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## EU Polity and Foreign Policy

1) **Introduction:** Not classification – study of processes understand development of new/ unique polity

Classification approach: Analysts focus on EU achievements during the Cold War – overcoming German/French rivalry etc, role of institutions/ regimes in reshaping identities and interests of member states. EU first polity based on post-modern, post-national values etc.

This paper develops **2 critiques** of this approach, the first is rather easy and argues that ‘unique’ ‘post-modern’ foreign policy tells us little about the polity, the second is more difficult and, rather contradictorily, argues the opposite – that in fact the foreign policy of the EU does reveal the ‘unique’ nature the polity – I’d appreciate the help of people here whether it is a runner or not

2) Normative, post-modern approach of EU, tells us little about the polity: **EU’s military weakness and economic strength, not its polity, is reflected in its ‘post-modern’ foreign policy:**

i) Weakness, lack of military strength (product of Cold War reliance on US nuclear umbrella). Robert Kagan’s *Paradise and Power* (US from Mars/ EU from Venus) makes the key point – that **moral internationalism** easy if in a position of weakness – not responsible or accountable, can preach from sidelines (Blair excelled at this). Driven to call for multi-lateralism, rule of law, international institutionalism from position of **weakness – can be used as principles of ‘civilian power’**

ii) Despite military weakness, economic strength and **bordered by weak and dependent regions** of Central and Eastern Europe open to influence and intervention with little opposition. Unlike US has natural region to experiment with new forms of international regulation – asymmetry of power and draw of EU aid and membership – gives **appearance of openness, fuzzy borders etc** – constructivists sometimes go further and suggest that enlargement process negotiation between equals and indicates Habermasian communicative or dialogic approach. Robert Cooper's *Breaking of Nations* more direct in terms of '**voluntary empire**' – nation-building but not by coercion US style.

EU's identity shaped by its situation – weakness vis-à-vis the US and strength vis-à-vis Eastern Europe

### 3) EU's foreign policy is unique in reflection of its unique legitimacy crisis:

i) **Problem of EU legitimacy drives foreign policy** – not unique, today FP increasingly central in search for mission/ values in the West, EU member states as well as the US.

Debates about ethical/ moral foreign policy of liberal administrations or neo-cons in US – addressing political malaise – not in terms of populism, driven by CNN etc (constructivist approaches) – nor mask of realist interests (realist/left approach) – attempt by elites to secure own coherence (need sense of purpose, mission) – legitimacy at most basic instinctual level

ii) The EU's legitimacy crisis is a **double legitimacy crisis** – the legitimacy crisis of EU member states drives the EU process, the relentless moves to enhance EU decision-making processes at a domestic level is an attempt by governing elites to bypass electoral responsibility – this process then creates a legitimacy crisis as soon as the EU has to be justified politically (govt's can't say they are more comfortable with the EU bureaucrats than their own electorates) – while ruling elites instinctively appreciate the EU as a bolster to their legitimacy electorates have been largely indifferent

iii) The **essence of the EU** and its post-Cold War *raison d'être* is its function as a **laboratory in post-democratic legitimacy** – governance without government. Unlike representative politics of liberal democracy the EU privileges consensus over confrontation; management over political programmes and policy ends over political processes – this elitist assault on democracy and rejection of politics cannot be lauded domestically.

iv) The **guilty secret** of the EU's post-Cold War vitality and growing success however can be **celebrated – but only when it is projected internationally**. EU foreign policy is a projection of the essence of the EU's polity – it is a rejection of politics in the international sphere.

**Rather that *Realpolitik*** – the contestation and balance of interests – the EU argues for new forms of international governance, for the extension of law and constitutionality – for the rule of lawyers and bureaucrats rather than politicians – for institutions like the Badinter commission that ruled on the dissolution of Yugoslavia, or the International Criminal Court. For the EU any political problem can be addressed by taking the politics out of it and bringing in bureaucrats and administrators to impartially decide.

v) Where the essence of the EU – its post-democratic regulatory form – is most clearly projected is in Eastern Europe – through the **enlargement process** and in its role in nation-building in the **protectorates** of Bosnia and Kosovo.

From the vantage point of Brussels the problems of Eastern Europe could be solved if only they rejected politics and focused on constitutional issues, development of civil service and the rule of law – the extension of the **EU acquis** to every issue of government, thousands of pages of rules and regulations for candidate states and similar process under the Stabilisation and Association Process. Rather than government responding to electoral pressure, elites are forced to follow the agenda from Brussels and European civil servants are seconded to draw up the regulations, hollowing out the political process.

In the **protectorates** the process is even more obvious – Lord Paddy Ashdown the EU Special Representative for Bosnia and international High Representative with the power to impose legislation and dismiss obstructive politicians argues that the mistake made by his predecessors was relying too much on elections and democracy, the most important issue is the rule of law (imported from Brussels). The export of good governance can also be seen in trade and aid conditionality.

While the US during the Cold War saw itself as promoting democracy the EU **promotes bureaucracy**, it reproduces the death of politics and hollowing out of the political. EU foreign policy is the one area that the EU and its member governments are not on the defensive. It is easier to criticise the political sphere in other countries. Taking the moral highground the EU exports post-democratic politics to parts of the world which are too weak to resist.