Stephan Keukeleire and Tom Delreux, *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*  

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Keukeleire’s association with Delreux is no less successful than with MacNaughton as the second edition of this book offers a good, encompassing and fully updated account of the many facets of the foreign policy of the European Union.

Like its predecessor, this volume adopts a broad perspective on the EU foreign policy (EUFP), arguing that it is *multifaceted* as it stems not only from the fields of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) but also from a wider range of areas pertaining to what used to be the ‘first pillar’; *multimethod* as it combines a variety of policy-making patterns and procedures and *multilevel* since both the national and European levels feed into it and so do, in the context of global governance, a variety of multilateral institutions and networks, which prompts the authors to refer to the more a-hierarchical notion of ‘*multi-location*’ EUFP. Starting from there, the book proposes a rather extensive journey into the multidimensional intricacies of its subject matter.

The first five chapters tackle the basics. The first one deals with key elements touching the nature of EUFP. In so doing, it highlights the areas of tension that have traditionally characterised this policy that is, more than any other, torn between national logics and preferences on the one hand, and European dynamics on the other hand. One such area of tension derives from the fact that EUFP not only has external functions but also, and perhaps more importantly, internal functions linked to integration and identity objectives. This, the authors remind us, can help to explain why effectiveness is not the overarching concern driving EUFP. In addition to stressing the increasingly globalising context of EUFP, this chapter also lays the conceptual framework which rests on a continuum stretching from relational foreign policy at one end to structural foreign policy (SFP) at the other. Already developed in the first edition, this ‘structural foreign policy’ notion provides the major conceptual contribution of the book. The authors regularly emphasise this throughout the various chapters of instances and aspects of EUFP illustrating it. After these clarifications about the nature of the beast and the conceptual lenses that allow its observation, the following four chapters respectively review the history of European integration in the many areas constitutive of EUFP (chapter 2) and then, for each of these areas, the actors involved at the various stages of decision-making, implementation and follow up (chapter 3) and the policy-making processes (chapter 4). The fifth chapter deals
with the complex interactions between EUFP and the foreign policies of Member States, dealing notably with many aspects of Europeanisation.

Whereas these first chapters essentially update those of the earlier version, so as to integrate institutional evolutions brought about by the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty and ensuing practices in a context that has significantly changed at both the international and European levels, some of the subsequent chapters have been substantially restructured. While chapters 7, 8 and 10, respectively tackling the CFSP, the CSDP and the foreign policy dimension of internal policies, are updated versions of what used to be chapters 6, 7 and 9, the new chapter 6 discusses a few key issues in EUFP. Among these key issues, one finds the usual value-driven triptych – human rights, democracy and rule of law – and a set of more security-oriented issues such as conflict management, non-proliferation and the fight against terrorism. All these topics were already tackled in the earlier version, mainly in a chapter on ‘issues beyond CFSP’ (former chapter 8). However, they have been considerably expanded in the new chapter 6, whereas the rest of former chapter 8 has also been beefed-up in a new chapter dedicated to ‘Trade, development and other external action’. This new formula highlights better the scope of the foreign policy that is ‘produced’ through former pillar one, well beyond a narrow focus on CFSP and CSDP. Among many other issues, this chapter interestingly touches on the increased use of sanctions at the EU level, and on two major international challenges (health and demography) that are not really dealt with by the EU but which require action.

The chapter that used to survey the main geographical arenas of EUFP has also been restructured. The new version has dropped Africa while retaining the various neighbourhoods of the EU, from the closest (Western Balkans) to the more remote Middle East. It does so by combining whenever possible the regional arena dimension with an analysis of the frameworks and approaches set up by the EU such as the European Neighbourhood Policy. The new version allows the authors to deal more extensively with the specific challenges that have emerged in the aftermath of the ‘Arab Spring’ in many Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries, and to question, in the light of post-2010 events, the efficiency of the SFP the EU has supposedly deployed for several decades in its neighbourhood. Former chapter 11 has also given way to two chapters. One exclusively tackles the EU competition with major Powers: the US, of course, but also Russia, China, other emerging Powers and Islamism. The second one substantially develops the projection of EUFP in multilateral organisations and offers interesting thoughts on ‘competing multilateralisms’ and on how these are liable to affect the reach of the EU and its foreign policy. Both these new expanded chapters give an opportunity to describe and somehow analyse changes in the EU’s standing in the world after the 2008 crisis began, shaking some of the EU’s fundamental material and immaterial assets (such as, respectively, economic clout and the socio-economic model). In stark contrast to all these enriching additions, the new conclusion does not significantly depart from the earlier one on the theorisation of EUFP and brings little novelty, if any.

Although the authors do not claim to embrace exhaustively all aspects of the broad EUFP, they have managed nonetheless to give a relatively complete overview of this policy: its evolutions, its actors, institutions and dynamics, its various vehicles, its substance and geographical scope, the partners and competitors it interacts with and the relevant arenas of interaction, and to some extent, the related theories. But the overview is not simply descriptive. The authors constantly engage in analyses to
explain both the opportunities and constraints that are faced by the EU in developing a foreign policy enabling it to assert itself as a full-fledged global actor. More concretely, the authors tackle one issue after the other rather systematically, showing both the institutional ‘theory’ and real-life practices, assessing the consequences of observable gaps and offering explanations in order to make sense of these gaps. In so doing, they offer a view on the current contours of the various dimensions of the EUFP while providing the reader with elements from both the recurrent and most recent debates and valuable assessments on the effectiveness of the multiple aspects of the subject matter.

Some might regret that the broad scope of the issues embraced in the book comes at the price of more detailed and fine-tuned analyses. However, one can counter-argue that a reasonable balance has been found between width and depth. It is rather on different dimensions that the book leaves the reader a little hungry for more. First of all, those who have read the 2008 version might be surprised by the shift in what the authors oppose to structural foreign policy, i.e. conventional foreign policy in 2008 and relational foreign policy in the 2nd edition. It would have been interesting, since the book is also about the changing nature of foreign policy in general, to engage in a short discussion about the need to somehow rethink ‘conventional’ FP in relational terms. The reader is rather left to guess about the differences seen by the authors and the relevance of the shift. This is particularly so since the definition of relational FP (“a foreign policy that seeks to influence the attitude and behaviour of other actors as well as the relations with and between other actors”, p. 27) blurs the distinction with SFP notably when it comes to the objectives, because in practice SFP, as least the one willed by the EU, also has ambitions to change attitudes and behaviour through induced shifts in partners’ structures. Whereas the authors ascertain that both types of FP are not mutually exclusive but rather “complementary and mutually dependent” (p. 28), the question remains as to whether the difference between both brands is one of nature or degree.

Another aspect of the book that might leave a sense of dissatisfaction is the theoretical one, although building a grand theory of EUFP is not a stated objective. The conceptual framework that mobilises relational and structural foreign policies on two ends of a continuum is certainly an interesting device to read the various dimensions of the EUFP but it looks more like a labelling tool rather than an analytical one. Differently put, the notion of SFP allows the authors to relate this or that EUFP action or approach to one of the two types of foreign policy but it is not really used to conduct more detailed theoretical analyses about how the SFP is actually deployed and works. Neither is the concept of SFP clearly discussed from the standpoint of its own relation with the various theoretical approaches that are quickly summarised in the conclusion. Rather, the authors simply highlight how a few approaches pertaining to the theories of International Relations firstly, European integration secondly, and Constructivism thirdly can help in shedding some light on specific aspects of EUFP. Moreover, it is surprising to see Constructivism somehow put on the same par as the two other sets of theories as if it were a theoretical field in itself, rather than a specific set of approaches that could be developed within the wider families of International Relations and European integration theories (among others, of course).

Last but not least, the book consistently establishes through many of its developments that the EU has been losing ground at the international level especially,
although not solely, with the financial crisis that opened new avenues for emerging Powers and the evolutions that have been taking place in the Mediterranean and Middle East regions in the wake of the popular uprisings. In many places and on many issues the EU seems now to be somehow irrelevant, and many international developments are seen by the authors as considerably undermining the EU’s ability to shape the structures of the evolving system. The reader would therefore expect an attempt in the book to delve more deeply into these trends, at least in the conclusion which, regrettably, does not take up this task.

In spite of these caveats, a couple of factual mistakes in the text such as the sentence suggesting that the Union for the Mediterranean (2008) and the Euro-Mediterranean Process (1995) both precede the European Neighbourhood Policy (2004) (p. 265), and perhaps a much too short justification of why ‘Islamism’ has been considered as a kind of ‘emerging Power’, this 2nd edition of The Foreign Policy of the European Union remains a must-read book. Written both methodically and in a crystal clear style, enriched with many figures, tables and boxes, the text will certainly prove to be very useful as a textbook for any course on EUFP. It will also prove to be valuable more generally to anyone interested in or working on the foreign policy of the EU thanks to the wide overview it provides on the field, the debates that is summarises, and the recent specialised literature it mobilises.