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**The Accidental Strategist?
Military Power, Grand Strategy,
and the EU's Changing Global Role**

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The Accidental Strategist? Military Power, Grand Strategy and the EU's Changing Global Role

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Discussion Paper
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The European Union (EU) is one of the most unusual and widest-ranging political actors in the international system. With its growing range of capabilities, the EU is better equipped than ever before to raise its global political "actorness" to a level nearly equal to its global economic "actorness". Moreover, these changes in institutional competencies and resources have been increasingly accompanied by various degrees of strategic thinking and planning on the part of EU elites. Given the increasingly wide range of EU policy competencies, and the increasingly complex demands placed on the EU as a global actor from both internal and external sources, this paper attempts to frame these efforts through the conceptual lens of grand strategy. It does so by first arguing that the EU's efforts as a global actor can be interpreted in terms that conform to the three basic components of grand strategy: physical security, economic prosperity, and value projection. Second, the paper analyzes the content of the EU's grand strategic goals under each of these headings, at three levels of analysis: intra-EU, regional (or neighbourhood), and global. Finally, the paper analyzes the EU's implementation of its strategic goals at these three levels in light of two dimensions: whether the EU is a status quo or revisionist actor, and the extent to which its goals conform to those of other key global actors, particularly the U.S. The paper concludes by speculating on the future of the EU as a global actor in light of these considerations.

The European Union (EU) is one of the most unusual and widest-ranging political actors in the international system. Since the 1950s, this capacity has gradually expanded to encompass foreign policy initiatives towards nearly every corner of the globe, using a range of policy tools: diplomatic, economic, and now limited military operations. This capacity, however, was neither included in the original Treaty of Rome of 1957, nor was it expected by many knowledgeable observers of European integration. Ernst Haas explicitly excluded foreign and security policy from his neo-functional logic of regional integration,² which stresses "spillover" processes in socio-economic affairs, while Stanley Hoffmann argued that political cooperation in the EU would remain very difficult owing to entrenched concerns over national sovereignty.³ After the Cold War, when the EU continued to pursue its foreign policy cooperation, many observers made even more farfetched predictions about the future of Europe: Germany would be tempted to acquire nuclear weapons, the EU (and perhaps even NATO) would

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¹ This paper began as a presentation on the roundtable "Does the EU have a grand strategy and does it matter?" for the EU Studies Association (EUSA) conference, Montreal (May 2007). An earlier draft was presented at the ARENA Centre for European Studies (University of Oslo, October 2007). I am grateful to the other participants in these meetings for stimulating my thoughts on this topic.

² Ernst B. Haas, "International Integration: The European and the Universal Process," *International Organization* 15/3 (1961): 366-92.

³ Stanley Hoffmann, "The European Process at Atlantic Crosspurposes," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 3 (February 1965): 85-101; Stanley Hoffmann, "Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe," *Daedalus*, Vol. 95 (Summer 1966): 862-874; and Stanley Hoffmann, "Towards a Common European Foreign and Security Policy?" *Journal of Common Market Studies* 38/2 (2000): 189-198.

ultimately deteriorate, and the EU would never be able to make an independent contribution to problems of international security.⁴ In one of the more theoretically-informed examinations of EU foreign policy during this period, Philip Gordon argued that “The prospects for a unified and effective EU foreign and security policy are poor, and likely to remain so.” The EU was “not very unified or credible;” it was “poorly equipped” to deal with external crises; and it had a vastly underdeveloped military force projection capability. He concluded, not without reason at the time, that the “EU is likely to remain a fragmented and incomplete international actor, dependent on the United States for diplomatic leadership and military support.”⁵

Whether ignoring or merely underestimating the EU as a global political actor, these predictions have been confounded by the steady march of European integration. Contrary to the expectations of many realists, the EU has engaged in a continual process of institutional growth in the area of foreign policy, has produced regular foreign/security policy “outputs,” and has positively influenced various global problems. The EU’s own shift in terminology from “external relations” to “EU foreign/security policy” since the 1990s also speaks volumes about the change in the EU member states’ own understanding of, and preference for, the EU’s role in the world. Usage of the term “European foreign policy” (EFP), which is now becoming commonplace, denotes all of the global behaviors of the EU: the foreign economic policy and diplomacy of pillar one (the European Community or EC); the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) of pillar two, and the police cooperation and anti-crime/anti-terror activities of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) in pillar three.⁶

With this range of capabilities, the EU is better equipped than ever before to raise its global political “actorness” to a level nearly equal to its global economic “actorness”. Moreover, these changes in institutional competencies and resources have been increasingly accompanied by various degrees of strategic thinking and planning on the part of EU elites. The most prominent example is the 2003 European Security Strategy document,⁷ yet there is evidence of similar thinking across a range of EU treaties and foreign and security policy activities, including the Treaty of Lisbon (or Reform Treaty) of

⁴ John Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War,” in Sean M. Lynn-Jones (ed.), *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991); and Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Emerging Structure of International Politics,” *International Security* 18/2 (1993): 44-79. Other EU skeptics argued instead for the viability of NATO over the EU’s efforts; see Charles L. Glaser, “Why NATO is Still Best: Future Security Arrangements for Europe,” *International Security* 18/1 (1993): 5-50; and Robert J. Art, “Why Western Europe Needs the United States and NATO,” *Political Science Quarterly* 111/1 (1996): 1-39.

⁵ Philip H. Gordon, “Europe’s Uncommon Foreign Policy,” *International Security* 22/3 (1997-98): 75-76. Others, such as Robert Kagan, have written even bolder polemics critical of the EU’s ambitions; see Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America vs. Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Knopf, 2003).

⁶ Under the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon (or Reform Treaty) the ESDP is now referred to as the “Common Security and Defense Policy.” As the Treaty has not yet entered into effect I will use “ESDP” in this paper.

⁷ Javier Solana, *A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy*, adopted by the European Council, Brussels, December 2003, and reprinted by the EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris.

December 2007 and the new European Neighborhood Policy (ENP).⁸ Given the increasingly wide range of EU policy competencies, and the increasingly complex demands placed on the EU as a global actor from both internal and external sources, it is time to take a closer, and more critical, look at the EU's explanation of its own global efforts – its strategies – to better understand its prospects and limits as a source of regional, if not global, stability and prosperity.

More specifically, this paper attempts to frame these efforts in terms of *grand strategy*. Although grand strategy is most often associated with statecraft and national security policy, in this paper I make three related claims. First, that grand strategy is not limited to states and that the EU's efforts to justify its place in the world can therefore be understood in terms of grand strategic thinking. Second, that while much of the actual content of EU grand strategy (as I define the term below) is not especially novel, there are some elements of innovative, even bold, thinking about Europe's place in the world. And third, that the EU's execution of its grand strategy – however erratic – is likely to put increasing stresses on its relations with other major global actors, whether institutions (the UN), other powerful states (the U.S.), and its own member states. Each of these claims is explored in the three sections that follow, while in the conclusion I speculate about a larger question motivating this paper: whether the EU's grand strategy, and the vision of the “better world” it serves, is useful as a source of inspiration for EU leadership across most if not all problems of global governance, and not just an exercise in wishful thinking among EU elites.

Grand Strategy and Military Power in the EU Context

What is grand strategy, and can a regional international organization have one? These questions are necessarily related: one's definition of grand strategy may delimit the types of actors that can supposedly possess such a strategy. The orthodox or classical view of grand strategy, which equates strategy to “statecraft” and (especially) the role of military force in backing up such statecraft, directly addresses both “peacetime” and “wartime” activities to protect the vital interests of a nation.⁹ At a minimum, grand strategy is composed of three basic conceptual elements: physical security, economic prosperity, and value projection. To the extent that states possess ultimate or primary control – sovereignty – over these activities, which largely involve various power resources (particularly the pursuit of security through military force), grand strategy must be reserved for states alone. And to the

⁸ On the ENP see Roland Dannreuther (ed.), *European Union Foreign and Security Policy: Towards a Neighbourhood Strategy* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Karen E. Smith, “The Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy,” *International Affairs* 81/4 (2005): 757-773; Judith Kelley, “New Wine in Old Wineskins: Promoting Political Reforms Through the New European Neighborhood Policy,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44/1 (2005): 29-55; and Katja Weber, Michael E. Smith, and Michael Baun (eds), *Governing Europe's Neighbourhood: Partners or Periphery?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

⁹ Paul Kennedy, “Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Toward a Broader Definition,” in Paul Kennedy (ed.), *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 2-3. Also see Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), esp. Chapter 1.

extent that state survival is the *sine qua non* of the existence of the international order itself, grand strategy must be concerned with protecting the interests of those states. Finally, grand strategy implies some degree of meaningful autonomy over one's future; discussions about it tend to be reserved for great powers, while smaller or weaker powers rarely have the luxury (i.e., power resources) to choose voluntarily between various courses of action.

However, the existence of the EU complicates this classical view of great power, state-centered, grand strategy. At a minimum, the wide range of (formerly domestic) competencies governed by the EU clearly indicates that it is possible to delegate, pool, or even surrender sovereign state activity to some type of collective entity that exercises some degree of authority over what used to be exclusively national decisions. If the modern definition of grand strategy includes all major instruments of national policy, as most scholars believe it does, then any such delegation or pooling suggests in turn that grand strategy can be disaggregated and delegated to a collective entity as well, at least in the areas where that entity exercises a capacity to govern. At a maximum, this general process of delegation might also be accompanied by an expansion of meaningful autonomy on the part of those who manage the collective entity, autonomy which might extend not only to policy entrepreneurship but to more forward-looking strategic *thinking and execution*. To the extent that such activities extend across all three dimensions of grand strategy noted above, we can say that the collective entity possesses, or is at least developing, its own grand strategy. Moreover, this process is not necessarily "zero sum" in the sense that strategic efforts on the part of the collective prevent or undermine such thinking on the part of its constituent units; if the units retain some degree of sovereignty and autonomy over their foreign policy decisions, yet still agree to make those policies serve the interests of the collective as well, then a more "positive sum" approach to the generation of a collective grand strategy is possible. In this view the collective grand strategy would be greater than the sum of its parts (EU member states) and would provide some clear "value-added" to the (normal) process of grand strategy conducted in the part of individual nation-states.

I argue that something along these lines is happening in the EU, and that this activity invests the pursuit of European integration with a more importance than is usually appreciated by more orthodox theories of international relations and comparative politics, particularly those involving realist or intergovernmental approaches to European integration. To the extent that institutional factors play a large role in the construction of EU grand strategy, one could say that the EU is pursuing a far more liberal approach to global strategic action than the more military-focused efforts of past and present great powers. It might even be argued that the very existence of the EU challenges any state-centered views of international relations, global governance, and grand strategy. The EU has been a rich source of theoretical inspiration and institutional innovation regarding our understanding of sovereignty,

international cooperation, regional integration, supranational governance, federalism/confederalism, statehood, and international “actorness.”¹⁰ As such, our views about grand strategy and strategic behavior on the part of key global actors also might require modification. In the narrowest sense, the EU’s attempt to re-define (or broaden) the notion of “security” well beyond traditional territorial defense (see below) means that a military-centered approach to grand strategy will be sadly lacking in terms of serving as a blueprint for joint action among EU member states and their close allies. In a broader sense, one might argue that grand strategy is really about re-making the world – largely through institutionalized cooperation – in accordance with one’s own values: to make war not just unlikely but *unnecessary*, and to make the world safe for European values and interests.

One critical problem, however, is whether a decentralized “actor” such as the EU can even articulate, let alone execute, a grand strategy. This is what I mean by the “accidental strategist” in the title of this paper: the EU’s grand strategy must be inferred from a range of policy documents and other statements, many of which mention *strategy* (or long-term goals) but not necessarily *grand strategy*. Thus, in speaking of the “EU as an actor” I am actually referring to a range of actors with the authority to make strategic-type plans or statements on behalf of the EU. These statements might often conflict or even contradict each other; they might also reveal “gaps” in terms of what a minimal grand strategy should cover. However, to the extent there seems to be some general coherence across these statements we can define an implicit EU grand strategy. In fact, the EU’s general pursuit of “coherence” as a core principle across its policies, both internal and external, might even be seen as a proxy for use of the term “grand strategy.”¹¹ Specifically, in the rest of this paper I shall define “EU grand strategy” as a general plan for integrating the policies and resources of the EU so that the resort to armed force is made unnecessary or undertaken with the maximum chance of victory at the lowest costs. Moreover, if military force is used in the service of grand strategy, those whose interests the military serves must also consider the strategic consequences of the peace, meaning: 1) not achieving total victory in a war (i.e., not necessarily pursuing a policy of unconditional surrender); 2) rehabilitating

¹⁰ See, *inter alia*, Andrew Moravcsik, “Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31/4 (1993): 473-524; James A. Caporaso and John T.S. Keeler, “The European Union and Regional Integration Theory,” in Carolyn Rhodes and Sonia Mazey (eds.), *The State of the European Union, Vol. 3: Building a European Polity?* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995); Wayne Sandholtz, “Membership Matters: Limits to the Functional Approach to European Institutions,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 34/3 (1996): 403-429; and Alec Stone Sweet and Wayne Sandholtz, eds., *Supranational Governance: The Institutionalization of the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹¹ Michael E. Smith, “The Quest for Coherence: Institutional Dilemmas of External Action from Maastricht to Amsterdam,” in Alec Stone Sweet, Wayne Sandholtz, and Neil Fligstein (eds.), *The Institutionalization of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Rory Keane, “The Solana Process in Serbia and Montenegro: Coherence in EU Foreign Policy,” *International Peacekeeping* 11/3 (2004): 491-507; Marcela Szymanski and Michael E. Smith, “Coherence and Conditionality in European Foreign Policy: Negotiating the EU-Mexico Global Agreement,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 43/1 (2005): 171-192; and Marika Lerch and Guido Schweltnus, “Normative by Nature? The Role of Coherence in Justifying the EU’s External Human Rights Policy,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 13/2 (2006): 304-321.

and even aiding a former enemy; and 3) paying attention to post-war reconciliation, stability, and national identity. As the EU has never initiated an actual “war,” the focus on the rest of this paper will be on the larger picture rather than war-fighting, although these activities will be related as necessary. This larger picture involves three basic elements noted above: *physical security*, *economic prosperity*, and some degree of *value projection*.¹²

Content: Key elements of EU grand strategy

Grand strategy, like foreign policy, serves the interests of the actor in question, in our case the EU. Although both efforts are meant to be outwardly-directed, it is worth noting that both foreign policy and grand strategy also serve critical internal purposes. At a minimum, these intra-EU purposes include: 1) confidence-building among EU member states; 2) defining EFP as a distinct and legitimate issue-area related to the overall pursuit and defense of European integration, identity, and values¹³; 3) creating common viewpoints and analyses, or the so-called “*communauté de vue*,”¹⁴ as a frame of reference on key issues; 4) preventing disputes over foreign policy from adversely affecting the pursuit of European integration in other areas (the “damage-limitation” function);¹⁵ 5) socializing new member states and new EU officials into the “Community method” of supranational policy coordination;¹⁶ and 6) serving as a political cover for potentially unpopular foreign policy initiatives (the “scapegoat” function). These specific (endogenous) factors, not vague (exogenous) balance of power dynamics – such as a desire to

¹² This framework expands and refines the approach suggested in Terry L. Diebel, “Strategies Before Containment: Patterns for the Future,” *International Security* 16/4 (1992).

¹³ Richard Whitman, *From Civilian Power to Superpower? The International Identity of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 1998); Michael Smith, “The Framing of European Foreign and Security policy: Towards a Post-modern Policy Framework,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 10/4 (2003): 556-575; Knud Erik Jørgensen, “European Foreign Policy: Conceptualising the Domain”, in Walter Carlsnaes, Helene Sjursen & Brian White (eds.), *Contemporary European Foreign Policy* (London: Sage, 2004); Helene Sjursen, “What Kind of Power?,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 13/2 (2006): 169-181; and José M. Magone, *The New World Architecture: The Role of the European Union in the Making of Global Governance* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2006).

¹⁴ Philippe de Schoutheete de Tervarent, *La Coopération Politique Européenne* (Brussels: F. Nathan Editions Labor, 1980).

¹⁵ This function might also be termed “negative integration.” This allows Europeans to compartmentalize foreign policy disagreements so they can proceed with more important projects: the single European market and, later, the euro plan. We might also note there have been no major foreign policy disruptions to the course of European economic integration, even during crises like Falklands War, the Persian Gulf War, the break-up of Yugoslavia, and the Iraq war of 2003.

¹⁶ For elaboration on this point see Christopher Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe’s Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 1996); Ian Manners and Richard G. Whitman (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of European Union Member States* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Michael E. Smith, *Europe’s Foreign and Security Policy: The Institutionalization of Cooperation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Michael E. Smith, “Toward a Theory of EU Foreign Policy-making: Multi-level Governance, Domestic Politics, and National Adaptation to Europe’s Common Foreign and Security Policy,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 11/4 (2004): 740-58. Also note that the EU often quickly manages to “repair” itself and find common ground in the face of public disagreements, most recently with the Iraq War. See Michael Brenner, “The CFSP Factor: A Comparison of United States and French Strategies,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 38/3 (2003): 187-209.

counteract American hegemony¹⁷ – are equally if not more important in explaining the EU’s persistent pursuit of, and steadily growing desire for, foreign/security cooperation since the 1960s despite the obvious difficulties of organizing it, the high costs of maintaining it, the availability of alternative cooperative forums (NATO, the OSCE, the UN), and the EU’s supposed failures in certain cases.

So too must EU grand strategy be considered in terms well beyond an exclusive or primary focus on the armed defense of territorial integrity against external military threats. As an international organization with its own large bureaucracy and with sovereign democratic states as its basic membership unit, the EU must justify itself constantly to its member states as well as to the outside world, and its grand strategy must attempt to balance those internal and external demands. In addition, the concept of grand strategy inherently recognizes the highly competitive nature of world politics, even where the threat of war is not imminent. As the EU’s global actorness is enhanced, so too is the risk of various types of conflict with the grand strategies of other major global actors. However, in attempting to mimic the functions of states the EU has also set itself up for various legitimacy/transparency problems that must be acknowledged in its development of any strategic plans or documents. These problems intensify with each widening and deepening, most recently in the form of the debate over the European constitution (now Treaty of Lisbon).

One critical way the EU attempts to balance these internal and external demands – or engages in what might be called “omni-strategizing” – is through its approach to power. The EU’s approach to grand strategy implicitly recognizes the limits of the orthodox view of this topic. First, it recognizes the virtues of a full range of power resources, including economic power (i.e., market access and financial aid, as well as sanctions), non-material forms of power (i.e., “soft”, “civilian”, “ethical” or “normative”),¹⁸ less-threatening forms of military power in the form of police, constabulary, or gendarmerie forces, and perhaps most importantly, the principled and strategic co-mingling of all these forms of power in specific cases. Second, it recognizes the clear limits of offensive military power in handling complex security problems (beyond strict territorial defense), as well as the fact that military operations might make matters worse for those who exercise it (i.e., reduce one’s security) by actually

¹⁷ This is the so-called “soft balancing” debate; see Robert A. Pape, “Soft Balancing Against the United States,” *International Security* 30/1 (2005): 7-45; T.V. Paul, “Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy,” *International Security* 30/1 (2005): 46-71; Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, “Hard Times for Soft Balancing,” *International Security* 30/1 (2005): 72-108; Keir A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, “Waiting for Balancing: Why the World is Not Pushing Back,” *International Security* 30/1 (2005): 109-139; and Barry R. Posen, “European Union Security and Defense Policy: A Response to Unipolarity?,” *Security Studies* 15/2 (2006): 149-186.

¹⁸ Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40/2 (2002): 234-258; Richard Youngs, “Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests in the EU’s External Identity,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 42/2 (2004): 415-436; Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe Reconsidered: Beyond the Crossroads,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 13/2 (2006): 182-199; Sophie Meunier and Kalypso Nicolaidis, “The European Union as a Conflicted Trade Power,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 13/6 (2006); Mario Telo, *Europe: A Civilian Power? European Union, Global Governance, World Order* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006); and Sjurjen, “What Kind of Power?”

increasing local resistance in the target country through insurgencies or similar tactics. Third, as the EU now has recourse to military resources, as a last resort, to defend its values and principles, it is also very actively working to integrate this new capability into the broader European integration project through institutional reforms (the ESDP), resource re-allocation (various “Headline Goals” involving national contributions to common EU military forces; see below), common strategic plans (the EU Security Strategy document of 2003¹⁹), and related “cross-pillar” policy initiatives (such as the ENP).

Beyond this broader approach to power resources, EU grand strategy also takes into consideration several other factors based on its unique location and experience. For one, the EU is more exposed to problems related to globalization than any other actor, and Europe is the most interdependent region on the planet; the EU therefore may be far more versatile in the range of solutions it considers when attempting to meet these challenges. Second, the EU’s experience leads it to favor multilateral institutional approaches to common problems; to the extent that such institutional solutions can be re-produced and exported beyond the EU itself, its grand strategy is being served. The EU’s general – or strategic – approach to questions of power, problems of interdependence/globalization, and finding solutions based on highly institutionalized multilateral cooperation is a reflection of several core values that appear throughout EU documents and treaties. These include a concern with peaceful conflict prevention and resolution; interstate political reconciliation and regional problem-solving through economic integration and civil society building; state-building and democracy promotion; the protection of human and minority rights; environmental and social protection; and respect for the rule of law. In this sense EU grand strategy and EFP are a mirror reflection of the intense, highly institutionalized, multilevel, and multilateral cooperation that occurs among the EU member states themselves.

One final general point is the question of whether the EU is a satisfied or revisionist power. My argument is that the EU clearly is an “aspirational” actor – it seeks to “do more” at the global level in line with its economic weight – but whether this translates to wanting to change or reinforce the existing international order can vary across a range of dimensions.²⁰ If the EU, like the U.S., is largely a satisfied power then it will generally seek to uphold the status quo – the UN system and a liberal economic order – and encourage other actors to do the same. However, to the extent that EU grand strategy must take into consideration other major powers (particularly the U.S.), its approach to changing or reinforcing the existing global order may depend in part on American policies and how they are received by other actors. This is not to say that much of what the EU does will be an effort to

¹⁹ Solana, *A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy*.

²⁰ For a more extensive discussion on this point, see Kari Möttölä, “The European Union’s Grand Strategy: Affecting and Consuming Change in the Global Security Order,” paper prepared for the International Studies Association meeting, San Diego, CA, 21-25 March 2006.

contain American power (i.e., “soft balance” against the U.S.); instead, some elements of EU grand strategy will mesh with American objectives, others will conflict with them, and still others might have no relationship at all. Nor does it mean that the EU can act only or primarily in response to what the U.S. is doing; there is increasing evidence that the EU is able to not only set the global agenda, but to exert international policy entrepreneurship as well, even in areas where it faces overt American opposition. One critical predictor of U.S.-EU tension over grand strategy involves the question of *multilateralism*: every element of EU grand strategy is respectful of this principle as a foundational or core value, while the U.S. is willing to pursue or abandon multilateralism as it sees fit. The EU’s support or opposition to U.S. strategies is therefore critically dependent on America’s own approach to multilateralism.

Turning to the more specific content of EU grand strategy as defined in the previous section, I shall first consider the three elements – physical security, economic prosperity, and value projection – each in turn, followed by an examination of their relationship to each other. For each category, I shall further divide the discussion into three components: grand strategy oriented toward the EU itself (i.e., intra-EU), toward the EU’s immediate region (i.e., the EU’s “neighborhood,” involving its southern, eastern, and south-eastern flanks), and toward the global system (i.e., the EU in the world). In addition, states that have a reasonable prospect of joining the EU (particularly certain Balkans states) are not here considered as “neighbors” as they are subject to a different set of policies – involving the accession process – as compared to states that are highly unlikely to join the EU. These various conceptual elements of EU grand strategy are summarized in Table 1:

Table 1: Major elements of EU grand strategy

	Internal	Regional (“neighborhood”)	Global
Physical security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * EU as a pluralistic security community * Specific confidence-building measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Enlargement: turning neighbors into members * Power of attraction * Leading by example (EU as a model for regional cooperation) * Maintenance of NATO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Support for efforts against WMD * EU as a model for regional cooperation * Maintenance of NATO
Economic prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trade bloc liberalization in line with European social model * Common market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Power of attraction * Leading by example * Preferential regional trade liberalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Support for WTO trade regime * Special attention to LDCs
Value projection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Copenhagen criteria required of all EU member states * Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Political conditionality for cooperation with the EU * Support for Council of Europe and European Convention on Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Support for UN human rights policies * Opportunistic value-projection

In the rest of this section I briefly examine these elements in more detail.

Physical security

Physical security can be sub-divided into two major sub-categories: territorial defense of the EU from military threats, and more general societal security from a range of (mostly) non-military threats involving both state and non-state actors. Regarding the first category, we can consider the EU's approach at the three levels noted above: intra-EU, neighborhood, and global. Regarding the role of the EU in preventing *internal* military conflicts among EU member states, although this aspect of EU grand strategy is not directly mentioned in EU documents, it might be inferred from terms such as "peace" and "reconciliation" found throughout them. This interpretation also fits with the EU's role as a security community for its own member states, if not an explicit collective security arrangement. Some realists, in fact, continue to claim that much of what the EU does in the area of CFSP/ESDP is primarily – if not exclusively – meant to prevent the rise of internal security competition among EU states in general, and to contain Germany in particular.²¹ However, if this were true, we would expect to see a much stronger commitment to mutual defense within EU treaties (i.e., a transparent and credible collective security guarantee, or at least a statement of non-aggression among EU states), and possibly even stronger attempts by individual EU member states (if not the EU as a collective) to balance against Germany and prevent any increase in its military power. We do not see these behaviors,²² and EU states in fact have continued to support Germany's involvement in military cooperation, which calls into question the importance of internal balancing as an interpretation of EU grand strategy. However, it is not possible at this stage to treat the EU as a true collective security arrangement, in that its member states have assumed a formal commitment, whether tacit or explicit, to act together to resist aggression by one of its members.²³ Thus, it is still most appropriate to see the EU's grand strategy over its internal physical security as a type of pluralistic security community, which is based on shared values, sensitivity to each other's needs, communication, predictable behavior, and support for international institutions (the EU and otherwise).²⁴ This general approach to security community-building is supported by various specific confidence-building mechanisms among EU member states (CFSP/ESDP/JHA, etc) to facilitate common viewpoints and lay the groundwork for joint action.

²¹ Seth G. Jones, "The European Union and the Security Dilemma," *Security Studies* 12/3 (2003): 114-156. This article largely updates the earlier arguments of Glaser, "Why NATO is Still Best," and Art, "Why Western Europe Needs the United States and NATO," but the central logic – involving security competitions under anarchy – is still the same. In more recent work, however, Jones has modified his position somewhat, arguing EU security cooperation is a function of changes in the global balance of power, not a result of fears of internal security competition. See Seth G Jones, *The Rise of European Security Cooperation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

²² The Lisbon Treaty does however contain something like a mutual defense pact, in the form of the so-called "solidarity clause" (Art. 28A, para 7). However, this commitment should be interpreted as a response to armed aggression from outside the EU (or from terrorist attacks), rather than a desire to contain Germany. Nor does the clause specify what forms of assistance EU member states are expected to offer, so it hardly qualifies as an express security guarantee.

²³ Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford A. Kupchan, "Concerts, Collective Security, and the Future of Europe," *International Security* 16/1 (1991): 114-161.

²⁴ Karl Deutsch et al, *Political Community in the North Atlantic Area* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

In addition, the EU's *rapprochement* with NATO over the past decade also suggests the low status given to this element of EU grand strategy. As NATO still provides a credible deterrent against both internal and external threats (at least within the EU/North Atlantic neighborhood), and as EU member states do not seem to be motivated by a need to contain Germany, there still seems no need to provoke a debate regarding the specific commitments regarding collective defense required (or at least expected) of all EU members. Even more conspicuous in its absence is the question of a possible nuclear deterrence policy for the EU. If nuclear weapons are the ultimate deterrent against external threats, the EU's lack of debate on this issue suggests the question of physical security against military threats made by non-members is still effectively delegated to NATO where EU grand strategy is concerned.²⁵ We also might infer that that the EU is effectively free-riding on the nuclear deterrent provided by two of its member states (the UK and France), in combination with NATO's nuclear "umbrella". However, as the EU still might face a global threat from weapons of mass destruction (WMD) possessed by other states or (potentially) non-state actors, it still incorporates into its grand strategy cooperation with global efforts to control such weapons, as through regimes such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency, supported by cooperation with other major global actors (the U.S., China, Russia) on a case-by-case basis.

Regarding threats relating more to societal security rather than territorial defense, EU grand strategy is far more specific, particularly with the internal and regional dimensions. Here we have the guidance of the 2003 European Security Strategy paper, and most major threats identified within it fall outside the category noted above. These include the problems of terrorism, WMD proliferation, regional conflict, state failure, and organized crime. Moreover, the document emphasizes that European security must first be enhanced in its own neighborhood by stabilizing the Balkans and extending cooperation and security to the east and south, with a focus on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It also articulates the principle of "effective multilateralism" as the cornerstone of EU foreign policy (as opposed to America's more unilateral approach to security).²⁶ With the Madrid bombing in 2004, the EU now includes anti-crime/anti-terrorism in the work of the ESDP and has appointed a counter-terrorism "tsar" to assist such cooperation among EU member states. Moreover, all of these efforts are increasingly linked to internal "soft security" EU policies, particularly those involving JHA matters, a

²⁵ The EU's neutral member states – Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden – might disagree with this interpretation yet it strains credulity to think that NATO would fail to offer help, and that EU neutral states would fail to accept it, if a major military attack occurred against the EU. Moreover, during the Cold War the U.S. made informal security guarantees to some neutral European states, such as Sweden, in the form of nuclear submarine patrols. See Nils Bruzelius, "Secret Nuclear Submarines Guaranteed Swedish Security," *Framsyn Magazine*, Swedish Defense Research Agency (FOI), January 2005.

²⁶ For a more detailed comparison of the U.S. and EU security strategies, see Gerrard Quille, "The European Security Strategy: A Framework for EU Security Interests?," *International Peacekeeping* 11/3 (2004): 422-438; and Roland Dannreuther and John Peterson (eds.), *Security Strategy and Transatlantic Relations* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006).

trend that makes it even more difficult to treat CFSP/ESDP as purely intergovernmental in practice and territorially-defensive in orientation, *contra* the arguments of many realists.

Economic prosperity

The EU's grand strategy for economic prosperity varies widely across internal, regional, and global levels. At the intra-EU level, the cornerstones of the strategy involve a general preference for trade liberalization supported by the European social model. Although the commitment to these goals may vary widely across (and even within) EU member states, this desire to find a more "humane" balance – or the "European dream"²⁷ – between the liberalizing goals of transnational firms and desires for greater social protections (i.e., rights to collective bargaining, health care, education, pensions, etc) is a core element of intra-EU grand strategy. This goal is similarly reflected in the EU's approach to competition (or anti-trust) problems, environmental regulation, and other potentially pathological effects of unbridled capitalism, which often put it at odds with the U.S., especially when it applies "extraterritorial" control over these problems against non-EU actors.

At the regional and global levels, the question of free trade dominates EU grand strategy, but there is clear variation between these levels. At the regional level, the EU attempts to balance its support of the World Trade Organization (WTO) regime and its norm of non-discrimination with selective and conditional market access to non-EU members on its periphery, thus forming a preferential trading area with somewhat flexible membership criteria. Normally access to this area is treated as part of the more general accession process; however, the EU is taking steps to supplement (if not replace) the enlargement process with a type of "second class" membership, the ENP (see below). Finally, at the global level, the EU has modified its support for the general liberalizing goals of the WTO regime in light of (mostly) transatlantic disputes over specific sectoral problems, such as agriculture, steel, aircraft, genetically-modified foods, intellectual property, and trade in services. Again, this problem stems from the EU's need to find a workable balance between the internal goals of its members and the pressures of the world trading system. Thus, like the U.S., it will engage in selective protectionism even as it tries to negotiate an end to such measures with its major trading partners. In addition, the EU pays special attention to its relationship with various Less Developed Countries (LDCs), particularly former European colonies, in ways that go well beyond the efforts of other actors such as the U.S., Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, etc. This attention extends to specialized and conditional market access, extensive humanitarian and development aid, and technical assistance (among other measures).

²⁷ Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream* (New York: Polity, 2004).

Value projection

Regarding value projection, at the intra-EU level the conditions of EU membership serve as a kind of grand strategy regarding the type of normative order the EU aspires to be. These are reflected primarily in the so-called “Copenhagen Criteria” as the basic conditions of EU membership. These criteria require that candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, respect for and protection of minorities, and the existence of a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the EU. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. These values are further reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, signed by the EU member states at Nice in December 2000.²⁸ This Charter includes specific rights in six major areas: dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens’ rights, and justice, many of which go well beyond the protections found in America’s own Bill of Rights. These include a prohibition against the death penalty, prohibitions against eugenics and human cloning, privacy protections (including data privacy), freedom of arts and sciences, gender equality, consumer protections, access to health care, and rights for children, the elderly, workers, and the disabled. Taken together, citizens of the EU probably enjoy the widest human rights protections of any region on the planet (though how and when these rights can be exercised is still an open issue; the question of its legal effect is currently tied to the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty).

This intra-EU set of basic values extends to a large degree to the broader regional European neighborhood and even to the global level through similar documents, particularly the European Convention on Human Rights and the Council of Europe’s Social Charter. Obviously the accession process makes reference to these rights, as do numerous association agreements with non-EU member states both in the neighborhood and well beyond it (such as cooperative agreements with various Central/South American countries, including one with Mexico²⁹). As the EU’s protections and conditionality requirements for cooperation with non-member states go well beyond those required by the U.S. (not to mention other actors such as China and Russia), we may expect to see a greater degree of transatlantic conflict over this topic. The EU is already attempting to take the lead on a number of specific value-related problems at the global level, all of which directly challenge America’s views (at least under the current presidential administration). These efforts might be termed “opportunistic value projection” as the EU chooses only certain issues to pursue at the global level when it sees a clear window of opportunity. Again, this approach often depends on America’s attitude to certain issues, yet

²⁸ The EU’s Charter is an amalgam of various similar documents, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, various member state constitutions, various international documents, etc. It includes 50 articles enumerating specific rights of all EU citizens, plus additional articles on general governing provisions.

²⁹ Szymanski and Smith, “Coherence and Conditionality in European Foreign Policy.”

to the extent that these efforts are largely in line with other normative elements of EU policy (as related to its Charter of Fundamental Rights, for example), we might interpret this activity as a key element of EU grand strategy. In fact, some have seen these activities as a manifestation of a unique European responsibility or even as a “civilizing mission” that goes well beyond the mere *protection* of its own values and interests to encompass the *projection* of those values as universal, cosmopolitan, global norms.³⁰

Execution: Strategy and the EU’s Changing Global Role

Developing a grand strategy and executing it are two separate things, and it is perfectly normal for complex organizations to succeed at planning while failing at execution. Without undertaking a detailed critical examination of the various strategic elements discussed above, we should first note that the EU is at least *attempting* to implement those elements with a wider range of policy tools than ever before. This general statement can be seen with a summary of various EU policies covering the strategic elements noted above, as reflected in Table 2:

Table 2: The execution of EU grand strategy

	Internal	Regional (“neighborhood”)	Global
Physical security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * EU as a reflection of reconciliation and peace among its member states * JHA measures against terrorism and organized crime * Possible “solidarity” in response to armed aggression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * CFSP/ESDP conflict-resolution operations * ENP Program (including CFSP/ESDP/JHA cooperation with ENP partners) * EU-Russian “Four common spaces” * Possible “solidarity” in response to armed aggression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Support for efforts against WMD * Very limited ESDP interventions * Civilian Crisis Management * Actions against money laundering, organized crime, and terrorism
Economic prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Single European Market * Euro program * Problem-specific initiatives (technology, stability/growth pact, competition, etc.) * Selective protection of certain sectors (agriculture, intellectual property, defence, financial services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Selective, conditional market access through the Euro-Med Program and the ENP Program * Aid and technical assistance to regional neighbors * Maintenance of EFTA/EEA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Commission’s role in WTO and related regimes * Lomé/ACP aid * Strategic partnerships with major powers
Value projection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union * Social chapter * Protection of cultural diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Political conditionality clause of ENP Action Plans and related cooperation agreements with neighbors * Support for Council of Europe and European Convention on Human Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Support for UN human rights policies * Problem-specific initiatives (climate change, privacy, anti-death penalty, etc.)

³⁰ For example, see Andrew Linklater, “A European Civilising Process?” in Christopher Hill and Michael Smith (eds.), *International Relations and the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2005); and Erik Oddvar Eriksen, “The EU – a Cosmopolitan Polity? *Journal of European Public Policy* 13/2 (2006): 252-269.

As we might expect of an entity that began as a regional economic organization, the EU's efforts in the realm of economic prosperity are most extensively developed. The core of this goal involves the Single European Market (SEM) and the Euro; these two policy domains are so extensive and important to the existence of the EU that they might be viewed as even more important – at least in the context of *EU grand strategy* – to the future of “Europe” than the question of physical security. The many spill-over policies and related institutional changes related to the construction of the SEM and the Euro probably consume more political capital than any other EU policy domains and, accordingly, loom large in any public statements about the EU's global role and future ambitions. However, as strategic mechanisms for ensuring *prosperity* (i.e., sustainable economic growth and a rising standard of living among EU citizens), the SEM and the Euro plan clearly have their limits. Economic growth and standards of living still vary widely across the EU, and the EU as a whole lags behind other major actors in terms of economic growth.

In response, the EU's grand strategy for internal economic prosperity increasingly involves problem-specific initiatives to help realize the promises behind the SEM and Euro plan: that the reduction of internal barriers to trade and related transaction costs (including EU-wide price stability) will, by themselves, improve European economic growth. These efforts include the Stability and Growth Pact, support for technology and EU-centered research and development (the Framework programs), and more indirect efforts to improve overall EU growth, social cohesion, and competitiveness (education and training through Erasmus, regional aid/cooperation, industrial cooperation through Airbus, etc.). Finally, this element of EU grand strategy also involves selective protectionism of certain economic sectors (particularly agriculture, defense industries, financial services, and certain aspects of intellectual property), which is done not so much to ensure economic *prosperity* as it is to facilitate larger political bargains within the EU (i.e., log-rolling to ensure a net level of liberalization across EU member states) and, to a lesser extent, improves the EU's bargaining leverage *vis-à-vis* major global competitors, particularly the U.S.

For our purposes, however, the two most interesting aspects of this table involve the EU's growing ambitions as a security actor, and its increasing willingness to assert its values on the global stage. Regarding the former aspect of EU grand strategy, the EU now possesses some power projection capability and is willing to put its own troops in harm's way as a contribution to international security. The expansion of the CFSP to involve limited military operations through the ESDP mechanism equally contradicts the theoretical predictions of realism, which expects such cooperation only the face of a major external threat or through the leadership of a hegemonic state. The EU lacks both of these power-based incentives, yet in 1999 it declared a Headline Goal to develop the capability to deploy up to 60,000 troops for handling the so-called “Petersberg Tasks” (humanitarian and rescue tasks,

peacekeeping, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace enforcement) as part of its foreign policy. This nascent “Euro-corps” was later re-tooled into a European Rapid Response Force with contributions from nearly all EU member states, even formally neutral ones such as Austria, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden. The EU also appointed Javier Solana as the new CFSP High Representative to give a voice and face to its foreign policy. Between 2000 and 2004, a wide range of ESDP support institutions were created within the EU,³¹ while arrangements for EU-NATO military cooperation were established after years of transatlantic debate (the “Berlin Plus” agreement³²). The EU also instigated a *de facto* “absorption” of the Western European Union (WEU) and its limited institutional infrastructure,³³ while a second Headline Goal committed the member states to introduce 13 EU battlegroups by 2010. Eighteen such groups have now been organized, thus exceeding that goal.³⁴ Following the release of the EU Security Strategy document, the EU rapidly extended the range of its crisis management activities to include joint disarmament operations, financial/technical support for non-member states engaged in counterterrorism, and security sector reform (see below). Finally, and perhaps most impressive of all, the EU has made use of these resources and plans by initiating no less than 18 actual ESDP operations since 2003, some of which have involved military forces and the use of force.³⁵

This activity greatly exceeds anything the EU attempted in the 1990s in this realm. Operation Artemis in the DRC is especially interesting as an example of the EU’s military capabilities under the ESDP. Since Artemis included troops from Brazil, Canada, South Africa, and other countries, the EU clearly demonstrated its ability to lead non-EU troops in a foreign military operation well beyond the European theatre. Equally importantly, the EU also demonstrated for the first time its willingness and

³¹ Including a Political and Security Committee, a Military Committee and Staff, a Planning Unit, a Situation Centre for ESDP, and a European Defense Agency.

³² Briefly, Berlin Plus allows for “assured access” to NATO planning capabilities, a “presumption of availability” to the EU of NATO assets, and NATO European command support for EU-led operations. Berlin Plus discussions began in June 1996 but were not completed (and thus made operational) until December 2002.

³³ For background on the ESDP see Anne Deighton, “The European Security and Defence Policy,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40/4 (2002): 719-741; Trevor C. Salmon and Alistair J.K. Sheperd, *Toward a European Army: A Military Power in the Making?* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003); Catriona Gourlay, “European Union Procedures and Resources for Crisis Management,” *International Peacekeeping* 11/3 (2004): 404-421; and Nicole Gnesotto, ed., *EU Security and Defence Policy: The First Five Years (1999-2004)* (Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2005).

³⁴ A battlegroup is a form of rapid response: a combined-arms, battalion-sized, high-readiness force package of round 1,500 troops reinforced with combat support elements, including relevant air and naval capabilities, which can be launched on the ground within ten days after the EU decides to act. Five battlegroups are single-nation; the other thirteen involve coalitions of two to four states, including two non-EU member states: Norway and Turkey. Moreover, all four neutral EU member states have agreed to join a battlegroup; one such state (Sweden) both leads its own group and leads the Nordic battlegroup. Out of 27 EU states, only Denmark and Malta do not currently contribute to a battlegroup. See Gustav Lindstrom, *Enter the EU Battlegroups*, Chaillot Paper No. 97 (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2007).

³⁵ For an examination of several of these missions, see the special issue of *International Peacekeeping* 11/3 (Autumn 2004); and Bastian Giegerich and William Wallace, “Not Such a Soft Power: The External Deployment of European Forces,” *Survival* 46/2 (2004): 163-182. The EU is currently considering two other ESDP missions, in Kosovo and Chad.

ability to initiate, plan, and execute a military operation completely autonomously of NATO. This act defied America's preference to allow NATO (i.e., the U.S.) to vet all ESDP military operations, even those that did not require access to NATO assets. Perhaps even more importantly, EU forces engaged in several firefights with local militias and killed a couple of dozen militiamen (with no losses among EU forces). One of the battles was fought in part by Swedish special forces; this represented the most difficult engagement for Swedish military forces since the 1960s according to Sweden's own military commander in chief.³⁶ This fact demonstrates the EU's ability to not just threaten but actually use deadly force, and to do so with the support of its supposedly neutral member states.

However, it is also questionable whether these efforts – particularly those well outside the European neighborhood – actually contribute to the EU's own physical security. Instead, they might be seen as forms of practicing, learning-by-doing, and capacity-building in the expectation of adopting more complex missions, which might also more closely relate to the EU's security and that of states where the EU has a strong interest. Still, the EU does not possess its own credible offensive military capability, and, even if it did, it is questionable whether the EU would undertake a more punishing, Kosovo-type operation to compel or deter a foreign military force. Finally, it is worth considering whether this activity might undermine the EU's reputation as a civilian or normative power, and this potential problem most certainly deserves more attention as part of the EU's approach to grand strategy. If the ESDP and its battle-groups are primarily oriented towards interventions rather than deterrence or defense of the EU itself, which seems to be the case, then there is a real risk that the EU will find itself caught in a major strategic dilemma: whether to risk innocent civilian lives by attacking the perpetrators of human rights violations (Kosovo) or whether to offer only token protection to victims and allow them to be slaughtered by a stronger force (Srebrenica). The EU's reliance on American air power in the Kosovo War was a major impetus behind the ESDP, yet we still do not know whether the EU would use these new forces in a more aggressive manner, and whether such use would undermine the EU's other normative goals as a civilian power. As I have argued elsewhere,³⁷ the EU might be better off (i.e., achieve its grand strategy) by distancing itself from NATO-type capabilities and missions rather than imitating them, but this path has been rejected in the past few years.

Turning specifically to normative issues and value projection, a more interesting question perhaps is how far the EU is willing to expand its own "vision" of international order and global governance, even if that vision undermines or directly contradicts the efforts of the U.S. as a hegemonic leader. Based on both the content and execution of EU grand strategy, we can see a clear

³⁶ Ståle Ulriksen, Catriona Gourlay, and Catriona Mace, "Operation *Artemis*: The Shape of Things to Come?," *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Autumn 2004), p. 519.

³⁷ Smith, *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy*, pp. 260-61.

expansion of ambition regarding the EU's global political actorness. In the 1970s, the EU was content to focus on building the single market and its political ambitions were limited to *ad hoc* cooperation in the shadow of the Cold War. By the late 1980s-early 1990s, the EU was beginning to realize that it not only had its own global interests, it also possessed a high degree of economic power to help defend those interests. In this sense EU elites began to advance the argument that the EU somehow “deserved” to play a greater role in world politics in line with its economic clout, particularly following the lead-up to the launch of the Euro.³⁸ In fact, the EU's deliberate efforts to “export” its novel techniques of political cooperation, interstate reconciliation, global governance, and regional integration comprise one of its most important foreign policy goals.³⁹ However, following the Maastricht Treaty on European Union a great deal of external political capital in the EU was devoted to the enlargement question and the ambitions for a stronger role in global political affairs suffered accordingly. More recently, however, we see glimmers of an even bolder vision: that the EU possibly has a *unique and better* approach – better, that is, than America's – to the management of many problems of global governance; at least those that do not require offensive military force. As table 3 reveals, the EU now possesses nearly all forms of power – both hard and soft – that the U.S. (apparently still) enjoys in light of its hegemonic status:

Table 3: Hegemonic states and power resources⁴⁰

Period	Hegemonic state	Power resources
1500s	Spain	Gold, colonial trade, mercenary armies, dynastic ties
1600s	Netherlands	Trade, capital markets, navy
1700s	France	Population, rural industry, public bureaucracy, army
1800s	Britain	Industry, political cohesion, finance and credit, navy, liberal norms, island location (easy to defend)
1900s	United States	Economic scale, scientific/technical leadership, universalistic culture, military forces and alliances, liberal norms, leader of international organizations, hub of transnational communication

³⁸ David Allen and Michael Smith, “The European Union's Presence in the European Security Order: Barrier, Facilitator, or Manager?,” paper prepared for delivery at the biennial meeting of Council for European Studies, Chicago, IL, 14-16 March 1996; Ole Elgström and Michael Smith, *The European Union's Roles in International Politics: Concepts and Analysis* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006).

³⁹ Simon Nuttall, “The Commission: Protagonists of Inter-Regional Cooperation,” in Geoffrey Edwards and Elfriede Regelsberger, eds., *Europe's Global Links: The European Community and Inter-Regional Cooperation* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990); Jörg Monar, “Political Dialogue with Third Countries and Regional Political Groupings: The Fifteen as an Attractive Interlocutor,” in Elfriede Regelsberger, Philippe de Schoutheete de Tervarent, and Wolfgang Wessels (eds.), *Foreign Policy of the European Union: From EPC to CFSP and Beyond* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1997).

⁴⁰ Source: Joseph P. Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

The question is, of course, the extent to which the EU will make use of its full range of power resources to advance its own vision of global governance. Europe's "better world" is often framed, at least implicitly, as a response to U.S. grand strategy, which has come under great stress in light of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, plus its overall "war on terror". In the 1990s, the U.S. strategic debate was largely between a resort to quasi-isolationism versus selective intervention – or "offshore balancing" – in certain conflicts, particularly those that involved a direct threat to its security.⁴¹ Today, however, the U.S. has not only adopted a "global war on terror" grand strategy supported by an explicit policy of *preventative* – not just pre-emptive – and *unilateral* (rather than multilateral) military attacks, even in the face of international opposition; it has also repeatedly undermined its own reputation as a protector of human rights in light of abuses in Iraq and Guantanamo, CIA kidnapping and torture flights, deliberate attacks on civilians in multiple theatres of war, and other highly aggressive policies. America's "grand strategy" has thus been greatly diverted, if not corrupted, by the war on terror, and the U.S. finds itself over-extended militarily and under-supported politically on a number of fronts, creating a major window of opportunity for other principled global actors such as the EU. The EU has started to fill this credibility/leadership gap, and its response often takes the form of policies targeted at U.S. views, such as European efforts to ban the death penalty, fight global warming, protest human rights abuses made under the war on terror (such as America's policy of "extraordinary rendition" and the use of torture), develop global protections on data privacy, support the International Criminal Court, ban anti-personnel landmines, assert stronger norms regarding competition policy, and regulate genetically-modified foods. The EU thus seems to be growing far more comfortable with its *global* principled leadership in ways well beyond its capabilities ten or twenty years ago.

To be sure, the EU still faces enormous challenges in terms of implementing its grand strategy, such as it is. One key problem involves simple demographics, in terms of several related challenges such as a low overall birthrate in the EU, aging populations with expectations of a comfortable retirement, issues related to immigration and the integration of various minority groups (particularly Muslims), and so on. Like the U.S., the EU may be susceptible to ignoring global issues in favor of domestic ones; if so its efforts involving value projection would suffer accordingly. In addition, as noted above there is a real danger that certain elements of grand strategy will conflict with others; here the key tension is between its normative aspirations and its economic/security goals. The U.S. has been

⁴¹ See e.g. Josef Joffe, "Bismarck or 'Britain'? Toward an American Grand Strategy after Bipolarity," *International Security* 19/4 (1995): 94-117; Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21/3 (1996/97): 5-53; Eugene Gholtz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, "Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," *International Security* 21/4 (1997): 5-48; Christopher Layne, "From preponderance to offshore balancing: America's future grand strategy," *International Security* 22/1 (1997); Michael Mastanduno, "Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy After the Cold War," *International Security* 21/4 (1997): 49-88; and Robert J. Art, "Geopolitics updates: The strategy of selective engagement," *International Security* 23/3 (1998-99).

willing to abandon its support for human rights and democracy under the guise of the Cold War and the “global war on terror” in certain situations; now that the EU has developed a multi-dimensional grand strategy it too will face increasing tensions about how to pursue and prioritize its strategic goals. As this happens, the EU, like the U.S today, will face the danger of appearing as not just an *ineffective* but also a *hypocritical* global actor, which could have a profound effect on the overall “power of attraction” possessed by the EU.⁴² The EU already attempts to use “coherence” as a way to encourage its non-member partners to agree to comprehensive package deals involving political conditionality, limited security cooperation, and economic liberalization;⁴³ this approach has now been fully institutionalized through a range of Association Agreements and the European Neighborhood Policy.⁴⁴ However, this also means the EU will increasingly face the problem of “rhetorical entrapment” as the outside world begins to expect the EU to live up to its own norms.⁴⁵

Other potential problems involve the EU’s relations with two major powers beyond the U.S.: Russia and China. In both cases, the EU may be in danger of allowing security or economic goals to over-ride the other elements of its grand strategy (value projection). The EU desires access to Russian energy supplies and access to China’s huge and growing market, yet as these countries grow more powerful and assertive the EU may be forced to re-consider its relationship to them. Human rights abuses and more parochial security problems (such as arms transfers) are likely to further complicate the EU’s efforts to formulate grand strategy. As the “power of attraction” as exercised through policies such as enlargement and the ENP clearly has its limits, the EU will have to increasingly rely on power projection to handle problems well beyond its geographic sphere of influence. The EU now possesses greater power projection capabilities than ever before in its history, yet the process of asserting and justifying these capabilities is likely to be far more contentious, and costly, than the process of their creation.⁴⁶ So too will the EU’s exercise of external influence in the coming years be equally if not more contentious than the development of its internal policies, if the view of grand strategy presented in this paper is correct.

⁴² For more extensive discussions, see Andrew Clapham, “Where is the EU’s Human Rights Common Foreign Policy, and How is it Manifested in Multilateral Fora?,” in Philip Alston, Mara R. Bustelo, and James Heenan (eds.), *The EU and Human Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Karen E. Smith, “Speaking with One Voice? European Union Co-ordination on Human Rights Issues as the United Nations,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44/1 (2006): 113-137.

⁴³ Szymanski and Smith, “Coherence and Conditionality in European Foreign Policy.”

⁴⁴ Frank Schimmelfennig and Sylvia Maier, “Shared Values: Democracy and Human Rights,” in Weber, Smith and Baun, *Governing Europe’s Neighbourhood*.

⁴⁵ On rhetorical entrapment, see Frank Schimmelfennig, “The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union,” *International Organization* 55/1 (2001): 47-80.

⁴⁶ For a more extended discussion of this point, see Mette Eilstrup Sangiovanni, “Why a Common Security and Defence Policy is Bad for Europe,” *Survival* 45/3 (2003): 193-206.

Conclusion

Evaluations of policy ideas and strategies require some appropriate basis for comparison. Comparing the EU to a single powerful state, such as the U.S., is both inappropriate and unfair. Comparing the EU to other international organizations is more appropriate, but also limited, in that the EU's institutions and ambitions go well beyond what we see of other global (the UN) and regional (ASEAN, OAS, AU) international organizations. In my view the main reference point for evaluating the EU is Europe's own history: do we see greater cooperation and integration in Europe today compared to ten, thirty, or fifty years ago? The answer clearly is yes. However, a second reference point involves the EU's own ever-expanding ambitions, and here the record is somewhat mixed. The EU was primarily inward-looking and economically-focused in its first decades, and here it has seen major successes: the near-completion of the SEM, the Euro plan, and successive enlargements used as a tool of foreign policy. The EU's success in promoting stability and peace among its own member states, and thus overcoming the highly objectionable post-war division of Eastern and Western Europe, is equally undeniable. Now, however, the EU is becoming even more outward looking and, equally importantly, more politically-minded, even to the extent of involvement in security affairs beyond the European core. After a decade of failing to respond effectively to security emergencies in the Balkans and elsewhere, the EU is attempting to learn from its mistakes and bolster this capability as the final component of its "actorness". Defying the predictions of many observers, the EU has taken on some of the responsibilities of a global security actor, although it rarely receives credit for this activity from observers who focus on America's efforts.

I have interpreted much of this activity through the conceptual lens of grand strategy. I have argued that many of the EU's policies – as ideas or actual resource commitments – can be viewed as elements of a more general strategy befitting the EU's emergence as a global political actor – even a *great power*. To the extent that grand strategy involves global political competition, the EU will face increasing challenges from three other major actors: the U.S., China, and Russia. As China and Russia do not offer what might be called a "vision" for global governance, it may be that the EU's main challenger here will be the U.S., at least in the short to medium term. In fact, some observers are already arguing the merits of the EU's approach to certain global problems over America's own approach.⁴⁷ If many international problems are related, to some degree, to problems resulting from interdependence and globalization (i.e., threats to cultural diversity, economic stresses on uncompetitive states or groups, illegal movements of people or illicit substances), then the EU may be much more experienced, and innovative, than the U.S. in handling such problems. Moreover, there has

⁴⁷ See Rifkin, *The European Dream*; T.R. Reid, *The United States of Europe* (London: Penguin, 2005); John McCormick, *The European Superpower* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); and Mark Leonard, *Why Europe Will Run the 21st Century* (London: Public Affairs, 2006).

been a marked change in emphasis in EU activism in terms of means and ends. Where in the past the EU's uniqueness as a global actor was characterized by its stress on methods such as multilateralism, peaceful dispute resolution, institutions, preventative measures, and soft power mechanisms (often to the irritation of the U.S.), the EU is increasingly attempting to articulate a unique vision of ultimate ends as well: promoting itself as a "civilizing" force for global governance and world peace.

Even more interesting is the related possibility that the U.S. itself is now in decline as a hegemon or imperial power, and will only grow weaker with time in light of its current approach to certain global problems (i.e., "imperial over-reach" as the U.S. attempts to maintain its global status and prevent the rise of competing powers). Many strategists – even American ones – are currently debating such a possibility, and some believe that America's "unipolar moment" is well over.⁴⁸ If so, there will be greater opportunities for other actors to fill a leadership gap at the global level, if only on a case-by-case basis. Even if the U.S. is not in terminal decline, others have observed that Americans are simply not very good at the kinds of security problems facing many populations, particularly in the developing world; in other words, America is not effective as a "state builder."⁴⁹ Its experience in Afghanistan and Iraq (not to mention Vietnam) especially lend credence to this claim, and suggest a window of opportunity for new approaches to these problems that downplay the role of offensive military capabilities and emphasize police/gendarmerie forces, the re-building of judicial capacities, and the development of civil society as a "cushion" between the demands of citizens and the response of (temporarily) weak central governing institutions. This is precisely the approach the EU is attempting to develop.

The EU, of course, has many challenges of its own, not the least of which is the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by all EU member states, and the implementation of its various new provisions regarding foreign and security policy, such as the extended term of the President of the European Council, the new European External Action Service, and above all, the new solidarity clause.⁵⁰ The Lisbon Treaty asserts numerous *universal* values as the foundational inspiration for European integration, and actors inside and outside the EU are paying more attention to whether, and how, the

⁴⁸ On this debate, see e.g. G. John Ikenberry, "Institutions, strategic restraint, and the persistence of American postwar order," *International Security* 23/3 (1998/99); John M. Owen, "Transnational liberalism and U.S. primacy," *International Security* 26/3 (2001/02); John Ikenberry (ed.), *America Unrivaled* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2002); Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004); Barry R. Posen, "Command of the commons: The military foundations of U.S. hegemony," *International Security* 28/1 (2003); Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of the United States' Unipolar Moment," *International Security* 31/2 (2006); and Michael Mandelbaum, *The Case for Goliath* (Public Affairs 2007).

⁴⁹ On this point see especially J. Brownlee, "Can America nation-build? (Review essay)" *World Politics* 59 (January 2007).

⁵⁰ Specifically, Art. 28, para. 7, states that "If a Member State is a victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter."

EU supports these norms.⁵¹ The EU's official motto – “United in Diversity” – may work as a governing principle within the EU itself but it is highly questionable whether such a balance between the enforcement of collective norms and the preservation of national cultures can be struck outside the EU itself. Claims to universalism are always potentially controversial yet the EU seems increasingly willing to take on the risks of not just defending but *extending* these values as key principles of global governance. There is a world of difference, however, between leading by example (the power of attraction) and leading by assertion (power projection), and between a more general humanitarianism and a more specific civilizing universalism as fundamental goals of policy.

As part of this transition the EU needs continually to address wider concerns regarding the overall legitimacy, democratic foundations, coherence, and universality of its global ambitions.⁵² Fortunately, EU citizens seem fairly well supportive of these efforts; despite the French and Dutch rejections of the earlier Constitutional Treaty, European public opinion overall still exhibits strong support for both the CFSP and the ESDP.⁵³ Yet EU citizens may not be as willing to absorb the economic and human costs of a larger, more sophisticated and active, European military force. And it is almost certain that this general support may quickly erode if the EU gets bogged down in the kinds of violent conflict resolution problems found throughout the developing world, especially if casualties are involved. Now that the EU is leading its own troops into such conflicts, this problem will manifest itself at some point in the near future. Thus, beyond the challenges already noted above the EU would also do well to consider very carefully the last remaining component of its nascent grand strategy: how to articulate, as clearly and consistently as possible, the specific conditions under which, and reasons for which, the EU will use deadly force.

⁵¹ The Preamble of the Lisbon Treaty cites “inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law” as universal values stemming from the humanist inheritance of Europe. These values are further asserted in Article 1a, which also mentions minority rights, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between men and women.

⁵² On democratic control in particular see Wolfgang Wagner, “The Democratic Control of Military Power Europe,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 13/2 (2006): 200-216.

⁵³ The EU regularly surveys its citizens on this question and reliable data are available extending back more than a decade. The most recent comprehensive survey on EU foreign policy (2003) is available on the EU's website at: <http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/notes/csf_pesc_papr03_en.pdf>. It demonstrates overall support for the CFSP at 67%, and overall support for a common defense policy at 74%. It also surveyed the ten EU membership candidate countries due to join in 2004 and found overall support among them for CFSP was at 67% and support for a common defense policy was at 77%. Overall, support on these issues has steadily increased throughout the EU since European citizens became more aware of the EU's ambitions in foreign policy following the 1987 Single European Act.