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Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy
Convergence, Divergence & Dialectics:
National Foreign Policies & the CFSP

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ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE

**Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy
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National Foreign Policies and the CFSP**

CHRISTOPHER J. HILL

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The story of the interplay between national foreign policies and the EU's foreign policy is replete with paradox: has European Political Cooperation (EPC) and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) 'rescued' the foreign policy of the national state, as Allen has suggested?¹ Have not the various national policies displayed tendencies of convergence as well as divergence? Is not the very idea of a 'common' European foreign policy still dependent on the existence of separate national policies and a tacit division of labour between them? Of course paradox, ambiguity, and complexity have always been what makes politics and all other human activity compulsory viewing, and their ubiquity here should draw us towards the subject of European foreign policy, not away from it. This chapter will explore the paradoxes of convergence and divergence by developing one of the editor's initial explanatory hypotheses, that of the 'logic of diversity,' and by then moving to a closer examination of what constitutes the 'European foreign policy-making process,' in which both states and European institutions are now so deeply embedded. It will then develop into an argument about the dialectics of this process in which the established elements of both solidarity and fragmentation help define each other.²

The logic of diversity

The idea of the 'logic of diversity,' which Jan Zielonka has brought sharply back into focus, derives from the work of Stanley Hoffmann, and in this writer's view it is one of the most profitable ways of approaching Europe's multilayered international relations.³ Drawing on Rousseau, Hoffmann argued that 'the present [international] system profoundly conserves the diversity of nation-states despite all its revolutionary features.'⁴ After the break up of the Soviet empire and the stalling of the Maastricht project this judgement seems more rather than less relevant. Yet this is not a model which merely replicates the stale insights of realism and neo-realism: change is taking place in Europe which goes well beyond a rearrangement of coalitions or patterns of power. As Hoffmann pointed out in the 1990s, looking back, the relationship between the nation state and the European Union (EU) is not zero-sum; the EU has become 'a singular construction' at the same time as it has helped the restoration of the nation state. What is more, the EU 'is now a necessary and permanent part of the European political landscape, and thus a subtle, if often shaky, actor in international affairs.'⁵

When this observation is brought down to the level of daily practice, it means that, on the one hand, 'Europe' does act in various issue areas, such as trade policy, central America, or the CSCE.⁶ Moreover Europeans also act variously as individuals, groups, and nations, and are sometimes taken by outsiders to be

representative of Europe as a whole. Yet, on the other hand, as this book has pointed out from the outset, there are many things that are not and cannot be done at any level, while the aspirations to a collective foreign policy remain largely unmet. Moreover, the fact that this failure to progress has now registered in the consciousness of elites across Europe means that the 'renationalisation' of foreign policy, or the reassertion of the nation state as an international actor, is now freely discussed. Traditional national foreign policies, even German and Italian, are now arguably moving back into the space that the CFSP has proved unable to occupy through an insufficient socialisation of its units into a common mentality and definition of interests.

If this apparent reversal of history seems to go too far, then it should be remembered that the logic of diversity does not imply the return of some seventeenth century sense of triumphant statism.⁷ Rather, it refers to the way in which common pressures are exerted on differing 'national situations', to use Hoffman's words again.⁸ Different histories mean divergent identities, widely differing political systems (even within the confines of liberal democracy), differing patterns of relationships with the wider world, and differing capabilities at all levels. These contrasts - which need not cause problems or conflicts, but which will inhibit integration - certainly make common action in foreign and defence policy problematical, not least because of the premium put on unity and decisiveness in this area of public policy more than any other. In that perpetual contest between homogeneity and difference, between lumping and splitting, which comes as close as any other to defining politics, European foreign policy-making is stuck with a full measure of 'difference.'

Through this lens of what might be termed 'historical realism,' then, a mass of data can be observed which suggests that if the EU states are not actually 'going back to the future,' they are certainly not rapidly converging on a common foreign policy. Some states are particularly insistent on their independence; some cases are particularly liable to produce a splintering of European reactions. Taking the states first, there is a clear continuum of degrees of socialisation. At one end are the states that welcome the discipline and protection of the CFSP and therefore rarely cause it embarrassment. Here we find the Benelux countries, with the Netherlands now much less worried about balancing European with Atlanticist or ex-colonial loyalties than ever before. Their foreign policies are on a convergence trajectory, such that the realist writer Alfred Pijpers observed recently that 'it is fully realised in The Hague that a unilateral Dutch foreign policy does not make much sense any more, and that the success or failure of national initiatives is to a large extent determined by the limits and possibilities of a common European foreign policy.'⁹

In the middle of the continuum, with some naturally leaning more to one end than the other, we find the majority of EU states generally supportive of CFSP, not anxious to break ranks for the sake of it, but still with distinctive concerns that limit convergence. Spain and Portugal, for example, are enthusiastic neophytes of integration but have concerns in the Mediterranean and the southern hemisphere which make them hesitate before backing the extension of the Community method into foreign policy. Likewise the neutral states, Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden, seek to balance their undoubted desire for shelter under the umbrella of common European positions against their reluctance to be drawn into new defence commitments through a developing EU-WEU relationship. Also broadly cooperative but not always reliable are the two big states, Germany and Italy, which have paradoxically discovered through their founding membership of EPC the confidence to assert themselves more. They both still subscribe to the goal of a single European foreign policy, but in practice they have both shown more rather than less willingness to step out of line - whether over Slovenia, Croatia, and Albania in the Balkans, or Iran and China further afield.

At the 'uncooperative' end of the continuum stand the usual culprits: Britain, France, Denmark, and Greece. The two former are Security Council members and militarily powerful states that consequently regard themselves as having special responsibilities that cannot be fettered by *communaux* procedures. Over the last ten years they have gone their own way (rarely in harness) on major problems such as South Africa, the Gulf, Bosnia, and Algeria. Denmark and Greece are also concerned for their independence, but for rather different reasons. Greece is integrationist in principle, but has not always agreed with the majority view on issues like Macedonia and Cyprus, just as it opted out from common positions on the USSR in the early 1980s. Denmark is less concerned about the substance of foreign policy, but very concerned with issues of principle: it will not relinquish sovereignty in the CFSP, partly for historical reasons and partly out of a generalised opposition to the federal tendency within the EU. Of course even these recalcitrants show no desire to break up the CFSP. Indeed Britain has been broadly positive towards what has been done within it, and France is traditionally in favour of Europe developing as a 'third force' (now presumably a second) in wider international relations. Divergence, in other words, exists within limits and coordination is accepted as an obligation and unquestioned benefit.

Could things, indeed, be any different, now that EPC/CFSP has been in existence for 27 years (the same time-span that separated Gavrilo Princip's shots in Sarajevo from Japanese bombs in Pearl Harbour)? There is an *acquis politique* that new members of the EU have to accept, and all Member States without

exception would now find the idea of an EU without a international political presence almost literally inconceivable. This is how far things have come; despite the many setbacks, there is an embedded multilateralism about the EU's foreign policies (sic) in the 1990s.¹⁰

The multilateralism, however, is intergovernmental; the cooperation is intermittent and the presence is sometimes ineffectual. The limits set by the logic of diversity on European actorness are just as firm as those set by the *acquis politique* on unilateralism. Are there any reasons to suppose that convergence can continue in foreign policy, and that the famous *saut qualitatif* towards singularity might still be within reach?

The logic of convergence

From a theoretical perspective there are four ways in which a positive answer might be given to this question:

Rational calculations might lead Member States in due course to conclude that the advantages of the politics of scale outweigh the temptations of selfishness - in other words, the temptation of chasing Rousseau's rabbit is finally overshadowed by the attractions of the stag hunt, although whether it is because the stag has become more desirable or simply easier to catch is not clear.¹¹ The economicist, not to say globalist, approach to international relations would expect this to be an inevitable product of the inability of individual units to survive in an integrated marketplace, while the rational strategist would see the advent of regional powers as the logical consequence of nuclear weapons and the exponential growth in the cost of hi-tech armaments. There would, however, be two caveats even for exponents of this view. First, solidarity does not necessarily mean convergence if it is achieved on the basis of calculated self interest, and it follows that a coalition could fall apart through loss of common purpose or under the impact of some disruptive event, if a sense of common identity has not also been forged. Second, the increase in the pace and breadth of EU enlargement throws into doubt part of the logic behind the politics of scale, namely that more automatically means stronger. It is only too plausible that an EU made up of 21 states in the year 2001 (as the Commission recommended in July 1997) will find it even more difficult than it does now to produce a consistently unified and resilient foreign policy.¹²

External demands and perceptions could gradually force the European tower of Babel to quieten down and to speak with a single, comprehensible voice. This is a version of Schmitter's externalisation hypothesis, or even of Josef Joffe's

American pacifier.¹³ The need to deal with powerful or problematic countries such as the United States or Israel has to some extent already imposed discipline and caution on the European group while the experience of the common commercial policy and the GATT rounds seems to provide obvious lessons for the CFSP. Insofar as more and more regional groupings are seeking bloc to bloc relations with the EU, and key states like Japan or South Africa see it as a partner in the way that they do not look at individual European states or the United States, this set of pressures for solidarity is likely to increase.

The evolution of the international system could push and pull the EU into greater actorness in politics as well as commercial policy. This would be partly a function of the bloc to bloc relations referred to above and partly the result of deeper forces, of which the EU as the first and biggest of all regional blocs is itself the main manifestation. A Waltzian emphasis on the security dilemma produced by the international system for its component parts might well lead one to suppose, particularly in the more fluid and unpredictable one-superpower world, that the EU will be forced to acquire the ability to defend itself and to protect its interests abroad. Security and defence policy will then drive foreign policy, rather than vice versa as is often supposed, by compelling states to create the political process necessary to make decisions on defence. This is essentially the view of those who predict that the United States will not be willing to underwrite the security of another nascent superpower forever, or that the development of new threats to an enlarged and more vulnerable Union will require the capacity to meet them at a military level. On this view, halfway between realism and determinism, the mechanism of the balance of power will lead the EU to its manifest destiny as a great power.

A convergence of values leading to a redefinition of national interests according to a genuine sense of collective identity could be occurring, and might even be near that unknowable point of no return, fostered by common experiences, common procedures over nearly three decades, and by an increasing sense of the Other(s) - 'we' Europeans are not Americans, Turks, Russians, Moroccans, or whoever else turns up to pose the embarrassing boundary problem.¹⁴ If a sense of common and distinctive civilisation does underpin the European Union, then the question of its precise borders will matter less than the mores and principles which are thought to need preserving and to which by definition no other group would be so committed (this of course begs the question of 'Western' or transatlantic values). If Paul Valéry's remark is true, that 'wherever the names of Caesar, of Gaius, of Trajan and Virgil, wherever the names of Moses, of Saint PaulAristotle, Plato and Euclid have a simultaneous meaning and authority, there Europe is,' then Europe has a secular religion cementing it together.¹⁵ This does not mean - despite 'the triumph of the west' - that the spirit

of a crusade is abroad. It is simply that the differences between the nation states in the EU may gradually once again come to seem less important than the things that unite them. This version of neo-mediaevalism (far more than any 'clash of civilisations') could create the conditions for a single foreign policy towards the rest of the world; the EU a modern version of the Holy Roman Empire - which, as Voltaire pointed out, was itself never holy nor Roman nor even an empire.

Each of these four possible paths for the future convergence of European foreign policies is feasible. Together they might be thought to constitute a powerful case for progression. The key factor, as has often been pointed out from various points of view - realist, rationalist, and constructivist - is whether or not national decision makers are significantly reconceptualising their notions of interest and identity in European terms.¹⁶ 'Interest and identity' are advisedly coupled here; ever since Rosenau's classic critique we have been alerted to ask not just what is the (national) interest at stake, but 'whose interest is the national?'.¹⁷ The identity of the agent therefore helps to define interests, while conversely the pre-existing interests, or stakes in a problem, of a collective entity like a state help to structure its identity. We only need to think of an example like Greece and Cyprus to see the truth of this. Equally, it is important to remember that even if elite decision makers may be shifting their intellectual and emotional boundaries, this does not necessarily mean that they represent their whole societies in so doing. The cold water poured on the Maastricht Treaty by public reaction is a case in point.

In search of a balance sheet

A balance sheet can be drawn up of the elements of convergence and divergence to be found simultaneously in the present system of European foreign policy making.¹⁸ Clearly a mono-causal approach to explaining CFSP outputs is not adequate, and no trend can be definitively identified. Nonetheless, stepping back from the hurly-burly of current affairs makes it possible to place the CFSP in a longer historical perspective, and this may provide some clues to its future.

A freeze frame of the current situation, even if inherently ambiguous, would be interpreted by most people as presenting a negative image of European foreign policy. Far from marking progress, it would seem to show that the motor of foreign policy integration has cut out, leaving the potential ship of state becalmed just as it reaches the open sea. Yet looking back over the 35 years since the first serious effort was made to produce European diplomatic coordination in the Fouchet plans, we can see that we have been here before. There have been many setbacks and periods of stagnation in the journey from Luxembourg to

Amsterdam through Copenhagen, London, Stuttgart, Milan, and Maastricht. There is no teleology about this journey, and the present difficulties may turn out to be more than a temporary setback.

Still, there is no denying that since the start of EPC in 1969 the members of the system have become far more familiar and comfortable with each other's foreign policies than they were before. The exchanges of diplomats between the French, German, and even British diplomatic services and the many other procedural innovations are more a symptom than a cause of better working relationships, but the (admittedly limited) common measures over Salman Rushdie and election monitoring in South Africa would not even have been proposed before. 'Europe' had no Mediterranean strategy in the 1960s, and no way of responding jointly to the Six Day War. The United States had no difficulty in dealing with its embarrassed allies individually during the Vietnam War, despite the mass demonstrations on the streets of European cities. The 1968 crises over Cuba and Czechoslovakia passed without the merest glimpse of European coordination. Today this would not be possible. The EU might turn out to be inept, cowardly, or toothless, but the Europeans would at the least agonise over what to do, and they would certainly issue a collective statement on their position. When they cannot even reach an agreement on a declaration, it is a noteworthy event and causes comment. The expectations are now those of commonality, and even of common action; failures to meet these expectations therefore produce political problems inside and outside the EU.¹⁹ This in itself is a mark of considerable change, and of CFSP's status as the most significant system of foreign policy association yet to evolve.

Alternating phases of hope and disappointment for European foreign policy coordination suggest that this historical status has not filtered down to the level of public debate. What they also disguise, however, is the fact that after years of fitful procedural progress EPC/CFSP has now hit a wall of political resistance. It cannot develop further without the creation of a significant executive to mobilise the foreign policy resources of the Member States, to impose discipline, and to implement policy through a single machinery. Without such changes the best that can be hoped for is the present pattern of fitful cooperation, sustained at best for short periods by Member States' fear of isolation and need for cover. Yet conversely, that very jump into foreign policy supranationalism is very unlikely to take place without a prior convergence of attitudes, interests, and policies in other issue areas on the part of the Member States - and such convergence is always a matter of the *longue durée*. Perhaps, as the German government has hoped, the great challenges of enlargement and monetary union (far from reinforcing intergovernmentalism as Thatcher and Major gambled) will galvanise constitutional change and thus prevent a bigger Union from collapsing under its

own weight. But in the area of foreign policy at least, it must be more likely that an enlarged EU, characterised by differentiated integration in important areas like money and justice, simply will display a wider range of foreign policy positions without providing the means to reconcile them. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have hardly been exemplary for their group unity, and they will naturally seek to push common policy in the direction of their own distinctive concerns, just as the last three new entrants to the EU have done.²⁰

In a broader sense, it may be argued with justice that historical processes are at work which are leading to the convergence of European societies, and even their states, even if convergence has not yet shown up in foreign policy. The sacred concepts of sovereignty and security mean that even diplomats who are professionally international and who in EPC have created a form of European collegiality cannot push foreign policy to the front of the queue for integration. But beneath and around them, the conditions perhaps are being created which could one day make the constitutional move on foreign policy seem inevitable. The desire for peace and prosperity in Western Europe after the second 'thirty years war' produced an economic community and a Franco-German enmeshment that has resulted in people of 15 states moving freely around each other's territories, becoming relaxed enough with each other to rule out any question of enmity, and sharing an increasingly similar range of rights and services. What is more, as individual states and the very idea of welfarist governments have weakened, so has the tendency to look to the EU as a source of shelter in a harshly competitive world (although the United States is still looked to for physical protection).

This is the kind of convergence that has lead some to argue impatiently that European integration, not least in foreign policy, is lagging badly behind both the objective need and the condition of European society. In this light the problem of the lack of 'consistency' between common economic policies and merely coordinated foreign policies becomes an irritating technical distraction rather than a serious issue. The arrival of shared needs and political values (building on Valéry's common cultural heritage) should mean that the real politics now consists in relations with outsiders who might threaten this solid democratic peace and its materially rich foundations. An awareness of globalisation has only heightened the sense that, stripped bare of colonialist advantages and many of the old American subsidies, Europeans now can survive only by clubbing together and accepting the costs as well as the benefits of homogenisation.

From a sociological point of view therefore, there are arguably pressures for convergence in foreign policies which have already produced EPC and its offspring CFSP, and which can be expected, given time, to push things further.

There have already been some remarkable developments - Germany, legitimised by its commitment to European cooperation, is beginning to take on peacekeeping responsibilities; France is finding in EPC a way of letting go of the excesses of Gaullism without losing face, and to some extent also its route back to NATO. But these are not in the nature of things spectacular moves, and can only be seen as significant when judged over decades rather than years.

The same is true of the European stance on the Arab-Israeli issue - hammered out in the late 1970s, held to despite the intermittent hostility of all parties to the dispute, and providing a reference point to which all Member States were eventually glad to hold on. Spain and Greece recognised Israel after entering the EC and accepted EPC's even-handed approach to the extent that Spain, once indelibly pro-Arab, now provides Europe's Special Representative in the Middle East.²¹ The Europeans have broadly held together under great pressure from Israel, and to a lesser extent the United States, as they have moved towards a greater degree of identification with the Palestinian cause and a more outspoken frustration with Israeli behaviour in the occupied territories. This is a unity - imperfectly observed to be sure - that has been forged in the most testing of circumstances.

Thus the fact that Europe fails to hold together in crises when it is under the media spotlight is not such a decisive indication of incapacity as it often seems. Europeans are gradually coming to view an increasing number of international problems in the same way, and the degree of divergence between Member State positions has narrowed. If national governments do not always obey the strong language of the Treaty of European Union to 'support the Union's external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity,' they also do not often display the kind of flagrant disregard for established common positions displayed by French Foreign Minister Cheysson in Jerusalem in 1981, when he announced unilaterally that there would be no European initiative in the Middle East.²² The shock caused by Germany behaving similarly over the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia in December 1991 was the exception that proved the changing rule, both because it was Germany and because consensus has come to be viewed as too painfully achieved to sacrifice lightly. The well-publicised examples of states going their own way are these days largely in areas where converge on an agreed position has not yet been possible (as over Macedonia/FYROM) or in those where the position was ambiguous or lukewarm to begin with (as over sanctions against post-Tiananmen China).²³

From both the top (the freemasonry of diplomats working on the CFSP circuit) and the bottom (the slow transformations of states and societies towards

the kind of convergence which the two superpowers once seemed to display but which was never of the same order), the existing system of separate national foreign policies is being squeezed.²⁴ There is still plenty of life left in it, nevertheless, and the barriers of defence and sovereignty are far from being mere formalities to be swept away by the next charismatic leader able to grasp the nettle of change. But there is a sense in which form and function may be drifting apart, and it is becoming clearer that the problem is the very existence of the Member States themselves. Social and bureaucratic convergence is posing the questions, but only the states can provide the answers - certainly if it means disestablishing themselves.

The emerging European foreign policy-making process

It is to be hoped that if this 'solution' to a historical problem is to be achieved, it will be done calmly and by Europeans in rational control of their political fate. Unfortunately history has a habit of forcing change through crisis and overwhelming threat, as France found in 1940 and the Soviet Union in 1989. A single European foreign policy (and therefore state) may yet be born out of desperation. At present such circumstances naturally seem remote, even apocalyptic. What is more germane is the ability to cope with a wide range of problems arising out of complex interdependence, usually with both political and economic ramifications. Europe has developed a somewhat ramshackle but surprisingly effective system for coping with these diverse demands, and it is worth providing an outline of its operations, since it is the way in which the elements of divergence and convergence currently co-exist.

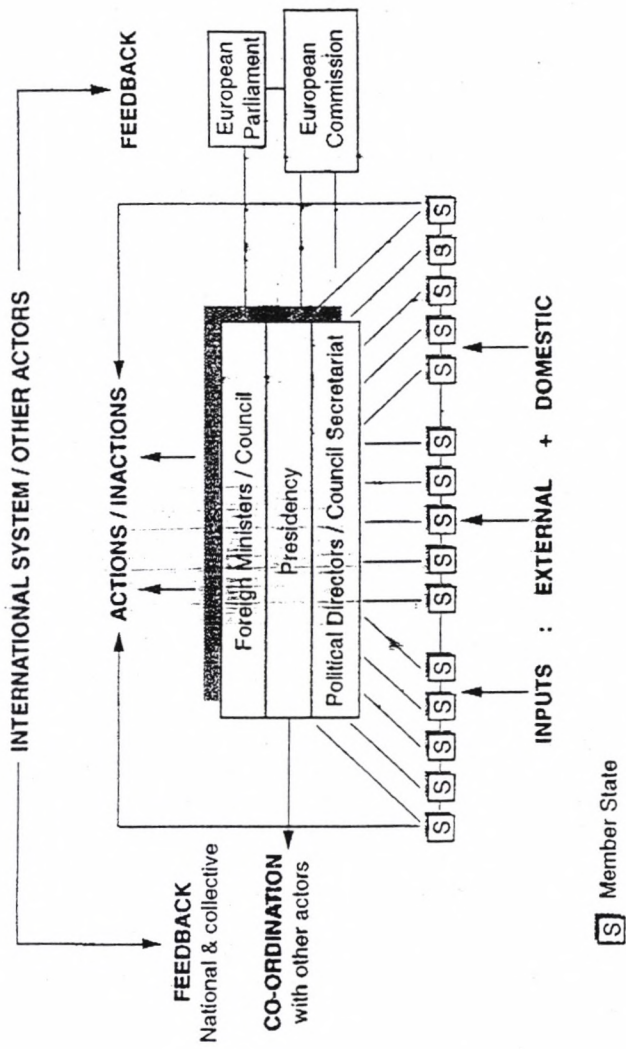
In recent years there has been much discussion of 'multi-level governance' in world politics.²⁵ The EU's foreign policy system is not one of government because there is no consistent and comprehensive pattern of decision making - one can never be sure from where the next decision is going to come. But its policy-making culture (for that is what 'governance' means, if anything) is certainly multi-level and mixed actor in character. This can be interpreted in various ways as an equal and balanced system of mixed jurisdictions, national and Community, as a mishmash of confusing and conflicting competences, or as a system in evolution towards communitarianisation²⁶.

The process in fact goes well beyond the confines of the EU, to which discussion is usually limited; it includes other intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), some third states, and increasingly some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which have been coopted or forced their way into the network of consultations²⁷ (see Figure 1). Although we always need to keep clearly in mind

what the EU specifically can and cannot do, it makes little sense if we try to explain its successes and failures in international relations without reference to the other actors overlapping its area of activity. NATO, for example, is still pre-eminent in defence policy and is no longer bound by 'out of area' restrictions. Equally, its new off-spring, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) have made it a major player in the zones beyond Germany's eastern frontier which are one of the EU's foreign policy priorities. France's move back into a closer relationship with NATO has also made it analytically more difficult to separate out the paths of decision and action in relation to policies towards the old Soviet bloc. Thus the two sets of institutional enlargements, NATO's and the EU's, are politically entangled and sometimes deliberately blurred by all parties to them.²⁸ What is certainly clear is the fact that the EU's decisions towards eastern Europe are not wholly its own.

This mixed picture is reinforced when we add the ingredient of the WEU. The logical aspirations of many to merge the WEU with the EU have not only not been met by the Treaty of Amsterdam but have not come near to being met. Rather, the deal done on Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs) at the June 1996 NATO Berlin Council, has bound the WEU into an even closer relationship with NATO which is theoretically triangular, but in which the EU plays an imprecise role in practice. In the Treaty of Amsterdam there is much talk of the EU 'availing itself' of the WEU, and 'the possibility of the integration of the WEU into the Union, should the European Council so decide,' but a studied vagueness on how the CFSP can issue instructions to an organisation which itself is dependent on NATO for most of its military capability, and which constitutes only two thirds of the EU's membership.²⁹ Moreover the WEU is still far from being able to create integrated European armed forces, and of the separate states that make it up only France and the United Kingdom are serious military players.

Such a mix of organisations and actors means that it is always difficult to know how to move to agreement - and with whom - during a crisis. The inaction in the Great Lakes crisis of 1996 was partly the result of these uncertainties. Although, when in 1997 it proved impossible to get an EU/WEU peacekeeping force together for Albania, the combination of an Italian initiative, UN legitimacy, and OSCE support produced an alternative that has so far worked better than the cynics predicted. The OSCE, the Nordic Council, and ad hoc arrangements like the Contact Group for Bosnia are other ways in which foreign policy in Europe gets coordinated.



The European Foreign Policy Making Process

Lurking behind the overlapping institutionalism of course, are other actors that make it even more difficult to know who is shaping 'European' foreign policy. For all its weakness Russia is still a permanent member of the Security Council, and had a place in the Contact Group when Italy did not. Canada is still a member of NATO and of the OSCE. Norway influenced events in the Middle East through the mediation of the Oslo Accords, despite (or perhaps because of) not being in the EU. And the United States is still the most important single influence on the international politics of Europe, despite having withdrawn most of its troops from the continent and all the talk in the 1990s of a European Security and Defence Identity. The US affects European society in a myriad of ways. It shares in Europe's policy making through NATO, the OSCE, an inside track of access to the CFSP, the CJTF concept and the G7 of industrialised nations, the UN Security Council, and the various penetrating bilateral relations that it enjoys with all the important European states.³⁰ The United States, in short, is omnipresent *inside* the common European home and its separate actorness is sometimes difficult to distinguish from that of the Europeans themselves.³¹

The last part of the mixed actor environment from which European foreign policies emerge is relatively new. Non-governmental organisations can no longer wholly be categorised as external influences on formal office holders, pushed to the margins of events by an executive monopoly over external questions. On Third World development questions groups like Oxfam, Médecins sans Frontières, and Christian Aid have become virtual partners of official agencies, and their knowledge of conditions on the ground has made them rather more valuable sources of information than the (increasingly scarce) national diplomats. Not surprisingly their independence from governments can therefore be called into question, and hostage-takings of aid workers are becoming increasingly common. Similarly in Bosnia refugee workers have often had better access to local populations than military or diplomatic representatives, and they have had to confront the same dilemmas about who to help that the Red Cross has suffered with for decades.³² In the rest of Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union, the various 'know-how' funds of PHARE and TACIS have been created precisely to enable private and public organisations to work in tandem, with the result that some academic groups and private companies have effectively become part of the implementation phase of official policy.

A multi-level system inevitably produces uncertainty, delay and confusion. It also can be flexible, powerful and preventive of extremism. The key question, however, is always whether such a system is in a condition of dynamic transformation towards unified actorness. Even if a clear answer is never going to be possible, we can still address the issue of how much *potential* the system has for self-transformation, and how much of this potential has already been realised?

The matrix out of which any given European foreign policy decision emerges consists of the mixed-actor, multi-level system sketched above, together with the attitudes and perceptions of the political class of the day (meaning both the public and the politicians). The former provides the structure and the latter the agency of the system. But whereas the structure is necessarily slow to change, being under no single actor's formal or practical authority, attitudes and perceptions can be both multifarious and quicksilver in character. They vary between states, within them, and in the same groups over time. But they do not vary randomly. Rather, the processes of social and international change which were discussed in the first part of this chapter, together with the structuring effects of the European institutions themselves, now consolidated over 40 years and including a foreign policy cooperation network most of that time, create a moving platform on which the theatre of politics is played out, inevitably shaped by the character of its stage and set.

The politics of European foreign policy making, therefore, revolves around a dialectic of solidarism/fragmentation where tendencies of each kind are defined and contained by tendencies of the other. The following list of these apparently opposing sets of forces is intended to demonstrate that most elements of the system we now operate display characteristics of both commonality and distinctiveness. We could use the terms centripetal and centrifugal, but this would be too Newtonian a metaphor for a process that has no single centre and no single force acting upon it. Furthermore in human society the way actors think of themselves and their context means a great deal for the way they behave, and the sense of commonality or separateness is central to their identities, morale and purpose.

Solidaristic forces

- Member States now accept that there can be no turning back to the pre-EPC condition. The CFSP, for all its ills, is a permanent and necessary part of their policy environment. Indeed if it did not exist they would probably invent it. CFSP is clearly a significant part of the attraction for potential entrants to the Union, who seek shelter politically within a large bloc as well as to benefit from it economically.

- Even the biggest Members now have a strong sense of the weakness of unilateralism. This does not prevent them from acting unpredictably and in a self-regarding way, but it does mean that they are careful not to bring the CFSP into complete disrepute. There is a *non plus ultra*.

- The smaller Member States now have a heightened sense of collective responsibility for the international system, in particular its European aspect. Neutrality is inevitably attenuated as a result of participating in EPC/CFSP and active involvement, at least in conflict prevention, increases. For some smaller states, like their larger partners, European diplomacy has provided a legitimate way of re-engaging with a wider world, when decolonisation had constituted a form of expulsion. Portugal, Belgium, and the Netherlands are the main cases here.

- Outsiders accept the CFSP process as a working diplomatic caucus. The powerful and the weak, the near abroad and the far distant are all interested in doing business with CFSP. They do not regard it as a busted flush, as the Commonwealth was for so long, or a one-issue association in the way that ASEAN has been. Rather, they see it as a political grouping in the process of becoming whole which may not perform effectively now but may very well do so in the future, and thus needs watching. This is as true of the United States as of Israel, of Iran and of Brazil. The consequent dialogues provide CFSP with status and rationale.

Fragmenting forces

- National foreign policies still have important functions, such as bilateralism, and the pursuit of particular historical interests. These will at times be perfectly compatible with collective positions (and on a division of labour principle they may actually be desirable), but on others problems over relative gains cannot be avoided.

- Paradoxically, cooperation has given Germany, Italy, and Spain the platform from which to assert national interests more confidently. The criminal and pariah associations of the past had inhibited their behaviour and could only be left behind through involvement in the collective action of a democratic Europe. The new freedom to be treated as 'ordinary countries' which was thereby created does not mean that they wish to leave the safety of the CFSP behind; it is only that they are now less willing to see European foreign policy made by others in their name. Their concern is to shape the substance as well as the procedure of European diplomacy, which will in turn mean occasional clashes with other members - notably Britain and France who monopolised the leadership of EPC during its first two decades.

- The group of 15 states contains great variety of geography, size, wealth, statehood, and historical roles. This variety provides the EU with a wide range of

potential capabilities for foreign policy and also a broad range of different models for foreign policy behaviour. The decision makers and publics of Britain and France are exposed to the perspectives of Austria, Finland, Greece, Spain, and Sweden, as well as to those of their more familiar neighbours and/or alliance partners. There is transformational as well as fissiparous potential here.

- Democratic accountability tends to pull in the same direction as that of national concerns over foreign policy independence. That is, any attempt to exert democratic control over European foreign policy will necessarily be directed at influencing the national government's position in the Council of Ministers, and at forcing change by the threat of a veto or an opt-out. The European Parliament is not yet strong enough in any dimension to be the main focus of agitation. These actions will expand the knowledge of what the CFSP is about, and are very likely to have transnational effects of emulation or reaction.

- Outsiders have learned how to divide and rule the EU group. Given the mixed-actor system it would be extraordinary if other states needed lessons from game theorists on prisoners' dilemma or stag-hunt strategies as a method for gaining advantage. By the same token, insofar as there is a rational process of calculation at stake, the EU and its Member States will be forced to reassess their own approach to collective action, that is, to the costs and benefits of a given separation of powers.

- Systematic coordination among foreign ministries produces some symptoms of *engrenage* and collegiality, but bureaucratic politics is also at work. It produces transgovernmental alliances, which do not promote integration but simply cut the cake of European diplomacy in a new way. The Franco-German and Netherlands-Luxembourg 'couples' are the best examples. But Danish and British diplomats have been known to make common cause, and the British and Italian foreign ministries have produced several joint initiatives in recent years. The southern Member States are increasingly caucusing in an attempt to redirect attention from Eastern Europe.³³ It is not completely clear whether these inner groups and shifting alliances help CFSP to function or provide an insurmountable obstacle to its progress.³⁴

Into the public eye

Any assumption of a 'victory' for the forces of either solidarism or fragmentation would be to make a crass teleological error. We cannot know where the European foreign policy system is heading, and the notion of a 'destination' is mere anthropomorphism. What is clear, however, is the interplay taking place between

the national and the collective, and indeed between a range of actors that stretches much further than the EU and its Member States. This has produced a pattern of multi-level diplomacy in which the various elements sometimes compete, sometimes reinforce each other, and sometimes merely coexist. Nested in all this is the CFSP, a focal point despite itself, for unlike the OSCE, NATO, or WEU, the EU is actively trying to bring about accelerated convergence between its members' foreign policies. The continuing strength of national diplomacy is a formidable obstacle to convergence, but it cannot hide the importance and durability of the EPC/CFSP system. It is not simply at the mercy of its members' political rivalries, because in its turn it shapes their perceptions, choices, and behaviour - not least because it is the only way by which Europe can have a high political profile in the global system.

The CFSP has suffered bad press by pretending that procedural tinkering amounts to a quantum leap forward. But it is sufficiently elastic to incorporate, rather than deny, separate national policies and to work alongside other IGOs like WEU, NATO, and OSCE. The dialectics of these multiple relationships should promote wider understanding of the choices available and the decisions that might be made. A multi-level, multi-actor system after all, cannot go unobserved; it is a form of pluralism writ large which cannot but increase transparency and participation. Technocratic elitism will never go out of its way to encourage public debate, but so far as Europe's many strands of foreign policy are concerned, the day of technocratic elitism may be drawing to a close.

Notes:

1. David Allen, 'The European rescue of national foreign policy,' in *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, ed. Christopher Hill (London: Routledge, 1996). This picks up on the ideas of Alan S. Milward, with the assistance of George Brennan and Federico Romero, in *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 1992).
2. What follows develops, but does not repeat, the author's 'The Actors Involved: National Perspectives,' in *The Foreign Policy of the European Union* eds. Elfriede Regelsberger, Philippe de Schoutheete, and Wolfgang Wessels (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996), and reprinted in adapted form in *Quaderni Forum* 5:1-2 (1996).
3. Jan Zielonka, *Explaining Euro-paralysis* (London: Macmillan, forthcoming 1997); Stanley Hoffmann, 'Obstinate or Obsolete? France, European Integration and the Fate of the Nation-State,' in ed. Stanley Hoffmann *The European Sisyphus: Essays on Europe 1964-1994* (Boulder: Westview, 1995). Hoffmann's classic essay, first written in 1966 and up-dated in 1973 (the version cited here) still stands as a profound and influential analysis of the historical forces at work in the slow reshaping of Europe. The original can be found in *Daedalus* 95:3 (Summer 1966).
4. Stanley Hoffmann, *The European Sisyphus: Essays on Europe 1964-1994*, (Boulder: Westview, 1995): 74.
5. *Ibid.*: 4-6.
6. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The 'Conference' was transformed in 1995 into an 'Organisation', creating the OSCE.
7. On the nature of the original principle of *raison d'état*, and its evident remoteness from the philosophy of the modern European state, despite our 'Westphalian' international system, see Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society* (London: Routledge, 1992) especially pp182-189, and 195-196. Also see John Vincent, 'Realpolitik,' in *The Community of States*, ed. James Mayall (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982): 73-84.
8. 'Obstinate or Obsolete,' see Stanley Hoffmann *The European Sisyphus: Essays on Europe 1964-1994* (Boulder: Westview, 1995).
9. Alfred Pijpers, 'The Netherlands: the weakening pull of Atlanticism' in *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*, ed. Christopher Hill (London: Routledge, 1996): 265.
10. The idea of embeddedness is taken from John Ruggie's notion of 'embedded liberalism.' See his 'International regimes, Transactions and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Post-War Economic Order,' *International Organisation* 36:2 (1982). Ruggie in turn looked back to Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944), which had distinguished between 'embedded' and 'disembedded' economic interest in multilateralism. Subsequently Ruggie and his colleagues focused our attention back on multilateralism. See *Multilateralism Matters: the Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form*, ed. John G. Ruggie (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

11. The 'politics of scale' notion was introduced to the study of European foreign policy by Roy Ginsberg, *The Foreign Policy Actions of the European Community: the Politics of Scale* (Boulder: Lynn Reinner, 1989). Rousseau's stag hunt parable is explored in Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

12. The Commission's view is expressed in 'Agenda 2000,' presented by Jacques Santer to the European Parliament on 16 July 1997. Its contents were leaked to *The Independent* (11 July 1997).

13. See Philippe Schmitter, 'Three Neo-Functional Hypotheses about International Integration', *International Organisation* 23:1 (Winter 1969), and Josef Joffe, 'Europe's American Pacifier,' *Foreign Policy* 54 (Spring 1984). Joffe borrowed the term 'pacifier' from Uwe Nerlich.

14. On Europe's 'others' see Iver B. Neumann and Jennifer Welsh, 'The Other in European Self-Definition: An Addendum to the Literature on International Society,' *Review of International Studies* 17:4 (October 1991). Neumann has continued to produce interesting work on this theme. See his *Russia and the Idea of Europe: A Study in Identity and International Relations* (London: Routledge, 1995), and 'Self and Other in International Relations' in *European Journal of International Relations* 2:2 (June 1996). In this last piece Neumann warns (p168) that '[i]f it is proposed to achieve integration at the price of active othering, that price seems to be too high to pay.'

15. The quotation is from Valéry's *Regard sur le monde actuel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), and is courtesy of Guido Lenzi's 'Reforming the International System: Between Leadership and Power-Sharing,' *The International Spectator* 30:2 (April-June 1965): 69. Also helpful here is Anthony D. Smith, 'National Identity and European Unity', in *The Question of Europe*, eds. Peter Gowan and Perry Anderson (London: Verso, 1997).

16. For a good summary of the different approaches possible see Karen Elizabeth Smith, 'Explaining Cooperation on an EU Foreign Policy towards Eastern Europe', *Quaderni Forum* 10: 1-2 (1996) especially pp32-41.

17. James N. Rosenau, 'The National Interest' in his *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (New York: The Free Press, 1971). It was, however, Warner R. Schilling who first broached this kind of question, in his 'The Clarification of Ends - or, Which Interest is National?,' *World Politics* 8: 4 (1956).

18. For a balance-sheet of 'what national foreign policies can still do' and 'what national foreign policies cannot do very well' see the author's 'The Actors Involved: National Perspectives,' in *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, eds. Regelsberger et. al., 1996, op.cit.

19. Christopher Hill, 'The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualising Europe's International Role,' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31:3 (September 1993).

20. The 57 varieties of differentiated integration produced in the 1980s and early 1990s are discussed by Alexander Stubb, in his 'A Categorization of Differentiated Integration,' *Journal of Common Market Studies* 34: 2 (June 1996). In the IGC, which culminated at Amsterdam in June 1997, the terms 'flexibility' and 'cooperation renforcée' had already overtaken them. On Visegrad et.al., many delicate problems of bilateral relations remain for the countries of eastern Europe.

See Monika Wohlfeld (Ed.), *The Effects of Enlargement on Bilateral relations in Central and Eastern Europe* (Paris: WEU Institute for Security Studies, Chaillot Paper no.26, June 1997).

21.The envoy is Miguel Maratino, previously Spanish ambassador to Israel. He was appointed by EU foreign ministers in October 1996, apparently at French insistence, immediately after the American envoy, Dennis Ross, flew back to Washington admitting failure. Clearly the aim was to revive the faltering peace process and to raise the EU's profile. See *The Independent* (29 October 1996). But his impact has not lived up to the more extravagant claims, as in 'Europe draw up Middle east conduct code,' *The European* (3-9 April, 1997).

22.Title V, Article J1.4. The Treaty of Amsterdam adds another injunction to this sentence: 'The Member States shall work together to enhance and develop their mutual political solidarity' (new J1.2). The Cheysson remark, uttered in the middle of a strenuous effort to implement the previous year's Venice Declaration, can be found in Françoise de La Serre, 'La politique étrangère de la France: New Look ou New Deal,' *Politique Etrangère* (March 1982): 132-133.

23.On FYROM see Stelios Stavridis, 'The Democratic Control of the CFSP' in *Common Foreign and Security Policy: The Record and Reforms*, ed. Martin Holland (London: Cassell, 1997): 140-144. Holland's case-study of South Africa in the same volume argues that cohesiveness was achieved within a 'designated South African policy' (p181).

24.Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel Huntington, *Political Power: USA/USSR* (New York: Viking Press, 1964).This now virtually forgotten book took the convergence hypothesis, associated with Walt Rostow, seriously, but ultimately declined to support it.

25.Much of this has arisen from game theoretic work in the United States on the need for various kinds of strategy in international relations, to deal with internal and external demands, as well as the coexistence of anarchy and cooperation. See for example Robert Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level Games', *International Organisation* 42:3 (Summer 1988), (reprinted as an Appendix to Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson and Robert D. Putnam [Eds.] *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993]). Also Robert Axelrod and Robert Keohane, 'Achieving Cooperation under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions,' in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: the Contemporary Debate*, ed. David Baldwin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

26.Simon Bulmer leans towards the first of the three, in his 'Analyzing European Political Cooperation: the Case for Two-Tier Analysis', in *The Future of European Political Cooperation: Essays on Theory and Practice*, ed. Martin Holland (London: Macmillan, 1991). William Wallace prefers the more gloomy view in his *Regional Integration: the West European Experience* (Washington DC: the Brookings Institution, 1994), especially pp72-81. For an example of the progressive school see *CFSP and the Future of the European Union*, an Interim Report of a Working Group of the Bertelsmann Stiftung (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 1995).

27.What follows builds upon my earlier attempts to model the system in 'The Foreign Policy of the European Community,' in *Foreign Policy and World Politics*, (8th Ed.), ed. Roy Macridis (New York: Prentice Hall, 1991), and 'The Capability-Expectations Gap,' 1993, [op.cit.](#)

28.On the interesting ambiguities of this process, see William Wallace, *Opening the Door: the*

Enlargement of NATO and the European Union (London: Centre for European Reform, 1996).

29. New Article J7 (formerly J.4 of the TEU). Of the 15 EU Member States, ten are full members of the WEU, and five (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden) are Observers. The WEU has three Associate Members and ten Associate Partners from outside the EU's ranks. J7.3 does stipulate that the European Council can set 'guidelines' for the WEU.

30. On special access to CFSP see Totis Kotsonis, 'A Political Europe in an Atlantic World: A Study in the Development of EPC/CFSP-US Consultation Procedures and a European Political Identity,' PhD. thesis, London School of Economics, 1997.

31. The work of Michael Smith has always emphasised this transatlantic interdependence and interpenetration. See in particular his *Western Europe and the United States: the Uncertain Alliance*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1984).

32. See Jacques Freymond, 'The International Committee of the Red Cross as a Neutral Intermediary,' in *Unofficial Diplomats*, eds. Maureen R. Berman and Joseph E. Johnson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

33. See Esther Barbé, 'Present and Future of Joint Actions for the Mediterranean Region,' in *Common Foreign and Security Policy: The Record and Reforms*, ed. Martin Holland (London: Cass, 1997).

34. For a thoroughly dialectical view of the wider issue of European integration and inner groups see Philippe de Schoutheete, 'The European Community and its Sub-Systems,' in *The Dynamics of European Integration*, ed. William Wallace (London: Printer for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1990).

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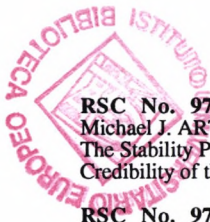
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