Introduction: foreign and security policy in the European Union

Nothing is possible without men; nothing lasts without institutions.
Jean Monnet

On November 19, 1970, Europe's novel experiment in regional economic integration quietly delved into uncharted territory. In Munich, at the former Prussian embassy to the Kingdom of Bavaria, European Union (EU) foreign ministers met for the first time under the rubric of a new institutional framework, "European Political Cooperation" (EPC). This meeting represented the latest in a long series of efforts to coordinate the foreign policies of EU member states in areas other than economic affairs. The EU's previous attempts to coordinate such policies, such as the European Defense Community and the European Political Community of the 1950s, and the Fouchet Plans of the 1960s, had failed miserably because of fundamental disagreements about the means and ends of European foreign policy cooperation. Thanks to this legacy, EPC was greeted with considerable uncertainty and skepticism when the EU foreign ministers met in Munich. The meeting aroused little public attention, and EPC participants themselves expected the profound differences in their foreign policy traditions, domestic political cultures, administrative capacities, and global relationships to inhibit their attempts to find a collective voice in world politics.

In addition, not only was EPC's scope of action so indeterminate that it threatened to invite more conflict than cooperation, but its mechanisms to induce such cooperation were feeble and peculiar. It was not based on a treaty, nor did it have any permanent organizational machinery. Its rules were extremely vague and its instruments for collective action few. Perhaps the only thing the EU foreign ministers could agree upon – but for different reasons – was that EPC should be kept strictly separate from supranational European Community (EC) procedures and that security or defense matters were not appropriate subjects for discussion in the EPC framework.

Given its obscure goals, its modest institutional support, the difficult problems Europe hoped to confront with it (such as the Middle East), the entrenched foreign policy traditions of its member states, and the hostile attitude of the US toward it, EPC should never have left the planning stage. If it did persist, it should have been little more than a "talking shop" for diplomats, very similar to other political dialogues based within regional organizations (such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or the Organization of American States) or held during periodic summits (such as the Group of 7 [G-7] industrialized nations) which also possessed no capacity for coordinated external actions. Yet this novel diplomatic experiment – "the world's most advanced model of collective diplomacy" (von der Gablentz 1979: 688) in the words of one enthusiastic participant – surprised its participants and critics alike over the next two decades. The very first meeting of EPC foreign ministers in Munich laid the groundwork for sustained discussions of the Middle East and East–West relations, which resulted in the Euro-Arab Dialogue and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe a few years later. These two difficult subjects occupied EPC for years while other issues were gradually added to the agenda, extending foreign policy cooperation into uncharted territory. During this time the institutional framework of EPC developed and expanded far beyond what was anticipated or even desired by EU member states. Finally, although EPC was established outside EC structures, it quickly grew more sensitive to Community policies and procedures so that, by the time of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union in 1991, EPC was replaced by a "Common Foreign and Security Policy" (CFSP) and both the EC and the CFSP were tied together legally under the new single institutional framework known as the "European Union." By this time powerful taboos against discussing security issues had been overcome and cooperation in this area found its way into the Maastricht Treaty, though in a somewhat equivocal way. Today, discussions regarding defense cooperation and a common European military force are commonplace in the EU, and specific plans to further those ends have been agreed.

Thus, despite the legacy of failure and the climate of uncertainty surrounding the first tentative meetings in EPC, EU member states creatively improved and expanded their cooperation in foreign policy, a process which continues to this day. How they managed this feat is the subject of this book. In particular, I examine the relationship between institutional development and foreign policy cooperation among EU member states. Toward this end I advance a theory of institutionalization and describe the specific mechanisms that encouraged EU states to cooperate in this

area. I also provide empirical evidence of such cooperation, linking it to institutional changes in EPC/CFSP.

The puzzles of European foreign policy

The EU's attempt to cooperate in foreign policy has attracted an increasing amount of attention in the growing literature on Europe's external relations. There is little consensus, however, on the relationship between EU foreign policy and international politics. Some scholars, particularly American ones, see EPC/CFSP as a pretentious waste of time or even a failure, particularly when it is unable to solve complex international problems (Art 1996; Gordon 1997–98; Hoffman 2000). Others see it as a nuisance, one that only interferes with, or even undermines, the efforts of powerful states (again, chiefly the US) to maintain global stability. Both attitudes, particularly when based on single episodes such as the Middle East or the Balkans, miss important aspects of EU foreign policy that easily justify a closer look at its development and functioning. And although a number of excellent case studies on individual EPC/CFSP actions exist, there are more elemental, and in my view, theoretically interesting questions about Europe's cooperation in foreign and security policy. In particular, this volume focuses on five closely related sets of questions.[1]

1 The existence, endurance, and expansion of EU foreign policy

Perhaps the most important questions are also the most general: why should a regional economic organization struggle for so long to develop its own foreign policy? Why does the EU persist in attempting to speak with a single voice in world politics, even when this might frustrate its most important ally, the United States? And why did EPC not only succeed where the European Defense Community and European Political Community had failed, but persist and expand as well, even in the face of numerous internal and external challenges? As "the simplest, leanest, most cost-effective form of international cooperation yet devised" (Hurd 1981: 388), EU member states could have kept EPC as a passive forum to share information, as it was designed; instead they repeatedly attempted to both strengthen and make greater use of the mechanism. Taboos over what had been considered issues inappropriate for EPC (such as security) were gradually broken, and changes in the mechanism itself were built

[1] For similar expositions of the most important questions concerning EPC, see Hill 1988a; Weiler and Wessels 1988.

onto previous innovations, so that member states did not feel threatened by a radical expansion of their cooperation in this sensitive area. This theme – progressive adaptation in the midst of continuity – is a defining feature of EPC/CFSP. However, this is not to say that there were no setbacks; in fact, in explaining continuity we must also confront the fact that European foreign policy cooperation has disappointed its advocates in some areas. Still, it has advanced in a fairly logical cycle involving crisis or opportunity, small-scale innovation, and institutional consolidation (or codification), until the sequence repeated itself and gradually took European foreign relations in new directions.

2 *EU foreign policy and the external world*

Another set of puzzles concerns the impact made by EU foreign policy on non-members, and the influence of external forces on the EU system itself. This topic is often framed as the emergence of the EU as an international political actor (Taylor 1979; Ginsberg 1989; Crawford and Schulze 1990; Rummel 1990; Hill 1993; Holland 1997a; Piening 1997; Peterson and Sjursen 1998; Whitman 1998; Bretherton and Vogler 1999; Ginsberg 1999, 2001). The EU's impact on the world is in part a function of policy effectiveness, and could be used as an indirect measure of cooperation. However, while critics of Europe's global ambitions frequently point to EPC's failure to "solve" (or even to positively impact on) complex international problems such as the Arab-Israeli conflict or the breakup of Yugoslavia, they also unfairly and too readily overlook the more fundamental purposes of EU foreign policy cooperation. EPC was not created to help Europe solve international problems; it was created to prevent international problems from disrupting the Community and, to a lesser extent, to make sure a common European voice was heard in international affairs.

In terms of the first task EU foreign policy has proved a resounding success; foreign policy issues have rarely if ever disrupted the daily business of the EC. And although some might argue that the close involvement of the US in European affairs encouraged common European positions on world politics, there also have been numerous opportunities for discord within Europe and between Europe and the US. In fact, disagreement with a number of American foreign policies provided a major incentive for EU states to cooperate, as I demonstrate in this volume.[2] EU foreign policy has helped to moderate these potential areas of disagreement

[2] As Nuttall (1992a: 3) once put it, "A consistent feature [of EPC] has been the need to find a way of expressing policies which are not those of the United States."

by framing disputes over foreign policy in terms of collective interests and rules, and often has gone beyond these activities by also promoting a collective European response to major questions of international affairs. In this sense one can say that EPC has changed from a defensive or passive approach to cooperation (preventing any external disruption of the Community) to a more positive, proactive one (asserting European interests and values beyond its borders); or in other words, from negative to positive integration. As a result, the EU is still taken far more seriously as an international *political* actor by other states (even the US), regional groupings, and international organizations than many observers appreciate. However, this is not to argue that EU foreign policy is a positive force for the outside world, or even for world peace. This study does not attempt to address this question directly, although I do touch upon it as necessary. Instead, the primary normative criterion used in this volume is whether foreign policy cooperation benefits those for whom it was originally intended: the member states of the EU.

3 *EU foreign policy and European integration*

The question of whether European foreign policy cooperation has an impact on the world beyond the EU is an important one. To a large extent, this has involved finding ways to convert Europe's considerable economic resources into external political power, which raises another set of research questions. As observers often point out, the EC's external economic activities are far more extensive than what takes place within the EPC/CFSP domain (Smith 1998). Sanctions, bilateral aid, and development policies are the only real tools possessed by "civilian powers" such as the EU; still, for EPC/CFSP to co-opt these policies for external political ends, thus drawing itself closer to the treaty-based Community, was a major advancement. Moreover, the EU has become increasingly concerned about improving the coherence among its external policy domains, in part to enhance its role in world politics (Coignez 1992; Neuwahl 1994; Krenzler and Schneider 1997; Smith 2001b). This has not been an easy task, and it raises the more fundamental questions of why a regional institution devoted to economic cooperation among its citizens and firms should require its own global foreign policy, and how that institution attempts to reconcile its economic and political aspirations.

To complicate matters further, there may be inherent differences between international cooperation in economic and political/security affairs. The stakes are perceived to be higher in areas of "high politics," and it is often very difficult to assess and distribute the gains, if any, from foreign policy cooperation. Economic integration represents a clear goal

(the elimination of internal barriers and the harmonization of EU barriers with those of the outside world) that can be explicitly measured according to agreed timetables. A common foreign policy, however, does not share these characteristics; it can mean only a constant process of policy coordination (though informed by general principles, such as respect for human rights and democracy), often driven by changing external circumstances or crises. This may involve the creation of entirely new standards (not just the elimination of old ones), sometimes at the expense of existing national foreign policy interests. Finally, many economic issues involve a fairly high degree of consensual knowledge about the effects of economic conditions on behavior, such as the relationship between exchange rates and economic activity (Jervis 1978; Haas 1980; Lipson 1984).

This distinction between high and low politics helps explain why the EU first developed its authority in less-controversial economic areas while attempts at European defense cooperation in the 1950s failed. Unlike many economic goals, such as a single market or single currency, there is no clear "end product" to be achieved with a "common" foreign and security policy. Such a common policy, like political "integration" and political "union," implies a final stage when the mechanism, in actual practice, can mean only a continuing process of action that evolves over time. Accordingly, students of international cooperation in general, and of European integration in particular, have been preoccupied with socioeconomic policy areas, often to the exclusion of other forms of cooperation. There are also far more socioeconomic institutions in the international system than security-related institutions, which helps bias the literature on cooperation and regional integration in favor of the former. Indeed, one of the founding fathers of functional integration theory, Ernst Haas, explicitly excluded security and defense cooperation from his theory, which focused on spillover in economic policy sectors (Haas 1961). And when compared to other (EC) policy areas, EU foreign policy does seem seriously deficient; compared to international relations in general, however, it is a unique success. By focusing on supranational EC processes (or worse, foreign policymaking within states) as their benchmark for success, both integration theorists and theorists of national foreign policymaking fail to appreciate the central fact that EU foreign policy is being undertaken by states which previously had (and still have) such strong incentives and capabilities to pursue independent foreign policies, and whose pursuit of such policies once led to unprecedented misery on a global scale. Yet EPC was also quite novel in the extent to which it became increasingly linked to, and deferential to, supranational procedures within the EC. This process raises our next question regarding EU foreign policy: how it actually functions.

4 The mechanisms and resources of European foreign policy

The general blurring of the distinctions between high and low politics, between economic and foreign/security policy cooperation, and between the EC and EPC/CFSP, can be appreciated by a more detailed examination of the still-evolving institutions and procedures of EU foreign policy, and how they relate to those of the EC (and individual EU member states) in other areas. This constitutes a fourth major area of EU foreign policy research (Holland 1991b; Rummel 1992; Ginsberg 1995, 1997a; Cameron 1998, 1999; White 2001) and is a central focus of this study. Process always matters in fully explaining any policy decision, whether those of states or international institutions, and whether achieved by virtue of self-interested bargains or other social behaviors. More specifically, if the characteristics of cooperative issue-areas are reflected in institutional design, then we would expect that EU foreign policy cooperation would operate differently from the EC's socioeconomic policies, where the Commission has the sole authority to introduce legislation, the Council of Ministers (and in some cases, the European Parliament [EP]) has the right to modify and approve legislation, and the European Court of Justice (ECJ) can render legally binding decisions on EU member states, firms, and citizens. EU foreign policy is quite different from this process, but the argument must be substantially qualified.

One must first keep in mind that European integration has always involved the use of *economic* cooperation to reduce *political* conflicts among EU member states, and organizations such as the Commission are the driving force behind the policies used to achieve economic cooperation. Thus economic integration itself was supposed to promote, indirectly, political reconciliation, stability, and cooperation in Europe. Internal political integration of this sort might lead to foreign policy cooperation and external actions, but integration theorists assumed this connection rather than specified how it would be established or developed. In addition, EU member states have often disagreed over the extent to which Europe's external political relations should be handled by Brussels. As a result, some member states have attempted to keep EPC (and the CFSP) a strictly *intergovernmental* mechanism (at least in legal terms) to avoid "contaminating" it by existing supranational organizations and procedures in the EC. Other pro-integrationist states feared the reverse: the contamination of the EC's supranational aspects by the intergovernmental features of EPC. Both fears contributed to the explicit procedural separation of EC affairs from foreign policy when EPC was first established. Despite this separation, however, EPC *was* institutionalized and it grew much closer to the EC, eventually becoming formally linked to it as the CFSP in

the new European Union framework. How EPC/CFSP involves aspects of both intergovernmentalism and supranationalism (among other processes), and the extent to which it affects the more general process of European integration, are the central concerns of this volume.

5 *EU foreign policy and domestic politics*

Finally, other researchers have been more concerned with the relationship between domestic politics and EU foreign policy, an increasing area of interest in other EU policy areas as well. Since EPC was established as an intergovernmental system, it seems appropriate to consider state governments, interests, and institutions at the first stage of analysis. According to many observers, national foreign policies are the primary "inputs" into the process of EU foreign policy, and they have received much attention (Hill 1983b; Pfetsch 1994; Carlsnaes and Smith 1994; Stavridis and Hill 1996; Hill 1996; and Manners and Whitman 2000). However, since EU foreign policy has also become increasingly rule-governed over the past three decades, we must also consider the possibility that policy outcomes are the result of some unique combination of EU and domestic influence that varies across time, EU states, and types of foreign policy actions. In addition, these outcomes typically are not major history-making reforms of the EU; some have suggested that bargains such as the Single European Act and the Treaty on European Union favor, and may even strengthen, the position of heads of government/state (Moravcsik 1994). This is not the case with EPC/CFSP; while its outcomes are important policy decisions of the EU, they are not wholly determined by heads of state and they may involve EC institutions in ways that treaty negotiations do not.

It is possible to take these arguments even further and consider that EU member states are fundamentally changed by virtue of their participation in foreign policy cooperation, in ways and with mechanisms that can be empirically validated. This argument is in line with the assumptions about institutions and policy adaptation noted above. Moreover, if cooperation takes the form of consensus-building and peer pressure, rather than trading favors or accepting the decisions of an independent supranational authority, then we must also consider that state interests or preferences are susceptible to other forms of political influence which have not been fully appreciated by analysts of international cooperation. Finally, if common actions reflect common interests, and common interests reflect a common identity, then loyalties or even a distinct European identity can be forged as a result of increasing economic and political cooperation. My examination of the performance record of EPC/CFSP in this

volume shows it is possible to discern some persistent features of the EU's external identity from the way it behaves in world politics, and to see evidence of changes of policy within individual states by virtue of their participation in the system. Although I cannot fully explore all potential changes in the domestic politics of EU member states resulting from EU foreign policy cooperation, there is enough such activity taking place to warrant close attention in this study and in future research.

An institutional approach to European foreign policy

How do we explain EPC/CFSP and thus answer some of these important questions? Unfortunately, the wide variety of questions asked about EPC/CFSP has complicated the search for general theoretical explanations of it. As I suggested above, it is inappropriate to judge or explain EU foreign policy by comparing it to other EU policy domains, even those involving external economic relations, since it is not based on the same legal foundation or procedural mechanisms found in the EC. Although we can rely on some insights from the literature on economic integration, this approach alone cannot explain the complex dynamics of EPC/CFSP. Nor is it appropriate to rely exclusively on the literature on foreign policymaking within states, which typically follows the unitary rational actor assumption. The EU's foreign policymaking system is certainly not unified or even centralized, and it operates according to different rationales depending on the circumstances, a point I will explain in more detail in the next chapter. And as long as the EU is based on international treaty law, its member states reserve the right to participate according to their own self-interests. Finally, it is inappropriate to compare EU foreign policy to cooperation within military alliances, such as NATO. The stakes here are not nearly as high as those involving defense, and EU states have only recently begun serious discussions on joint military operations within the context of European integration.

Thus, this volume examines EPC/CFSP largely in terms of its inherent nature as an example of institutionalized multilateral cooperation among sovereign, independent states. European integration is largely an ongoing discourse about institutions: how to translate very *general* common values or aspirations into *specific* collective policies or behaviors, internal and external, through the application of norms and rules. Institutional development is central to European integration, but we need not privilege the supranational institutions of the EC (such as the Commission and the ECJ), which is the tendency of many institutional analyses of European integration. Instead, I examine the tensions, connections, and resolutions between intergovernmental and supranational methods of

community-building, focusing on how behavioral precedents have been set and followed in the area of foreign policy, despite strict limits on the initiation of policy by the Commission and the adjudication of disputes by the ECJ.

Moreover, although the EU's foreign and security policy cooperation is a unique ambition among regional economic organizations, it is not strictly *sui generis*: some of its institutional elements can be found in other forums for international cooperation, and the activities of EU organizational actors in this domain are closely related to functions they perform in other EC policy areas. As a result, the organization and functioning of EPC/CFSP can offer more general theoretical lessons about the nature of international cooperation; in fact, the puzzle can be reformulated in this way: how have EU states managed to intensify their cooperation in foreign policy since 1970 without fully subordinating these efforts to the supranational Community method and while respecting the individual interests and sovereignty of EU states? Although certain historical elements, such as Franco-German reconciliation and leadership, play a role in this story, constant debates and compromises over institutional questions have been equally important. Institutions can be reproduced while history cannot, and the lessons learned by the EU in this domain can thus shed light on institutionalized cooperation in other domains.

More specifically, I argue that this cooperation is theoretically and empirically interesting for three reasons. First, EPC/CFSP represents international cooperation in what might be considered an emerging, even unusual, issue-area: it is motivated for reasons beyond economic gain or defense. EU foreign policy is largely an "aspirational" institution similar to international cooperation in areas such as human rights, development assistance, and labor standards (Botcheva and Martin 2001). For the most part, EPC/CFSP does not provide direct material benefits to EU member states in terms of either security or wealth, yet they continue to pursue it. Second, and partly due to its aspirational goals, this cooperation was achieved with an innovative and flexible set of institutional procedures, one that is still expanding and that has not been adequately explored by theorists of international relations. Aspirational institutions are usually weak (i.e., they involve no strict enforcement mechanisms), yet EU states have achieved a significant degree of cooperation in foreign policy while strengthening EPC/CFSP as an institution. Third, EPC/CFSP involves highly developed, industrialized states with vastly different capabilities and powerful historical reasons to prefer autonomy or independence, especially in foreign policy. Western Europe is largely responsible for the international state system (not to mention realist-based balance-of-power policies), and I hope to determine how and why the states of