

WHERE IS THE ANALYSIS OF EUROPEAN FOREIGN POLICY GOING?

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Introduction

In his insightful review article summing up the state of the art in EU foreign policy analysis (EFP) at the end of the previous millennium, Ben Tonra concludes on the upbeat note that it “is a pleasure to report on the health and strength of publication in the field... The developing scholarship in this area is throwing up new conceptual challenges and offering a widening variety of conclusions to some well-established questions” (Tonra, 2000: 168). Given that this field of study has continued to flourish since then, this may be an opportune moment to reconnoitre this terrain again to ascertain if the centrifugal tendencies diagnosed by Tonra have continued; and if so, to discuss the possible implications of such a condition. The question is, after all, whether it is a healthy sign that a field of study is pulling in different directions, or whether this is symptomatic of a condition calling for scholarly concern. What to some ears is lovely polyphonic music may to others -- not as easily enamoured of ‘new challenges’ and a ‘widening variety of conclusions’ -- simply sound like a cacophony of dissonant voices.

Before proceeding with this overview and evaluation of the field, a few declarations of scope and intent need to be made up front. The first is that it will not deal with European foreign policy itself as an empirical domain or with how it has developed (or not developed) during the recent past. In other words, I will not discuss and evaluate the actual conduct of foreign policy on the European arena or the status of its empirical analysis; instead, the focus will be on *how* it has been studied by scholars working within the field. Obviously, it is not always a simple matter to keep these two aspects distinctly separate from each other, since most researchers combine theoretical and empirical analysis, often in a reciprocal and mutually beneficial process. Nevertheless, the discussion here will concentrate on second-order issues of

theory, conceptualisation and analytic approaches in current research on European foreign policy, not on the status of empirical analysis itself.

Secondly, although much has been written on recent developments within European foreign policy and its analysis, this review essay will focus only on recent book-length volumes on this theme, published after the turn of the millennium. Six such volumes have come to my attention and will be considered here. Thirdly, although European foreign policy as an empirical class of phenomena can be said to encompass both national-level and Union-level foreign policy in Europe (more on this below), the emphasis here will be placed on what is taken to be foreign policy actions by, or on behalf of, the EU, not on national foreign policy making by EU members, even though the latter is an activity which has arguably not decreased in scope during the past decade. Finally, I would like to make it clear that I do not intend to evaluate the respective scholarly contributions of these volumes, or to compare them critically with one another.

The discussion below will proceed as follows. I will start by first considering conceptual issues, including some of the central definitional aspects that of necessity are crucial to the analytical identity of any particular field of study. Are scholars talking about similar phenomena when discussing European foreign policy and its attendant aspects, or are they speaking past each other simply because they are discussing essentially different things? In conjunction with this conceptual review I will also consider the theoretical and methodological assumptions underlying the studies in question, i.e., issues pertaining to the kind of analytical or explanatory frameworks being employed and hence, by implication, what kind of social science is being pursued. This discussion will then be linked up with foreign policy analysis (FPA), a sub-field within International Relations (IR) that has a long and venerable tradition but one which is not always fully appreciated by scholars working on European foreign policy. How compatible is EFP analysis with this tradition, and does it have something to learn from current debates within FPA? Finally, an attempt will be made to draw some lessons from the preceding overview, as well as to provide some pointers for how to develop further the analysis of European foreign policy.

Explananda and explanans

“Does the European Union have a foreign policy?” is the rhetorical title of the introductory chapter in Hazel Smith’s volume on *European Union Foreign Policy* (2002). The question is certainly crucial to our concerns here, and her answer is unequivocal: the European Union does indeed have a foreign policy, and it is “much the same as that of the nation-state” (Smith, 2002:7). She then goes on to outline six arguments for disposing of current objections to the very idea of a European Union foreign policy. These objections are grouped into two main categories, pertaining to either structural and/or institutional deficiencies, on the one hand, or to the capacity of the EU to pursue a foreign policy of its own, on the other. All six putative shortcomings -- that the EU is not a sovereign entity, that it is a subordinate actor to its member states, that it lacks a centralised decision-making as well as military capacity, that it is not very effective in international crisis-management, and the so-called ‘capability-expectations gap’ argument -- are given short shrift, leading to her conclusion that “the European Union does indeed have a foreign policy and that it can be analysed in pretty much the same way as we can analyse that of any nation-state” (Smith, 2002:1).

What does Smith have in mind when she claims that there are no conceptual problems with the notion of the European Union possessing a foreign policy much the same as that of the nation-state? Her argument is very clear on this score: ‘foreign policy’ means the “capacity to make and implement policies abroad which promote the domestic values, interests and policies of the actor in question,” and since the EU does in her view possess all of these attributes, it ipso facto has a foreign policy. It can be characterised thus due to “its developed philosophy based on liberal capitalist democracy, and its panoply of domestic competencies and policies on issues ranging from the common market to co-operation in policing and judicial matters” (Smith, 2002:7-8). This view is certainly as far as it is possible to get from conceptions of European foreign policy as *sui generis*, a polar position that has had considerable influence in the past and, as we shall see below, one that continues to be influential.

Having disposed of the conceptual issues pertaining to the explanandum, her analytic approach is explicitly to eschew a procedural or institutional tack – to equate EFP with what “emanates from the procedures of the Common Foreign and Security Policy” (Smith, 2002:8) – in favour of what she calls the ‘geo-issue-area approach’, involving foci which “engage with either the geographical reach of the Union abroad or which attempt to evaluate the various issues with which the Union has involved itself abroad. Both these approaches treat the European Union as a conglomerate actor” (Smith, 2002:9). Beyond this empirically focused framework of analysis no particular theory is advanced in this study; instead, Smith notes that there are not really any “theoretical obstacles to adopting the approach that the European Union has a foreign policy that it exercises throughout the world in a number of different issue-areas” (Smith, 2002:269). At the same time she is derisive of what she calls the “institutionalist ghetto of European integration analysis which concentrates on procedure at the expense of substance...in defence of the idea that CFSP procedures as written in the treaties should limit the scope of inquiry into European Union foreign policy” (Smith, 2002:269-70).

Of the volumes under review here the conception of European foreign policy that comes closest to the one above is to be found in Karen E. Smith’s study entitled *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World* (2003). With an appreciative nod to Hazel Smith’s conceptualisation, she provides the following formulation: ‘foreign policy’ “is defined widely here, to mean the activity of developing and managing relationships between the state (or, in our case, the EU) and other international actors, which promotes the domestic values and interests of the state or actor in question” (Smith, 2003:2). As in the case of the previous conceptualisation, it is also made explicitly clear that this view means that EU foreign policy is not to be confined to second pillar activities, i.e., to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), including the more recently established European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), but also encompasses its two constituent pillars, those of the European Community (EC) and Justice and Home Affairs (JHA). Also in agreement with Hazel Smith’s view, it is here claimed that the EU has at its disposal many of the traditional foreign policy instruments used by states, in addition to some unique tools of its own (Smith, 2003:67).

Karen Smith's modus operandi is to structure her study around five foreign policy objectives of the EU -- the promotion of regional co-operation; the promotion of human rights; the promotion of democracy and good governance; the prevention of violent conflict; and the fight against international crime -- and to analyse these in terms of why and how they have been pursued. The ambition has been not only to shed light on how the EU has attempted to realise these objectives but also thereby to determine its international identity qua foreign policy actor; and inasmuch as the approach is essentially empirical and evaluative, little effort is spent on linking these concerns to a larger theoretical framework or to ongoing theoretical debates. Quite clearly, this is a volume that wants to expedite matters by going to the heart of the matter without any unnecessary second-order digressions en route.

If both Hazel Smith and Karen Smith can be said to find the question of how to define EFP rather unproblematic, providing us with a no nonsense answer based on traditional conceptions of what -- at least in their view -- foreign policy analysis is all about, this cannot be said about Brian White's discussion of this issue in *Understanding European Foreign Policy* (2001). Thus whereas his two colleagues do not find it necessary to spend much effort on distinguishing between 'EU' and 'European' foreign policy, or to delve into definitional issues more generally, White goes to considerable lengths to grapple not only with the role of foreign policy analysis in EFP (which he certainly does not find unproblematic), but also in trying to untangle the three strands that, in his view, are intertwined in the latter: *Community* foreign policy, referring to the foreign policy of the European Community (EC) established in 1957, and which today can be said to constitute the foreign economic policy dimension of the European foreign policy; *Union* foreign policy which, until the Single European Act of 1986, consisted of the informal co-ordination of the foreign policies of member states in the process called European Political Cooperation (EPC), and subsequently was upgraded and formalised at Maastricht in the second pillar form of the CFSP; and *national* foreign policy, pursued separately by the members states but increasingly under the institutional influence of the EU as a whole (White, 2001:40-41). Without providing us with a formal definition à la the two Smiths above, he argues that defining EFP in terms of any one or two of these would be too restrictive, since "European governance in the foreign policy field appears to take all three forms." Hence, if it "is to be useful for analytical purposes, the concept

has to encompass the fragmented nature of agency at the European level and the variety of forms of action” implied in the above classification (White, 2001:39). However, he is open to a development in which the three become increasingly interwoven over time; and “the more extensive the interrelationships between them, the more justified we are in using the label European foreign policy” (White, 2001:39).

The framework of analysis which White provides for his subsequent empirical analysis of EFP is based on the notion of a foreign policy system in action composed of an interrelated set of elements consisting of processes, issues, instruments, context and outputs. He has described this systems analysis approach as follows: “the nature of the policy process is affected by the identity of the actors involved, the issues being dealt with, the policy instruments available and, not least, the context within which policy is made. These interrelationships in turn generate the outputs from the system” (White 2001:40). These elements -- in the form of focused questions -- are subsequently utilised in each of the empirically oriented chapters in order to give these a comparable structure, at the same time as the ambition is to indicate how these elements form interrelated components of a foreign policy system shorn of the state-centric realism of traditional FPA.

Roy H. Ginsberg, in *The European Union in International Politics* (2001), will have no truck with talk about the EU having a foreign policy pretty much like that of the nation-state. “Comparing and assessing EFP as if the EU were a state,” he warns us, “is a slippery slope” (Ginsberg, 2001:12). The reason for this is that the “EU lacks the attributes of cohesion, purpose, and continuity normally (but not always) associated with national foreign policies because the EU is not a state”; that is to say, “the EU is a partially constructed international political actor, neither a state nor a political union of states” (Ginsberg, 2001:9). This does not mean, however, that the EU is not engaged in foreign policy activities of various kinds. It certainly is, and his study is an impassioned examination – indeed, commendation -- of the EU’s ‘baptism by fire’ during the 1990’s as a foreign policy actor engaged in a host of “individual country-, region-, and issue-based foreign policy activities” around the world (Ginsberg, 2001:9). More specifically, and this is as close as he gets to a definition of EFP, such “activity refers to the universe of concrete civilian actions, policies, positions,

relations, commitments, and choices of the EC (and EU) in international politics” (Ginsberg, 2001:3). In his extensive elaboration of a conceptual model for analysing EFP – one of the most extensive and intricate in the literature discussed here, inspired by Eastonian systems analysis -- these various types of activities are conceptualised in the form of ‘outputs’ from a ‘European foreign policy system’ which includes all three EU pillars as well as the foreign policies emanating from within member states. However, the purpose of his book is not so much to analyse or to explain these foreign policy outputs as such as their international impact in the form of outcomes, i.e., their external political effects.

Elke Krahmann’s study of *Multilevel Networks in European Foreign Policy* (2003) has the most encompassing definition of ‘European foreign policy’ of the six volumes under discussion here. While acknowledging that typically this concept has been understood -- quoting Christopher Hill -- as “the sum of what the EU and its member states do in international relations”, she nevertheless rejects this specification in favour of employing “a different definition of European foreign policy which pertains to the decisions and actions of core European states and their multilateral organizations which are primarily concerned with the welfare of the region” (Krahmann, 2003:3). The reason for this new conceptualisation is that European foreign policy cannot, she claims, be reduced to the actions of the EU alone, nor to those of its member states, since not only are these “influenced by the United States and vice versa, but also there are key European foreign policy decisions taken and implemented by a broad range of national and multinational institutions, including the United Nations and NATO” (Krahmann, 2003:3). As a consequence of this complex set of relationships and foreign policy decision-making processes characterised by the increasing multiplicity, diversity and interdependence of foreign policy actors, she proposes the use of a multilevel network approach to incorporate the behaviour of national, transnational and international actors within the European context. In her view, this behaviour can best be explained in terms of the notion of rational, utility maximising actors attempting to influence one another’s preferences in the pursuit of European foreign policies. In the empirical part of her book she uses this approach in three closely argued and technically sophisticated case studies of European foreign policy decision-making: the first focusing on the EU, the second on the transatlantic community and the third on the United Kingdom.

The final volume to be considered in this overview, and the one published most recently, is Michael E. Smith's *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy* (2004). He defines 'EU foreign policy', 'European foreign policy' or 'foreign/security policy co-operation' (these terms are used interchangeably) as co-operative actions "(1) undertaken on behalf of all EU states toward non-members, international bodies, or global events or issues; (2) oriented toward a specific goal; (3) made operational with physical activity, such as financing or diplomacy; and (4) undertaken in the context of EPC/CFSP discussions (although the EC can also be involved)". The emphasis here is on institutionalised co-operation on the part of EU member states, specifically in situations in which "states did not perceive themselves as having identical interests in a given choice situation, yet...attempted to adjust their foreign policies to accommodate each other" (Smith, 2004:18). Such policy co-ordination necessarily involves active efforts on the part of member states to achieve a common end, and is hence a highly purposive and conjoined type of activity heavily dependent on institutionalised forms of co-operation. His book is essentially focused on tracing and explaining the institutionalisation of such co-operation in Europe since the early days of EPC.

This he does by way of explaining how changes in institutional context -- in terms of intergovernmental, transgovernmental and supranational procedures -- affect the propensity for co-operation, and then linking processes of institutionalization to an expansion of foreign policy co-operation among EU member states. The claim made is that "there is a reciprocal relationship between institution-building and co-operation", and that in the case of EU foreign policy this has meant a "progressive expansion of both the institutional mechanisms and substantive outcomes of cooperation" (Smith, 2004:239, 240). Starting with its modest beginnings in EPC, this process has led to the institutionalisation of a European foreign policy capacity -- currently embodied in the CFSP -- defined in terms of both regular, substantive policy outcomes and a set of explicit aspirations or goals.

Having sketched very briefly how these six scholars have defined their object of analysis -- the explanandum -- it is time to return to the question raised in the beginning: do they speak past one another, or are their respective conceptualisations

of the object of analysis in EFP compatible with one another? In other words, are EFP scholars still moving into different directions, essentially pursuing different objects of analysis?

The short answer is clearly yes: even a quick comparison between them points to obvious differences in both scope and kind -- e.g., between, on the one hand, Ginsberg's very broad conception of 'outputs' incorporating all three pillars as well as member states' foreign policies, or Krahmman's even more encompassing notion of multilevel networks operating within and outside Europe, and, on the other hand, Michael E. Smith's narrow focus on policy-making within the institutional ambit of EPC/CFSP. This follows in the footsteps of the previous scholarship discussed by Tonra in terms of his distinction between studies focusing on either CFSP or on more holistic EFP approaches (Tonra, 2000:164). We also find a clear differentiation -- also discussed by Tonra -- between, on the one hand, studies viewing EFP as essentially *sui generis* (Michael E. Smith, Krahmman and Ginsburg) and, on the other, those that to considerable extent view it as comparable with conventional foreign policy analysis (Hazel Smith, Karen E. Smith and perhaps White).

What is the longer answer? Are these just surface differences pertaining essentially to terminological and/or conceptual issues, or are they indicative of more fundamental questions regarding explanation and theoretical understanding, pertaining to the nature and choice of feasible explanans? Once again the answer is in the affirmative, and since we are here dealing with a more deep-rooted division, I will elaborate briefly on these differences and what they can be said to indicate about the landscape of European foreign policy analysis.

For this purposes I will distinguish, first of all, between policy as 'output' and policy as 'action'. The former is a behavioural concept with 'objectivist' connotations, whereas the latter denotes purposive, goal-oriented behaviour and hence is based on an essentially interpretative type of epistemology. Secondly, a distinction will be made between two basic ontological conceptions of the nature of social systems, revolving around the issue of where the primary causal foundations or dynamics of social systems are assumed to be situated. Without going into the deeper meta-

theoretical and controversial ramifications of this fundamental distinction in social theory, I will here simply distinguish between ‘structure’ and ‘agency’.

These two dimensions can be combined to render a simple two-by-two matrix that can be used to classify the conceptualisations of EFP discussed above. As I will briefly try to argue below, the six studies reviewed here can be placed into the four options provided by these two dimensions as follows:

	Output	Action
Structure	<i>Ginsberg</i>	<i>M. Smith</i>
Agency	<i>White</i>	<i>H. Smith</i>
	<i>Krahmann</i>	<i>K. Smith</i>

Clearly, Ginsberg’s conceptualisation of the ‘European Foreign Policy System’ and his stipulation of policy as an ‘output’ of this system places him squarely in the upper left box. Given the strong emphasis by Michael E. Smith on the institutionalised nature and dynamics of EFP, his is also a structural approach, but one with a conception of policy which is purposive and goal-oriented in nature. The latter also applies to both Hazel Smith and Karen E. Smith, but in both cases we have a strong focus on agency rather than on structure, in the sense that the actions involved are pursued by self-conscious and goal-oriented actors -- in this instance the EU in some form or other. Brian White is more difficult to categorise in terms of these criteria, but given the non-structural type of FPA that he advocates, with a focus on the decision-making behaviour of non-state actors in an interrelated and dynamic system producing foreign policy outputs, he ends up in the bottom left box. Finally, in view of the strong rational choice orientation of Elke Krahmann’s study, she too ends up in this box (although her approach is clearly very different from White’s).

What does this classification of contemporary EFP scholarship tell us? In my view, essentially two things: that the differences between the major recent contributions to the field are considerably more foundational in character than is perhaps assumed by most scholars working in it. In short, they are talking about different things, and they

are talking about them in different ways. Secondly, that if the notion of cumulation is valued above diversity and a “widening variety of conclusions” (to quote Tonra again), then we need to discuss and penetrate these aspects more than has been done in the past. One way of doing this is to latch on to recent debates within FPA.

EFP and FPA

What characterises the condition of FPA today, and are there any essential lessons that EFP can learn from recent debates within the former? The answer to the first query is arguably that a consensus exists today on the nature of the explanandum, although it has taken a circuitous route for scholars to reach this point of relative agreement. In my view, this consensus boils down to a specification of the unit of analysis that emphasises the purposive nature of foreign policy actions, a focus on policy undertakings and the crucial role of state-like boundaries (Carlsnaes, 2002:335; but see also Hill, 2003:3). This type of agreement has certainly been beneficial to FPA, and there is a strong *prima facie* case that a similar agreement within EFP would have equally positive effects. The crucial notions here are *purposive action*, *policy undertakings* and *international boundaries*, and it should not be an insuperable task to translate these into appropriate EFP terms.

This is the good news. The bad news is that here scholarly agreement within FPA ends. Indeed, as I have argued elsewhere, current approaches to foreign policy analysis are at least as diverse as the studies exemplified above, and this essentially for similar meta-theoretical reasons (Carlsnaes, 2002). These can be structured in terms of the following matrix, in which the horizontal dimension pertains to issues of epistemology in social theory (essentially along the lines of Max Weber’s celebrated distinction between *Erklären* and *Verstehen*), while the vertical dimension expresses the classical ontological choice between holistic and individualistic approaches to social science explanations:

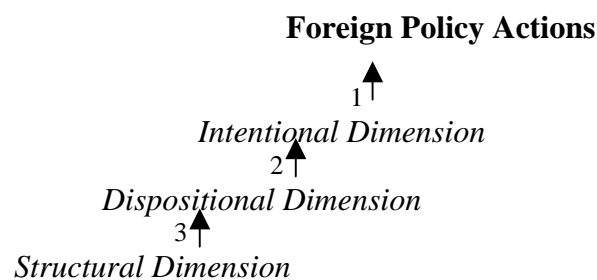
	Objectivism	Interpretativism
Holism	<i>Structural perspective</i>	<i>Social-institutional perspective</i>
Individualism	<i>Agency-based perspective</i>	<i>Interpretative actor perspective</i>

In an overview of current FPA we find, first of all, an array of *agency-based* approaches to the study of foreign policy actions, focusing either on the role of individuals and groups in the foreign policy process or on the cognitive and psychological characteristics of decision-makers. So-called bureaucratic politics and liberal approaches can also be said to belong to this category. A second major group of current analytical frameworks is premised on a *structural* rather than agency-based perspective in the analysis of state behaviour. Various forms – old and new – of realism are to be found here, as well as neoliberal institutionalism, which in many respects is simply a benign version of the former. A third category of approaches, which have become increasingly prominent during the past decade and half, are premised on a *social-institutional* perspective, and here we can distinguish between a social constructivist and a more discursive strand. Finally, there is also what can be called an *interpretative actor* perspective within FPA, a more traditional mode of analysis essentially based on the reconstruction of the reasoning of individual or group decision-makers.

In view of this rich flora of alternative approaches to FPA, there is arguably little help for EFP to be had here. Two options seem to confront us: either to accept this state of affairs, both in FPA and in EFP, and to go whichever route suits our predilections best; or to opt for some form of synthetic approach which would do the trick by providing an integrative framework for -- at best -- both sub-fields. The former is by far the easier choice, whereas the latter requires a bridge-building effort in a terrain that would seem to have no natural location points to support such an overarching construction. This does not mean that such attempts have not been made.

My own view is that a synthetic framework for analysing foreign policy is indeed feasible, but that it as to be on a level of abstraction that does not substantively

prejudge explanation in favour of any particular type or combination of empirical factors. Since I have elaborated on it elsewhere, I will here simply give a skeletal outline of the explanatory logic of such a suggested synthetic framework of analysis (Carlsnaes, 2002). The starting point is the claim that while the meta-theoretical matrix used above is specifically designed for the purpose of classifying approaches to foreign policy analysis in terms of their most fundamental ontological and epistemological presuppositions, it is less suitable for empirical analysis itself as distinguished from meta-theoretical dissection. At the same time foreign policy action in ‘real life’ is arguably always a combination of purposive behaviour, cognitive-psychological factors in play and the various structural phenomena characterising societies and their environments; hence explanations of actual foreign policy actions must be able to give accounts that do not by definition exclude or privilege any of these types of explanans. Insofar as the matrix used above does have such exclusionary implications, it simply will not be able to deliver the goods in this respect. Thus, rather than thinking in terms of a logic of mutual exclusion, I suggest that we instead conceptualise such a synthetic analytic framework in terms of a tripartite approach to foreign policy actions (the explanandum) consisting respectively of an intentional, a dispositional and a structural dimension of explanation (the explanans), as follows:



Although conceptualised as analytically autonomous, these three dimensions should be viewed as closely linked in the sense that they can be conjoined in a logical, step-by-step manner to render increasingly exhaustive (or ‘deeper’) explanations of foreign policy actions.

This means, first of all, that a teleological explanation (arrow 1) in terms solely of the intentional dimension is fully feasible, based either on strict rationality assumptions or

on more traditional modes of intentional analysis. It also means, however, that one can choose to 'deepen' the analysis by providing a causal determination (arrow 2) of policy -- as opposed to an explanation wholly in terms of given goals and preferences -- in which the factors characterising the intentional dimension are themselves explained in terms of underlying psychological-cognitive factors which have, so to speak, disposed a given actor to have this and not that preference or intention. Finally, the third -- and deepest -- layer is based on the assumption that in so far as intentional behaviour is never pursued outside the crucible of structural determination, factors of the latter kind must always figure prominently and causally (arrow 3) in our accounts of the former. As conceived here, this link between structure and agency can be conceived as both of a constraining and of an enabling kind, causally affecting policy actions via its effects on the dispositional characteristics of the agents of policy.

Although this type of an integrative framework eschews the dichotomization of approaches discussed above, it does not as such imply the inapplicability of any of these. Indeed, approaches from all the four types of rock-bottom perspectives discussed above can be fully utilised: the 'structural' and 'social-institutional' when analysing causal links between the structural and dispositional dimensions; 'agency-based' perspectives when tracing causal patterns between the dispositional and the intentional dimension; and the 'interpretative actor' perspective when the purpose is to penetrate the teleological links between intentions and foreign policy actions.

Transferring this framework to the analysis of European foreign policy would in my view entail the following. Whenever trying to explain such policy, we should first of all specify it qua explanandum in the form of an explicit European undertaking in an issue-area or with regard to specific geographical area -- in both instances beyond its borders. The EU and its member states have clearly engaged in many such undertakings over the years, and in this regard this behaviour is no different from that of a single state pursuing foreign policy actions.

Secondly, such actions can be analysed in terms of various levels of explanatory ambition, but whatever the ambition, the starting point must be a specification of the intention(s) behind the undertaking in question. This is not a causal issue, but one of

teleology: what the action in question is intended to achieve. The reason why such a determination always needs to be made as a first step is that by definition one cannot describe purposive actions without invoking the reason(s) for them. This, too, is no different from the analysis of the foreign policies of states, since in neither case need such purposive behaviour be defined with reference to any particular type of institutional boundaries. Thirdly, issues of causality enter the picture the moment one wants to determine why certain purposes, goals, preferences or choices have been invoked, but not others. In seeking for these essentially dispositional factors there is, once again, in principle no difference between the analysis of foreign policies pursued by individual states and foreign policies pursued by states in consort in some form or other (as in EFP). Dispositions in this sense are not bound by any particular boundaries or institutional structures, since they pertain to the characteristics of single or joint decision-makers, be their roles national, international or transnational. Finally, structural factors as constraining and enabling characteristics determining to various degrees the dispositions of such decision-makers, and by extension their purposive behaviour in the form of policies, do not come pre-packaged in either nationally or internationally coloured boxes. Some such factors are essentially of a domestic nature, others not; but most often their causal effects are felt equally across the various boundaries defining international societies and their interactions. Here, as in the case of the two other dimensions discussed above, the issue of finding and characterising the appropriate causal factor is empirical, not one of definition. It is in this sense that the levels of analysis issue -- whether we are dealing with national, transnational or international actors or factors -- does not predetermine the type of analysis that can be pursued.

Concluding remarks

The argument above has been that the growth of EFP as a burgeoning field of analysis is characterised by a situation in which its major contemporary practitioners are pulling in different directions as a result of fundamentally different approaches to their subject matter. This applies both to their conceptualisation of 'European foreign policy' qua explanandum and the types of explanatory analysis contained in these studies. Although this condition can be celebrated for producing a rich and variegated

spectrum of studies, it can also be lamented for undermining the possibility of producing a cumulative body of knowledge. Insofar as EFP is a new field of study, but one with close and natural affinities with FPA as a major and long-standing body of research, the question was then raised whether inspiration for alleviating this problem could possibly be provided by current developments within the latter. However, it was then argued that the very same problem was to be found also in contemporary studies of foreign policy in general, but that at least some attempts can be found within the field to bridge the existing divisions. One such suggestion was then discussed in some detail -- my own stab at bridge-building -- and this leaves us with the question whether and, in particular, how this suggestion could be applied to EFP. My concluding comments above are intended to suggest both an affirmative answer to the first question, as well as -- in response to the second -- a skeletal outline of how this can be achieved.

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