁷ The shift away from collective forms of politics, which asserted itself above all from the 1980s onwards, signalled the demise of *both* national and class-based loyalties, opening the door to more individuated societies for whom an attachment to foreign policy as an

⁴⁴ Aron, R. and Werner D. (Eds.) (1957) *France Defeats EDC* (London: Thames and Hudson).

⁴⁵ Robert Cooper also makes this point in Cooper, R. (2004) *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Atlantic) p51.

⁴⁶ Cooper, 'The Breaking of Nations', p51.

⁴⁷ Beer, S.H. (1969) *British Politics in the Collectivist Age* (New York: Vintage).

expression of national sentiment was far weaker. Today, as Robert Cooper remarks, the slogan of 'Your Country Needs You' has been replaced by the slogan 'Join the Army: Be All You Can Be'.⁴⁸

Looking at the evolution of Western Europe since 1945, we can trace the different moments of this development. Charles Maier notes that a consequence of the Second World War was a de-radicalization of the working class: political conflict had been removed from the factory floor and relocated to the battlegrounds of the war. The result was a stronger national sentiment after the war and a politically weakened – though numerically still very strong – labour movement. This was reflected in the post-war economic miracle: in France, by October 1946 real wages had fallen 50% from their 1937 level and the PCF cracked down on workers tempted to strike; in West Germany the wage share of national income fell in the late 1940s and early 1950s.⁴⁹ Political life, however, remained polarized, particularly as Cold War tensions were beginning to emerge. The Western European left, especially in France and in Italy, commanded a considerable grip on the political imagination, even if the threat and ambition of social revolution had receded. As a result, the countervailing doctrine of nationalism was strong: de Gaulle regularly mobilized his supporters with the warning that without a firm hand, the “forces of dispersal” i.e. the Communists, would take over the country.⁵⁰ It was, in short, still an epoch of collectivist, mass politics.

In the course of the post-war decades, the retreat of the struggle between left and right gave way to the rise of more moderate, centrist parties, with a marked impact on foreign policy. In France, the decline in the power and influence of the French Communist Party, particularly after the debacle of 1968, stripped from Gaullism one of its core *raison d'être*: to stem the “flood” (*le déluge*) of the political Left, as General de Gaulle memorably put it. The Gaullist movement split, with centrists on one side and hardline Gaullists on the other. Not coincidentally, the first movement towards European foreign policy cooperation occurred at this time, at the Hague conference in 1969. Faced with the collapse of his political tradition, de Gaulle's successor, Georges Pompidou, needed to win the support of pro-European Gaullists, such as Maurice Schuman, who had resigned after de Gaulle's May 1962 press conference on Europe.⁵¹ In Germany, a challenge to European foreign policy in the 1970s came from Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik*. Whilst this served in the end as a catalyst for closer cooperation, largely due to France's belief in the need to reign in possible German unilateralism through more institutionalized foreign policy cooperation, at the time it signalled the emergence of a more self-interested, nationally-minded West Germany. This was a response to the radicalization of German politics in the 1970s. The extreme left, whilst disavowed by the majority of the population on economic questions, struck a chord with its anti-American nationalism. Brandt's break with Adenauer's legacy of unrelenting Atlanticism was a response to a population increasingly frustrated with some of the basic tenets of the Federal Republic's postwar foreign policy consensus. Similar trends were occurring in Italy with the Red Brigades and in Britain with the IRA's struggle against the British state. Such internal

⁴⁸ Cooper, 'The Breaking of Nations', p51.

⁴⁹ Maier, C. S. (1987) *In Search of Stability: Explorations in Historical Political Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp174-178.

⁵⁰ Hazareesingh, S. (1994) *Political Traditions in Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) p273.

⁵¹ Vaïsse, 'Puissance Ou l'Influence?' p115. Pompidou chose Schumann as his foreign minister, a decision with symbolic importance for the Gaullist political family.

conflicts gave an urgency to questions of national interest and made loyalty to the state a live political issue.

By the end of the 1980s, this “pathologization of politics” as Tony Judt calls it, had fallen away, to be replaced by “identity politics”: more individuated forms of political action that rejected many of the collective aspirations of older social movements.⁵² Under such conditions, attachments to both class and the nation appeared archaic and the door was open to a transformation of foreign policy from an amalgam of – as Hoffmann characterized it in the 1960s – the “collective pride, ambitions, fears, prejudices and images of large masses of people” to a site as open to pragmatism, cooperation and compromise as any other area of public policy. As Charles Maier has argued, “the configurations of power *among* states tend to second those *within* states”.⁵³ It is the transformation of political life in Europe, and the attenuation of domestic political conflict, that has softened the edges of the nation-state and removed the urgency and necessity of foreign policy. The impact of these changes on the concept and practice of national interests is considered in the next section.

2.2. From nation-states to member states

A major feature of the realist accounts of EU foreign policy is the presumption that lying behind the EU’s relative inactivity in foreign affairs are the constant disagreements and bickering between European states. EU foreign policy is often no more than the “lowest-common-denominator” that member states have been able to agree to. Arguing in this vein, Chris Patten writes that

To have a single [foreign] policy, not a common one, would imply either a denial of the bonds that create a national sense of community or the fraying of those bonds and their replacement by a wider sense of loyalty or attachment. This may be a nice idea but there is not much sign of it happening yet. For the foreseeable future, Europe will have twenty-five ministers and twenty-five foreign ministries committed to trying to work together, but not trying to do themselves out of a job.⁵⁴

A similar point was made by former French foreign minister Hubert Védrine, who argued that “a common foreign policy does not declare itself. We can replace one currency with another... [But] we cannot declare that on the 1st March of next year, we will all believe the same thing about the Near East”.⁵⁵ Not only policymakers –

⁵² Maier, C.S. (Ed.) (1987) *Changing boundaries of the political: essays on the evolving balance between state and society, public and private in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). See also Tully, J. (2003) ‘Identity Politics’ in T. Ball and Bellamy, R. (Eds.) *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp517-532.

⁵³ Maier, ‘In Search of Stability’, p179.

⁵⁴ Patten, *op cit*, p155. Since Patten was writing, the EU has expanded to twenty-seven member states. In 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU.

⁵⁵ Védrine, H. (2003) *Face à l’Hyperpuissance* (Paris: Fayard) p344. For a classic realist perspective given by an American journalist, see Steven Erlanger’s account of the 2003 transatlantic crisis. In his words, “Europe’s greatest weaknesses stem from the continuing power of the nation-states and the continuing jealousies among them. It is not only France or Britain, martial powers with global interests and Security Council seats, who resist a European consensus. Belgium, Greece, Italy and even Luxembourg have their own amour proper, their own politics, their own navies, and their own scale of victories and defeats”. In Erlanger, S. (2005) ‘Anatomy of a Breakdown’ in Lindberg, T. (Ed.) *Beyond Paradise and power: Europe, America and the Future of a Troubled Partnership* (Abingdon: Routledge) p16.

who could be forgiven for confusing their own personal involvement with than of an analysis of EU foreign policy – press the realist case. The attachment to national interests as the basis for explaining EU foreign policy is well illustrated in the study of EU policy in the Balkans. As Daniele Heimert and Wim Van Meurs argue, “an assessment of European policies in the Balkans would resemble a melange of French and German interests, policies and perceptions”.⁵⁶ A similar point is made by Anand Menon in his recent review of ESDP. In his words,

For all the voluminous academic literature claiming the emergence of a European security culture or the gradual convergence of views initiated by the socialization of ambassadors in the Political and Security Committee (PSC), member states remain stubbornly differentiated in terms of their approaches to security. In attitudes towards the use of force, the projection of power, the legitimacy of intervention in former colonies and the correct balance to be struck between hard and soft forms of power, significant differences remain between their competing views as to what the ESDP should be.⁵⁷

From this realist perspective, EU foreign policy has no real autonomy logic; it is an expression of a clash between enduring national interests in Europe.

There is no doubt that disagreements between EU member states remain and form an important part of the foreign policymaking process in both CFSP and ESDP. However, it is misleading to present such disagreements as full-blown clashes of national interests. Though they attract the attention of journalists, in the EU in recent decades clashes of national interest have been more the exception than the rule. One of the most infamous disagreements in recent times – the division between “old” and “new” Europe in 2003 over the question of the US-led Gulf War – was taken by some to herald the early demise of CFSP.⁵⁸ In the very midst of the crisis, however, EU member states were able to agree on launching their first autonomous security and defence mission in the Congo (Operation Artemis) and 6 months after the crisis they presented a common European Security Strategy.⁵⁹

What often lie behind putative clashes of national interest are more minor differences of opinion and protocol. Even in those cases where powerful member states appear to subjugate weaker member states, as in the case of the frequent bickering between France and the Czech Republic in 2009, appearances can be deceptive. Christian Lequesne has analyzed France’s role in an enlarged EU of

⁵⁶ Heimert, Daniela & Van Meurs, Wim (2004) ‘The Balkans Between Paris and Berlin’ *Journal of South Eastern Europe and Black Sea Studies* 4(3) 343-60, p344.

⁵⁷ Menon, Anand (2009) ‘Empowering paradise? ESDP at ten’ *International Affairs* 85(2): 227-46, p237. Menon does go on to note that “it is frankly remarkable that 27 disparate member states have managed to achieve consensus as often as they have”, a point which suggests that consensus – rather than conflict – should be the focus of attention in studying EU foreign policy (Menon, 2009, p244).

⁵⁸ For a collection of essays written by European intellectuals at the time of this ‘old’/‘new’ Europe split, see Levy, D., Pensky M. & Torpey, J. (Eds.) *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe: Transatlantic Relations after the Iraq War* (London: Verso). Steven Erlanger describes European policymaking during the Iraq crisis as having an “opera bouffe quality” that was “discouraging, even dispiriting”. See Erlanger, *op cit*, p13.

⁵⁹ See Menon, A. (2004) ‘From crisis to catharsis: ESDP after Iraq’ *International Affairs*. 80(4) pp631-648. See also Crowe, B. (2003) ‘A Common European foreign policy after Iraq?’ *International Affairs*. 79(3) pp533-546. One writer who saw in the 2003 crisis a positive sign for EU foreign policy is John McCormick. McCormick writes that “most have chosen to interpret the divided European political response as a sign of crisis or of weakness, but might be better be seen as a reflection of Europe’s new confidence and of declining faith in American leadership” in McCormick, J. (2007) *The European Superpower* (Basingstoke: Palgrave) p56.

twenty-seven member states and concludes that France's hostility to enlargement, and its prickly relations with new member states such as the Czech Republic, cannot be explained by France's traditional attachment to its *primo inter pares* role in European integration. On the contrary, it has been France's uncertainty over its role in Europe, and its *difficulty in defining its own national strategies within the EU*, that has made enlargement appear as an opportunity rather than a threat.⁶⁰ Antagonisms which may appear as conflicts of national interest are therefore better thought of as products of difficulties countries such as France have experienced to *define* their own national interests.⁶¹

It is also important to add that the concept of the national interest itself rests upon political processes at the national level that help shape and determine what that interest is. In his 1982 article on the concept of interest in international politics, Friedrich Kratochwil highlights its public, justificatory dimension: such interests are forged out of a broader debate about what constitutes the public interest and national interests are as a result intimately connected to a reflection on the purpose and ends of the state.⁶² Charles Beard, in his classic book, *The Idea of the National Interest*, also highlights the way in which the evolving nature of the American national interest can be connected to the country's social development: the shift from isolationism after 1918 to containment after 1945 can only be understood in terms of the shifting balance of forces within US society, which saw the rise to power of those whose interest was in a more active and interventionist US foreign policy.⁶³ David Campbell, in his work on US foreign policy during the Cold War, identifies the correspondence between definitions of the national interests and currents within domestic politics. It is no coincidence, for instance, that NS-68 was written at the time of McCarthyism: the document is concerned above all with defining America's conception of democracy, at a time when the country's political elites were concerned that the average American might be seduced by the Communist alternative.⁶⁴

In striking contrast to these accounts of the national interest, EU foreign policy making proceeds on the basis of highly individuated, and entirely private, developments, internal to the national bureaucracies of EU member states.⁶⁵ Hubert Védrine observed, regarding the famous St Malo meeting of 1998 where the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was first launched, that he had not been aware of the negotiations ongoing between British and French officials. He was only informed of the forthcoming deal very late on, by his political director.⁶⁶ This same point is made by Sir Stephen Wall in his account of European policymaking within the British

⁶⁰ Lequesne, C. (2008) *La France Dans La Nouvelle Europe: Assumer le changement d'échelle* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po). For a review article based on Lequesne's book, see Bickerton, C. (2009) 'Arrogance or Ambivalence? Rethinking France's role in a Europe of Twenty-Seven', *French Politics*, forthcoming.

⁶¹ For an account of post Cold War US foreign policy that makes a similar point, see Gourevitch, A. (2007) 'National insecurities: the new politics of the American national interest' in C. Bickerton, P. Cunliffe and A. Gourevitch (Eds.) *Politics Without Sovereignty: A Critique of Contemporary International Relations* (London: UCL Press).

⁶² Kratochwil, F. (1982) 'On the notion of "interest" in international relations' *International Organization* 36 (Winter) p1-30.

⁶³ Beard, C. (1934) *The Idea of the National Interest* (New York: The Macmillan Company).

⁶⁴ Campbell, D. (1992) *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press) pp15-33.

⁶⁵ For an insightful and original discussion of the changing nature of national interests – and of diplomacy in general – in Europe, see Adler-Nissen, R. (2009) 'Late Sovereign Diplomacy', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 4 pp121-41.

⁶⁶ Mérand, 'European Defence Policy', p115.

establishment. A striking feature of his account of Britain's policy towards Europe was that all the 'heroes' in his *récit* were civil servants, not national leaders.⁶⁷ In fact, Wall notes that in spite of the great diversity between British prime ministers over the last twenty years, from Thatcher to Blair, policy on Europe has remained remarkably constant. In the case of the St Malo decision, scholars have noted that only a handful of civil servants and politicians were involved in what appeared as a major shift in British policy towards European defence and security cooperation. Whilst interests were involved and negotiation took place, such policymaking is a far cry from the processes identified by Kratochwil and Beard in their accounts of the national interest. The result of such individuated forms of interest is that disagreements do not take the form of major diplomatic incidents: they appear as a clash of personal preferences, easily resolved through discussion. This degree of pragmatism is reflected in the way the EU regularly compromises on its own principles and norms – the subject of the next section.

2.3. 'Pragmatic power' Europe

For those unconvinced by the realist insistence upon national interest-based conflicts within Europe, and who think that an independent logic of some kind does underpin the development of EU foreign policy, an alternative lies in the constructivist approach. This approach views EU foreign policy through the prism of an emergent pan-European sense of identity. With its roots in Karl Deutsch's work on "security communities", constructivists reject an interest-based explanation of foreign policy cooperation, replacing it with a notion of a pan-European *identity*. The momentum behind this identity comes from the strength of the EU's normative framework. In Helene Sjursen's words, "norms constitute the identity of actors; they not only constrain their behaviour but also constitute their world views and preferences".⁶⁸ EU foreign policy cooperation is therefore driven by the EU's "norm-based polity", what Goran Therborn has called the EU's "normative model" and what Ian Manners called the EU's "normative power".⁶⁹ Sjursen studies in particular the case of the EU's enlargement to Eastern Europe, arguing that the condition which made this possible was the "particular conception of the collective 'us' which the EU has, namely one that views post-communist states of Eastern Europe in 'kinship terms', as 'one of us'".⁷⁰ On the same issue, Frank Schimmelfennig has written of the EU's "liberal collective identity" and Iver B. Neumann treats "Europeanness" and "democratic regime type" as "two sides of the same coin".⁷¹ EU foreign policy is in other words driven by the strength of the EU's collective self-identification as a community of values.

⁶⁷ Wall, S. (2008) *A Stranger in Europe: Britain and the EU from Thatcher to Blair* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). See also Bickerton, C. (2008) 'Europe's union of disenchantment' *Le Monde Diplomatique*, July.

⁶⁸ Sjursen, H. (2002) 'Why Expand? The Question of Legitimacy and Justification in the EU's Enlargement Policy' *Journal of Common Market Studies*. 40(3) pp491-513, p492.

⁶⁹ Therborn, Goran (1997) 'Europe in the 21st Century: The World's Scandinavia?' *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 8 pp21-34.

⁷⁰ Sjursen, 'Why Expand?', p494.

⁷¹ Schimmelfennig, Frank (2001) 'The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Enlargement of the European Union' *International Organization* 55(1) 47-80, p59. Neumann, Iver B. (2001) 'European Identity, EU Expansion and the Integration/Exclusion Nexus' in Cederman (Ed.) *Constructing Europe's Identity: The External Dimension* (Boulder, COL, Lynne Rienner) p150, p155.

Given the argument so far, and looking at the EU's record as an actor, it is difficult to attribute – as constructivists would like to do - so much power and agency to the EU's normative framework. On the contrary, a marked feature of the EU as an actor is its pragmatism and ability to adopt quite contrary positions on particular matters, all in the name of maintaining European unity. If we connect the development of EU foreign policy to both Europe's "refusal of power" and to the moderation of national interests within Europe, it should come as no surprise that EU foreign policy is defined more by its pragmatism than by its normative commitments. The development of EU foreign policy is after all driven by the need to compensate for a retreat of European states from playing a more central role in international affairs. In their early study of European Political Cooperation, Weiler and Wessels grasp this point. They note that the purpose behind EPC was to provide both "a guarantee of the defensive nature and status quo orientation of most European states" and "a collective shelter against the call for more active foreign policy".⁷² Under such conditions, it is unlikely that the EU's foreign policy is driven by a desire to transform the normative basis of international order. Indeed, the constructivists – in their arguments about the EU's normative identity – tend to reproduce some of the same errors of realist approaches: they substitute for the national or European interest the notion of a pan-European identity; this belies an attachment to conventional accounts of power and purpose in international affairs which fails to take into account the evolution of the nation-state in Europe.

Looking at the record of the EU's actions, the predominant goal for the EU in its diplomacy is not a set of norms or principles but rather the – normatively neutral – goal of internal unity. This was evident, for instance, at the time of the collapse of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. The position of the EC had reflected that of its member states: it should oppose firmly any redrawing of borders and the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia should be upheld. As John Major put it at the time, "the great prize is to hold the federation together".⁷³ Such a position, however, was quickly jettisoned after Germany unilaterally recognized the independence of Slovenia and Croatia in January, 1991. Other member states eventually came round to this position, with the justification being that the EC needed to remain united and it should not let conflict in Yugoslavia prise apart it apart.

More recently, we saw the EU adopt contrary positions on the question of whether it should negotiate with Russia after the Russo-Georgian war of August, 2008. The EU's position initially had been to suspend negotiations with Russia on a Partnership Agreement until all Russian troops had retreated to behind the pre-war lines. Some member states decided that they preferred a softer line on Russia, and in November 2008 the EU re-started negotiations with the Russians even though the status quo ante in Georgia had not been established. For those member states who complained about such a u-turn in EU policy, the Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso told them that they should fall into line, in the name of European unity. In his words, "you may not like the common EU position entirely... but it is in your own interest to have one rather than three or four positions".⁷⁴ Far from demonstrating the power of its normative framework, therefore, it would seem that the EU foreign

⁷² Weiler, J., and Wessels, W. (1988) 'EPC and the Challenge of Theory', in A. Pijpers, E. Regelsberger, and W. Wessels (Eds.), *European Political Cooperation in the 1980s: A Common Foreign Policy for Western Europe?* Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, p251.

⁷³ Almond, M. (1994) *Europe's Backyard War: The War in the Balkans* (London: Mandarin) p33.

⁷⁴ Barroso, cited in Bickerton, *op cit*, p14.

policy, and in particular the stress on the need for consensus between member states, masks the absence of any clear principles or values upheld by the Union.⁷⁵

Conclusion: Sovereignty, or the changing balance of politics and bureaucracy

In the above, the paper identified “supranationality without supranational institutions” as the best description of EU foreign policy. Whether it be the developments of the Council secretariat, the position of the High Representative, the COPS, the ESDP missions or any other institutional development associated with EU foreign policy, the dominant feature was not the creation of supranational institutions that would transcend nation-states in Europe. Rather, institutional developments point to modifications in the way national executives, representatives and diplomacies relate to each other. Intensified communication and collaboration, a more interactive and mutually reliant manner of identifying interests, a preference for the internal resolution of disagreements – these are all features of EU foreign policy that find their institutional expression in the acronyms identified above.

As a result, what is needed in the study of EU foreign policy is a change of focus. Instead of considering the developments of CFSP and ESDP as lying somewhere along the intergovernmental-supranational spectrum, and conceptualizing changes in terms of vertical transfers of power upwards from the state to supranational institutions, we should think instead of a horizontal set of changes, occurring within European states. The story being told in the sections focusing on Europe’s “refusal of power”, the moderation of national interests, and the preference for pragmatism and compromise, is one of a changing balance between politics and bureaucracy. All modern nation-states include extensive state bureaucracies: a political authority without the capacity to administratively exercise its power falls short of our definitions of modern statehood. However, what has characterized the development of modern states has been the balance between politics and bureaucracy. This has been the concern of political sociology, most famously of Weber and the neo-Weberians of the historical institutionalist school, whose focus has been on the institutional development of European societies.⁷⁶ This has also been a central concern of political theory: how to ensure that political power, when vested in the centralized apparatus of the modern state, does not lose sight of the public good and turn inwards, defending only the interests of the state against those of wider society.

What can the changing relationship between politics and bureaucracy tell us about the origins and nature of EU foreign policy? This depends on the understanding of bureaucracy that one has. With characteristic pessimism, Weber saw bureaucratic rule as corresponding most closely to the needs and functioning of mass industrial society. He believed that the only choice facing modern societies was between bureaucratic domination and what he called “leadership democracy” - the emergence of charismatic political leaders, able to control a mass political party, and assert via the dominance of parliaments political control over the administrative apparatus.⁷⁷ For

⁷⁵ ‘Charlemagne: Russian Lessons’, *The Economist*, 8 November.

⁷⁶ See for instance Tilly, C. (1992) *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1992* (Oxford: Blackwell); Mann, M. (1986) *The Sources of Social Power, Volume 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); and the contributions of Evans, P.B., Rueschemeyer, D. and Skocpol, T. (Eds.) (1985) *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

⁷⁷ On Weber’s concept of “leadership democracy” and on his views on the balance between bureaucracy and politics in the modern state, see Beetham D. (1987) *Bureaucracy* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press); Weber, M., ‘The Profession and Vocation of Politics’ in P.Lassman and R. Speirs (Eds.) (1994) *Weber: Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp309-369.

Weber, the real struggle of the modern age was not between capitalism and socialism (two sides of the same bureaucratized coin) but between culture and civilization.⁷⁸ Marxist approaches have focused on mass democracy as the best check on bureaucratic rule. They explained the development of bureaucracy in the Soviet Union as the inability of the Bolshevik party to sustain democratic involvement of the masses under the conditions of the civil war and economic hardship.⁷⁹ In David Beetham's words, for Marxists "the power of bureaucracy is inversely proportionate to the strength of democracy".⁸⁰ Put slightly different, bureaucratization is a product of depoliticization i.e. people's collective withdrawal from participation in political life.

We can see this relationship between depoliticization and bureaucratization expressed in the development of EU foreign policy. It was argued that Europe's "refusal of power" originated in the retreat of nationalism as a "moving force" in European politics, which coincided and was partly a product of the demise of collective politics more generally, in particular the struggle between left and right. The corresponding impact upon the formulation of the national interest was stark: from a public process of political justification, the national interest was increasingly formulated in a manner that referred more to preferences and worldviews of individual leaders than specific forces within society. As a result, it was easy for compromise and pragmatism to assert itself, as these interests could not appear as more than what they were: a set of elite preferences rather than interests derived from the confluence of social forces. Europe's "pragmatic power" is thus an expression of the slow retreat of political rationales over those of bureaucracy and administration, driven by a steady but uneven depoliticization of European societies.

Which overarching concept captures the balance of politics and bureaucracy within the modern state? The concept of sovereignty. Sovereignty and the state are not synonymous precisely because sovereignty refers to the human agency and artifice that gives meaning and direction to the otherwise arbitrary workings of the modern state. Sovereignty is the concept that identifies the state as a politically-directed bureaucracy. Sovereignty, in the Hegelian formulation, is will.⁸¹ The rise of EU foreign policy, resting upon the dominance of bureaucracy over politics, is thus a sign of the demise of sovereignty in Europe. The shift from nation-states to "member states" points to a decline in sovereignty in Europe, but without anything taking its place.

⁷⁸ Lukács, G. (1980) *The Destruction of Reason* (London: Merlin) p610. By culture, Weber meant art, philosophy, and "man's inner development"; by civilization he meant all "techno-economic development" that he identified in industrial society Lukács, p595. As Lukács remarked, for Weber socialism "was developing further the material forces of production (mechanization etc.)". Therefore, "it too was unable to solve the conflict between culture and civilization". Lukács, 'The Destruction of Reason', p596

⁷⁹ Castoriadis, C. 'On the content of socialism' in D.A. Curtis (Ed.) (1997) *The Castoriadis Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell) p42-7. See also Deutscher, I. 'The Roots of Bureaucracy' in I. Deutscher (1971) *Marxism in Our Time* (London: Jonathan Cape) pp181-208; Lefort, C. (1986) *The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism* (Oxford: Polity).

⁸⁰ Beetham, 'Bureaucracy', p89.

⁸¹ Hegel, G.W.F. (1991) *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), chapters 272-329.