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**EXPLAINING THE EMERGENCE OF THE ESDP:  
SETTING THE RESEARCH AGENDA**

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## 1. Introduction

The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) has received a lot of attention since its initiation in 1999. The jury is still out in judging how fundamentally the ESDP will transform the European security landscape. With its operations in Macedonia, Congo and Bosnia launched in 2003-4, it can no longer be dubbed as ‘a policy without substance’ (Shepherd 2003) or as a ‘paper army whose battlefield is a desktop in Brussels’ (Wilkie 2002). By contrast, the ESDP – whether it succeeds in the long run or not – has been one of the most remarkable trends shaping both European security architecture and the European integration process during the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 2000, the newly inaugurated High Representative of EU Foreign Policy, Javier Solana (2000a), asserted that matters related to European defence were developing at the ‘speed of light’ compared to normal EU practice. Despite the stalemate in European integration that was caused by the rejection of the European Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands, the ESDP can be seen as progressing into one of the most dynamic areas in European integration.

One would have expected burgeoning scholarly literature explaining this big historical change in European security matters, but such a body of theoretically informed work has not been forthcoming (Mayer 2004). The road from St. Malo via Cologne, Helsinki, Nice and Laeken to Skopje and Bunya is well-known (Salmon & Shepherd 2003; Gnesotto 2004), but neither specialists in security issues nor those of European integration have been able to put forth a thorough research agenda concerning the ESDP. The little theoretical work that exists on European defence either pre-dates the emergence of the ESDP (van Staden 1994; Forster 1997; Larsen 1998) or does not attempt to contribute to explanatory theorising. There are some notable exceptions, provided mainly by American scholars who explain the emergence of the ESDP from a predominantly realist perspective (Posen 2006; Jones 2004, 2007).

Several scholars have noticed this theoretical vacuum, but research has barely progressed beyond this basic observation. In this article, I will discuss the present state of ESDP

literature in the context of studies on European integration in general and on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in particular and lay out some reasons for the weaknesses in this field. I will then deal with the nature of social science research and explore potential theories of the ESDP. Finally, I will discuss three explanations for the emergence of the ESDP and look at different ways that these theories can be tested. Although the empirical part of this paper remains sketchy, I will tentatively conclude that the need to manage new kinds of security problems best explains the emergence of the ESDP at the end of the 1990s. Yet, this explanation needs to be sustained by explanations that refer to the wish to complete the process of European integration and balance the power of the US.

## 2. Lack of theory and some reasons behind it

The need to link International Relations theory and European integration studies has been recognized by a number of scholars (Kelstrup – Williams 2000; Chrysochoou 2001; Pollack 2001; Rosamund 2002; Diez – Wiener 2003). Yet, the ESDP remains poorly theorized. The research that exists is mostly diplomatic history based on journalistic accounts of the key events, citing official documents about institutional developments and anecdotal, politically loaded or otherwise speculative evidence about motivational factors. There has been very little attempt to frame the ESDP within a broader historical context and examine whether those factors that help to understand the emergence of ESDP could also explain other comparable phenomena. Within the contemporary literature on the ESDP, the main debate has revolved around the need for and success of the ESDP rather than questioning why the ESDP has already come this far. In short, research on the ESDP has been theoretically weak and empirically superficial. It has been neither systematic nor cumulative, and has suffered from presentism and the lack of a focused debate (cf. Gabel et al. 2002).

One possible reason for this could simply be the time-lag between events and scholarly reflection. Considering the cycle of academic publishing, it may take several years before completed research is in print. Yet, when more than five years have passed and the deficit

has not been corrected, we must critically look at the nature of security studies and EU integration research communities.

In the policy-oriented research community, these shortfalls are understandable given that the interest in knowledge acquisition has been technical and related to problem-solving rather than understanding. Much of this literature aims at describing the achievements within the ESDP, convincing the audience about the benefits or warning about the risks of the project, addressing various organizational and institutional issues, discussing possible divisions of labour with other organizations, assessing its credibility and predicting its future. There is nothing inherently 'wrong' with this literature because there is a public need for such a debate in which scholars should also participate. The problem is that there has been a lack of self-reflective, critical and academically oriented literature for too long. For the most part, it has been too detached from the policy-oriented community, addressing the issues in far too abstract terms and relying on thin rather than thick description.

Yet, the policy-oriented community should be reminded that theoretical reflection is not irrelevant for the purposes of its research agenda. First, without being able to comprehend the reasons behind the launch of the ESDP, it is difficult to be clear about where it should lead. Secondly, scholars have often been late in analysing the twists and turns in defence integration. Indeed, the community of integration researchers can be accused of failing to anticipate the emergence of the ESDP in the same way that strategists failed to see the end of the Cold War, Sovietologists the collapse of the Soviet Union, or Middle East scholars the attacks of 9/11 and the rise of Islamist extremism. The feasibility of forecasting and whether it should be expected of scholars is another question, but repeated false predictions indicate that the underlying analysis has been misguided.

Just a few years ago, most analysts did not believe in progress within the ESDP. For example, Peter van Ham (1995: 170) argued in the mid-1990s that: 'there are only a few reasons to be optimistic that either the EU's CFSP or the WEU can make a significant contribution to solving conflicts and crises in Europe or beyond. This has both to do with

the absence of political will and decision-making mechanisms to make effective use of the available military assets as well as limited military power which West European states are able to deploy'. For Lawrence Freedman and Anand Menon (1997), there was 'every reason to suspect that [West European nations] will continue to prefer NATO over the EU.' In Philip Gordon's view (1998), 'the end of the Cold War, the widening of the Union, the continued differences in EU members' strategic culture, ambitions, values and historical relationships, and the lack... of European identity... means that EU foreign policy cooperation will remain limited, fragmented and intergovernmentalist in nature.' Emil Kirchner (1999), in turn, contended that progress would be less likely given NATO's success in Bosnia. Dimitris N. Chrysoschoou et al. (1999) concluded that 'the outcome of the [1997] IGC shows that Europe will not manage to develop an independent capability within the Union [in the security realms].' Certainly, skeptics would still agree with some of these claims, but the problem is that this pessimistic mood prevailed because of presentism (i.e. projecting the trends of the moment into the future) and not because of systematic investigation into those factors that accounted for the lack of defence cooperation.

Indeed, very few scholars have tried to explain the lack of progress within the CFSP in a more systematic way. Jan Zielonka (1998), who perhaps wrote the most nuanced analysis of its paralysis, differentiated between five explanations: the old-type power game among major European powers, a natural divergence of national interests, the strategic confusion caused by the end of the Cold War, the structural crisis of modern European democracies and the weakness of European institutions. He found all the explanations justified to some degree, but concluded that the paralysis was primarily caused by democracy and identity problems.

All scholars working in the field of European foreign and security policy have been familiar with the 'capabilities – expectations gap' (Hill 1993). Yet, it was never clear whether the real problem of the CFSP could be attributed more to the expectation side rather than to the capabilities side. In fact, many scholars actively created higher expectations. The policy-oriented research community tended to think that European

integration, including defence integration, is desirable, without giving specific reasons for these sentiments. As Andrew Moravcsik (2003) has aptly pointed out, most scholars, commentators and practitioners of EU politics have had a reflexive tendency to favour deeper European integration, often with little regard to whether it has a strong practical justification in any specific case.

Paradoxically, however, the most straightforward scenarios about the rise of the European Union as an international actor have often been put forth by those who have been critical of forming a militarised Union. Perhaps the earliest and most widely read prediction stemmed from Johan Galtung (1973), whose book can be read as a counter-thesis to the much more benign interpretation of the EU as a civilian power provided by Francois Duchêne (1972). Galtung forecasted that at the turn of the millennium, the European Community would be a superpower and have an equal status with the United States; it would have a centralized military leadership and capabilities to conduct autonomous military operations without the US. Of course, Galtung did not foresee all aspects of change. He believed that the Cold War would continue and therefore both the neutral as well as the Eastern European countries would remain outside of the European Community. Although Galtung mentioned both integration dynamics and crises as catalysts of this evolution, his analysis was more fundamentally based on a projection of the power-seeking interests of the former colonial Western European states that would lead to a military build up in order to reverse the clock and make the world Eurocentric again.

Hedley Bull (1982) also reacted to Duchêne's thesis about Europe as a civilian power. In Bull's view, the question of whether the European Community would remain a civilian power was theoretical, because its power was conditioned by the military power of states. Nevertheless, Bull advocated that the Western European states should work together and acquire a greater element of self-sufficiency in defence for three reasons. First, there was a serious divergence of interests between the Western European countries and the United States. Secondly, Bull expected that the Soviet threat would endure. Third, the Western European countries that were economically rich but militarily dependent would need to

enhance their defence capabilities for reasons of self-respect. While the Soviet threat has proven to be less enduring than Bull believed, the first and the third reasons seem anything but outdated from today's perspective. For Bull, the key actors in Europe were the states, but the European Community would be the one to cement an alliance of European states. Bull did not predict that a militarily more self-sufficient Europe would emerge as he identified several obstacles to it, but he did see it as a possible and desirable alternative in the future.

Recently, many more sympathetic accounts of the EU's rise as a military actor in international politics have been produced. For example, Charles Kupchan (2003: 151) has argued that the EU is developing into a peer competitor of the United States. He notes that a new discourse is emerging to portray integration as a way to acquire power and project the geopolitical ambitions of Europe as a whole. He is less explicit about why this is happening, but points to the tendency for integration to accelerate. In general, such accounts often regard the emergence of the ESDP as some kind of natural outcome of contemporary trends without providing any systematic study of the mechanisms that explain the process of European defence integration.

The inadequate level of analysis on the emergence of the ESDP is similarly noticeable on the more theoretical side of the academic community. Knud Erik Jørgensen (1997, 214) has deplored the absence of well-established theoretical schools within the field of crisis management. Even if a number of theories exist, we lack theories of EU governance that are true rivals. This is particularly true for the ESDP (Peterson 2001). Part of the problem is that the militarization of the EU represents an anomaly for the major integration theories. As they were developed in an era when the EU did not possess any military dimension, they accounted for the fact that defence was not part of European integration (Ojanen 2006a; 2006b). Understandably, these classic integration theories now face difficulties in light of the emergence of the Union's military dimension, but it is not impossible to find ways of adjusting them to the changed circumstances.

Realists cannot easily explain how major European powers would give up their sovereignty in military matters or be able to act in a coherent way through the EU (Collard-Wexler 2006). Kenneth Waltz (1993) and John Mearsheimer (1990) explicitly predicted that the EU would be rather insignificant in world politics and a more likely outcome of balancing tendencies in Europe would be a coalition of states around Germany. Barry Posen (2004, 2006) has nevertheless explained the emergence of the ESDP through a structural-realist lenses, interpreting it as a weak form of balance of power behaviour. However, he adds some other factors to his explanation, such as European identity, which are not easy to derive from the structural-realist standpoint. Other realists do not reject the balance of power theory, but regard it as irrational in the present-day unipolar order. These theorists dismiss the idea that EU defence integration might be considered a sign of balancing behaviour and rather see it as a reaction to the decreased presence of the United States in Europe and its reduced willingness to solve Balkan-style problems for its European allies (Brooks – Wohlforth 2005, 91).

By contrast, the proponents of the most famous theory of European integration, neo-functionalism, did not originally foresee integration extending to military matters, but rather believed that the EU would remain a civilian actor. In the view of Ernst Haas, the spill-over effect that otherwise fostered integration in the area of low politics would not create pressure for defence integration. For some people the spill-over of integration from one field to another was based on economic determinism while others put more stress changes in the attitudes of key decision-makers and interest groups (Haas 1997 [1958]; Schmitter 2005). Indeed, the neofunctionalist theory has remained underspecified.

In fact, it is possible to discern different logics of spill-over on the basis of the neofunctionalist writings and theorising (Tranholm-Mikkelsen 1991; Niemann 2006). Functional spill-over refers to a situation where the original goal can be assured only by taking further actions: for example the common currency would collapse without common defence. This type of spill-over is the most automatic and depends on the interrelatedness of issue-areas. Exogeneous spill-over emphasizes the role of external events and third parties as causal factors for example when outsiders start insisting that

the regional unit should shoulder responsibilities in the field of security and defence (Haas 1997: lii). Political spill-over takes place when national elites shift their expectations through a gradual learning process as various interest groups realise the benefits of further integration. Social spill-over, in turn, means socialisation amongst national civil servants. For example, the national representatives in various intergovernmental institutions such as COREPER (Permanent Representatives Committee) or COPS (Political and Security Committee) develop loyalties and connections amongst each other and are no longer pure representatives of national governments sent off from the capital. In other words, the absence of supranational institutions does not impede certain informal 'Brusselisation' of the CFSP which may in turn pave way to further integration. Finally, cultivated spill-over points to the role of the community institutions and functionaries in decision-making. Commission representatives can influence the integration process both as initiators, providers of ideas and information as well as brokers potentially even in the field of security and defence. Hence, as the neofunctionalist theory does not offer one single explanation of how integration proceeds. We also lack explicit attempts to apply these neofunctionalist insights into European defence.

The neofunctionalist theory has been challenged most explicitly by Andrew Moravcsik's (2000) theory of liberal intergovernmentalism. As such, Moravcsik's theoretical scheme is not directly applicable to defence integration because it focuses on great bargains, but the decision to launch the ESDP could be seen as a kind of great bargain. Yet, its emphasis on economic interests has *prima facie* less currency when explaining defence cooperation. By contrast, Moravcsik's understanding of states as driving forces of European integration is not controversial in the field of security and defence.

As all traditional theories and especially realism have been under attack by constructivists and other critical approaches for failing to explain crucial phenomena in international politics, there is a potential promise that these latter theories could offer a more solid theoretical background also for explaining the emergence of the ESDP. Steve Smith (2000, 51), for example, has argued that 'reflective and constructivist approaches offer a

much richer set of accounts about European integration than do rationalist theories.’ Yet, constructivism has often been accused of being too vague to produce testable theories. The most well-known critique stems from Moravcsik (1999) but others, such as Sjursen (2001, 204), have also noted that most of the ‘reflectivist’ literature is not explicit in identifying the driving forces in the political process. Thomas Diez and Antje Wiener (2003, see also Risse 2004, 160) have defended constructivism against such criticism by arguing that it should be seen as a meta-theory that does not make any substantive claims about European integration. Yet, they suggest that social constructivist theories should be tested against other middle-range theories acknowledging that these approaches are not currently in a position to make such unsubstantiated claims. According to Jeffrey Checkel (2001), this is because constructivist literature has been more method-driven than problem-driven. In Smith’s article and many other constructivist works (Walters 2002), one can also detect a general distaste of causal explanation and an emphasis on ‘how’ questions. In any case, the theoretical challenge posed by constructivism remains underspecified, albeit some variants of neofunctionalism can be seen on a par with constructivism. In general, however, the constructivist branch of literature has been able to analyse many aspects of the European integration and its foreign policy, but thus far it has not generated a clear explanatory account of the ESDP (e.g. Keane 2005).

In sum, no major theoretical approach in the study of IR offers a coherent and clear perspective from which to approach the European security and defence policy. Realists, liberals and constructivists seem to disagree amongst themselves or have not tried to apply their respective theories to explain the emergence of the ESDP. We could therefore start from the other end and look at the set of explanations that are commonly referred to when explaining the emergence of the ESDP. These explanations can be linked to these broader theories although they are seldom deduced from them.

### 3. Three (+ n) explanations and their general plausibility

What kind of a theory might best explain the emergence of the ESDP? What seems to be widely acknowledged is that there is no single theory capable of explaining all aspects of

European integration. Ian Manners (2003, 67) notes that ‘any all-encompassing narrative or meta-narrative about contemporary Europe is undoubtedly liable to be totalizing, universalizing, over-determining and undifferentiating.’ Indeed, there seems to be many competing narratives and explanations to European integration. Such narratives can surely coexist and work simultaneously as part of the causal complex. As François Heisbourg (2000) argues, European integration often proceeds when there is ‘constructive ambiguity’ about the aims and nature of the project. Although theories are not necessarily mutually exclusive, some theories may still explain some aspects better than other theories. In trying to compare various explanations of the emergence of the ESDP, we should develop propositions that link theoretically plausible statements to the actor’s own understanding of the reasons for their behaviour and behavioural outcomes.

The research literature on the development of the ESDP as well as the surrounding political discourse usually refers to three common explanations to the emergence of the ESDP. These three explanations are: the natural expansion of the integration process, the EU’s rivalry the United States, and the practical needs of crisis management in a changed security environment (see Strömviik 2005). These three explanations can be translated into counter-factual thought experiments. In the first case, the ESDP would not have developed without several stages of previous integration. In the second case, the ESDP would not have developed without the hegemonic position and diverging interests or values between the United States. In the third case, the ESDP had not emerged without new kinds of post-Cold War crises, primarily in the Balkans. All these three explanations can also be seen as grand narratives of European integration. The first narrative views European integration as a peace project aimed at preventing the recurrence of another European civil war. The second is a new heroic narrative of the European Union as defending and saving Western values from their misrepresentation and abuse by the United States. The third narrative sees the EU as a project to manage globalisation.

Any scholar or practitioner who follows European affairs should be familiar with these basic accounts. However, these explanations have not been systematically developed and tested and therefore we do not know to what extent they truly explain European defence

cooperation. The easiest solution is to contend that all of them have played some role in the establishment of the ESDP in combination with other factors. However, this answer is unsatisfactory even if we agreed that the theories are not mutually exclusive. Therefore, we must examine the explanations in greater detail and document the causal mechanisms that they presuppose.

The first explanation about the emergence of the ESDP is based on the idea of completing the process of integration. This account can mix both federalist top-down as well as neo-functionalist bottom-up processes. The former refers to the idea shared by key decision-makers to build Europe as a superpower, or at least as a new kind of entity that represents national sovereignty and defence cooperation. The latter follows the neo-functionalist spill-over logic that explains the emergence of defence cooperation through the logical expansion of integration from economic and political fields to security and defence. It has been commonplace to argue that common currency necessitates common defence but few people have spelled out what the causal connection really is or demonstrated that the EMU really contributed to the emergence of the ESDP (see e.g. Medley 1999). In academic literature, a general variant of this explanation has been echoed by Amitai Etzioni (2001), who argues that halfway integration cannot be sustained and the EU will either have to move to a high level of supranationality in political matters or fall back to a lower level. Stephanie Anderson and Thomas Seitz (2006, 37) stress the role of the ESDP for European identity building: ‘the Europeans will continue to pursue an ESDP because it is central to the European project’.

The second explanation stems from the belief that the ESDP represents an attempt to balance US power in world politics. The relevant point here is not about the ability of the EU to match the US with any degree of military parity but to be able to achieve more autonomy and independence vis-à-vis the United States. In other words, the emergence of the ESDP is based on the view that European defence cooperation is not merely motivated by integration itself, but in a crucial way by some sort of rivalry with the United States. Among others this is the view uttered by Margaret Thatcher (2002: 357) who argued that ‘the French and those who think like them have been so insistent on

achieving an autonomous European defence capability precisely because they see it as constituting a vital attribute of a new European superpower which will rival the United States.’ Theoretically, this understanding is rendered plausible through realist theory that views common threat as the classic reason for defence cooperation between any states. Looking at the historical development of the CFSP, Maria Strömvik (2005) has concluded that ‘the political will to cooperate has periodically increased when EU members have disagreed with American strategies on international security management’ (see also Smith 2005).

The prospect of a military conflict with the United States is not necessary to explain the emergence of the ESDP as a response to the US hegemony. Although the EU would not fear any direct military threat from the United States, the EU’s inability to act militarily makes it heavily dependent on US support. Thus, it is a question about a ‘balance of power’ or ‘balance of influence’ (Strömvik 2005) rather than a security threat. The most benevolent variant of this explanation would underline the EU’s wish to cooperate more closely with the US through the ESDP rather than oppose it or act separately, but such an interpretation would beg the question as to why the NATO framework is not sufficient. Historically, it is thus logical that the emergence of the ESDP coincides with the ‘unipolar moment’ after the demise of the Soviet Union. In particular, the Kosovo crisis demonstrated the existence of a technology and performance gap between the US and the EU. For many Europeans this meant that Europe could not pursue its own policy regarding the resolution of the crisis: Europeans were bound to accept the air campaign against Beograd and other strategic targets instead of waging ground war in Kosovo. Furthermore, because this dependence on the US also affects political and trade relations, the EU needs a viable security and defence policy of its own. As Posen (2006, 159) has argued, ‘if Europeans wish to influence the management of global security affairs, they need to be able to show up globally with capabilities, including military capabilities, that matter to local outcomes.’

The third explanation, the practical need for crisis management refers to the emergence of new threats (mainly in the Balkans) and the difficulties in addressing these threats

without a pooling of national resources. This explanation can be connected to the functionalist theory of international relations in the sense that the emphasis is less on the European integration per se but integration is the means to respond to common problems in a situation where state sovereignty is eroding. For example, Adrian Treacher (2004) has argued that the key determinant for the emergence of the ESDP was the transformation of the international system at the end of the Cold War. In his view, the creation of the ESDP was largely attributable to various exogenous shocks. Had it not been for these exogenous shocks, the EU may have been able to remain in its role as a pure civilian power. In Treacher's view, the impulse does not come from the integration process itself, but from the nature of security challenges.

The role of the Balkan conflict and the failure of the EU to act in the 'hour of Europe' after the end of the Cold War, are central in this explanatory account. Nevertheless, the link from a policy failure to policy change is never straightforward, because lessons drawn from an event are ambiguous and require interpretation. Therefore, political implications of a crisis are almost always contested. For example Karin E. Smith (2000) points out that the contributions of a civilian EU to international relations have been discounted. Similarly, Jan Zielonka (1998, 229) argues that 'one should avoid the impression that managing local violent conflicts is the prime CFSP objective, that military means are always the most suitable for handling these conflicts, and that there is no other actor but the Union to apply force in such violent conflicts.' Hence, in order to fully explain the development of the ESDP in respect to the need to manage crises in the areas surrounding the Union, one should also consider the process of how 'the knowledge was formed' or how the 'discourse changed' that resulted in the discounting of the idea that the EU should remain a civilian power.

In addition to these three explanations, there are a number of other possible accounts of why the ESDP emerged when it did. A possible fourth account relates the ESDP to changes in the UK policy under Tony Blair. Indeed, the change in UK policy has often been seen as an important factor explaining the emergence of the ESDP (Roper 2000). The ESDP did not emerge at the Amsterdam Summit in 1997 when the UK opposed it.

However, in 1998 Blair changed his position toward European defence cooperation and the ESDP emerged thereafter. Simultaneously, the formerly neutral states (such as Sweden and Finland) that had been sceptical about the EU's militarization followed Blair's lead and started to support the ESDP. Yet, the real issue in this context is not whether Blair or other former sceptics changed their policies, but rather we must understand why these changes occurred. If the reasons for policy change can be reduced to the factors mentioned above, this explanation would be redundant. If Blair changed the policy because he wanted the UK to bear more influence in European affairs, then the explanatory factors would be more on the national than on the European level. This explanation would form the basis for a fourth narrative concerning old European power politics and competition between nation-states recast in new circumstances.

Finally, yet another account has been offered by Seth Jones (2003) who argues that the ESDP was caused 'by a desire to enmesh Germany in an international security institution and to prevent future security competition among European powers.' In other words, the declining presence of American forces created the impetus for strengthened European security cooperation because Germany needs to be held in check. Thus, the emergence of the ESDP reflects the need to further bind Germany to the European structures. Jones' (2003) account would lead us to expect that the European states are concerned about Germany's power. However, France and Britain who initiated European defence cooperation have constantly encouraged Germany to spend more, rather than less, on its military and to assume more responsibility in military operations. It is also difficult to understand why NATO and a civilian EU would not be enough of a defence force as they have worked in the past. Even though the United States is retreating from Europe, it would have been more logical to Europeanise NATO rather than to militarise the EU.

Even with these additional explanations, the list is not exhaustive. There are always other possible alternatives to explain the ESDP, to be found for example in domestic politics and leadership personalities. Nevertheless, in order to determine the significance of various factors, we need to look for empirical evidence. More importantly, we need to be

explicit about what kind of empirical evidence would support these different explanations.

As noted before, few researchers have attempted to develop a rigid theory about the European integration process and test it with systematic empirical observations. Methodologically, our understanding of defence cooperation would benefit from following Moravcsik's (2004) effort to advance theory through explicit hypotheses, disaggregated cases and empirical evidence, despite Moravcsik's own partial failure to adhere to these rules (Lieshaut et al. 2004).

#### 4. Empirical Evidence

Moravcsik (2000) is very critical of research that makes sweeping conclusions on the basis of 'soft' sources, such as public statements, memoirs or secondary literature. He prioritizes 'hard' primary sources, especially in dealing with questions of motivation. It is difficult to follow Moravcsik's advice when doing research on the ESDP because access to archives from the recent past is restricted. Still, it would be foolish not to conduct empirical research at all or to think that all 'soft' sources are equally trivial or misleading. Hence, we should try to do empirical research on contemporary phenomena, although the limitations of available sources must be acknowledged and later corrections accepted.

Of course, empirical evidence is not limited to archival documents. Apart from the general theoretical plausibility that is based on the performance of the theories in other comparable contexts, we can look at the actors' actual behaviour as well as public statements about their motivational factors and the surrounding political discourse (Hadenius 1983). Of course, prevalence and circumstances affect statements about motivation. A public document such as the European Security Strategy may well conceal some hidden motives, but unless these hidden motives are detectable through other sources or proven through behaviour, they will remain speculative. By contrast, any

hypothesis about motivation becomes stronger if it is supported by all three factors: theory, behaviour and statements about motives.

Let us first look at the explanation according to which the ESDP is a consequence of European integration or a consequence of attempts to complete the process of European integration. If the neofunctionalist spill-over theory were correct, we would expect European institutions such as the European Commission play a major role in initiating and advocating the establishment of European defence. Yet, the role of the European commission has been limited despite a positive attitude towards European defence. For example, Jacques Delors (1991), President of the Commission, started from the assumption that a separate European defence was not a realistic alternative for a long time to come. Jacques Santer, Delors' successor, also advocated that the European Union should play a major political role in the international environment and expected that the EMU would create more unity in foreign affairs, but he or the commission was not behind the initiative that led to the launch of the ESDP in Cologne 1999. Javier Solana as the High Representative of the CFSP and Secretary-General of the Council was the key figure in compiling the European Security Strategy, but only after it was tasked by the governments of the Member States. Most importantly, the limited role of the European institutions is seen in the fact that the initiative of a European defence dimension originated in a bilateral French-British meeting at St. Malo in 1998 outside the EU framework.

In a more federalist version of this explanation we would expect an outcome where supranational defence institutions would reflect the symbolic unity of the EU, even if the initial process would have been driven by member states. European defence integration has remained strictly inter-governmentalist as the outcome of the ESDP so far has avoided the establishment of supranational institutions. There has been no top-down harmonization in military matters. The unanimity clause in decision-making over defence matters has not been abandoned and national armies have been preserved. After Maastricht Treaty negotiations, there has been no explicit focus on creating supranational structures or a common Euro-Army that was at the core of the French-German proposal

(Mazzucelli 1997: 141). Moreover, the UK has been at the forefront of the ESDP despite its more sceptical attitude towards European integration. This scepticism is highlighted by the UK resistance to join the Economic and Monetary Union. If integrationist logic were at the helm of defence cooperation, one would expect the founding members of the Union, not the UK, to be leading this process.

The view that the emergence of the ESDP can be seen as an act to achieve a balance of power with the United States in international politics is well supported by the rise of anti-American, or at least anti-Bush attitudes in Europe. In 2002, majority of Europeans criticised the Bush government for its handling of several foreign policy issues (Worldviews 2002, 2003). According to the same poll, 65% of Europeans, in particular the French but also a majority of the British, said the EU should become a superpower like the United States, while only 14% endorsed the view that the United States should remain the only superpower. Although such attitudes were not equally prevalent during the Clinton era when the key decisions about launching the ESDP were made, discourse about a rift in transatlantic relations was already emerging during that period.

Yet, when we look at the statements of the main actors of the ESDP, we detect little evidence that supports this balancing theory. Only people that have had a relatively marginal effect on the development of the ESDP, but may still reflect the general mood within the European elite, have voiced their wish to build up European defence because ‘America now believes it has the right to impose its will on the rest of the world when it decides’ (Santer 2003, 53). By contrast, the European Security Strategy (ESS) describes the partnership with the United States as irreplaceable (European Council 2003). Similarly, in view of Javier Solana (2006), ‘the US-European partnership represents the world's most important force for peace and security. The usefulness of that partnership remains beyond question and I am confident that it will continue to grow’. It is possible that all this talk that emphasises partnership with the U.S. only obscures the real motives of the European leaders, but it is remarkable how consistent they have been in avoiding anti-American rhetoric when discussing the ESDP.

In practice, a motivation to form a balance of power against the US should lead the EU to develop defence capabilities that would enhance the EU's independence from the US and undermine NATO. So far, the EU has not developed entirely autonomous defence structures but has avoided duplication of key resources. Through the Berlin+ agreement, the EU is relying on cooperation with NATO, though it has demonstrated its ability to act autonomously and use national headquarters in European operations. For example, the EU launched a mission in the (Democratic Republic of) Congo in 2003 without the support of NATO. Thus, there are signs of the EU's wish to be more autonomous, supporting Posen's (2006) argument about EU autonomy. However, these indicators remain ambivalent and suggestive so it is difficult to use them as significant evidence.

The argument for balancing behaviour to rival the US hardly makes sense in the case of the UK. The UK has actively supported the US-led war on terror and emphasised the importance of a solid transatlantic partnership. The Germans have represented a mixed case since they have effectively denied that the desire to rival the US exists, but have at times behaved in a manner that is compatible with the balancing theory. The French have often used the rhetoric of a multi-polar world and have supported autonomous European defence institutions. Concretely, the balancing theory may explain the Luxembourg meeting of these 'core European countries' in April 2003 and their proposal to establish European military headquarters, especially since the meeting coincided with the most heated debates with the US over policy on Iraq.

Motivation for transatlantic competition can be detected more readily in regards to defence industrial cooperation than in the initial decision to launch the ESDP (Mörth 2005; Jones 2006). For example, the construction of Airbus A400M aircrafts capable of strategic airlifting, instead of purchasing similar Boeing C-17s, demonstrates European support of its own defence industries over its American competitors. European companies have often merged because they would have otherwise lost markets to the American companies. These mergers have generally not been the result of a single European market since it does not exist in procurement policy. Also, the European decision to launch the Galileo navigation satellite project can be seen as an effort to directly compete with the

American GPS. Ulrika Mörth (2005, 153) concludes that ‘the driving force behind the activity on the issue of armaments has been the image that Europe is lagging behind the United States’. In her view the notion of a threat from the United States and the need to stand against it have been important in making binding agreements in the armaments cooperation.

The third explanation that relies on the practical needs of crisis management closely reflects the motive statements of leading ESDP representatives. The European Security Strategy (European Council 2003) is driven by this logic: ‘the end of the Cold War has not brought to an end the security threats and challenges for European countries. ...No single country is able to tackle today’s complex problems alone. ...The European Union should be ready to share in the responsibility for global security.’ Javier Solana (2000b) has often relied chiefly on the rationale that ‘experience has clearly demonstrated the need for the European Union to develop a more effective foreign and security policy. ...We must improve our performance in the field of security and crisis management.’

This explanation about practical needs also reflects the direction that the ESDP has taken in crisis management. The EU has launched operations in the Balkans and in the Congo, places in which the US or NATO have not been eager to get involved. The resources that the EU countries have been acquiring, such as the strategic airlift aircraft, are also primarily aimed at filling the gaps in the EU’s crisis management capability rather than for its territorial defence or for balancing the US.

The explanation based on the practical needs of managing new global and regional threats seems to be best supported by motive statements and the actual behaviour of the EU and its member states. Yet, it can hardly account for the change on its own. The suggestion that the EU should be more effective in international crisis management in its surrounding regions and global crises presupposes a stronger identity of the EU. In this sense, the previous stages in the integration can be seen as necessary for the militarization of the Union.

## 5. Conclusions

The purpose of this paper has been to critically review existing literature on the ESDP and to construct a research agenda for conducting explanatory studies on the ESDP. I have distinguished between three basic explanations behind the emergence of the ESDP. These explanations are the attempt to complete European integration, to balance the power of the US or to respond to the new types of crises in Europe's security environment. I have also rejected some explanations, such as the idea that the primary motivation behind the ESDP is to tie Germany. As it is not possible to lend support to only one explanation, it is important to see how these various explanations complement each other. The explanation that places emphasis on the need to manage new kinds of global security problems best explains the ESDP at the end of the 1990s, but it can hardly stand on its own. Previous stages of European integration can explain why the EU was seen as the actor that should manage these problems in the first place. With the establishment of the EMU there were expectations that the EU should develop a more visible role in the field of security and defence. Nevertheless, the explanation that was based on the wish or need to complete the integration process was more important in the initial stages of the ESDP in the early 1990s and gradually eroded with generational change and the enlargement of the EU. Furthermore, especially after the crisis in the transatlantic relations in 2002-03, the explanation that regards the ESDP as a means to strike a balance of power against the United States has become more forceful, but it has not yet replaced the more pragmatic grounding of the ESDP.

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