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EU FOREIGN POLICY

- ROLE CONCEPTIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

Despite its achievements the exact status of the EU's international role remains highly contested in the academic debate. For some analysts, the EU can be legitimately considered as a global actor in both economic and security terms, but for others the notion of an EU foreign policy still seems distant. Hence, there are good reasons for this thesis to focus on the European Union and its role on the global arena. The central research problem that this thesis sets out to explore is the international role of the EU as an agent of foreign policy action during the first years of the 21st century. Following on K.J. Holsti's work on role theory in foreign policy analysis this problem is analysed by examining how the EU look upon itself, its role, as an international actor.

Primarily this thesis intend to answer two questions: *Which foreign policy roles does the EU ascribe to itself?* and *How has the distribution of roles evolved since the beginning of the 21st century?*

The analysis, and the conclusions drawn from it, is based on the reading of official foreign and security policy speeches, and to a certain extent statements, delivered by the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Javier Solana. The analysis presented a role-set consisting of ten roles in total: *Stabilizer, Promoter of Multilateralism, Partner, Regional Leader, Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security, Defender/Promoter of "EU" Values, Developer, Model, Global Leader, and Liberation Supporter*. When looking at the different roles sorted by year one easily notices the strong evolution of EU's perceived role as a Stabilizer. Other obvious trends are the decreasing emphasis put on the role as Developer and Liberation Supporter, and the high emphasis on promotion of multilateralism and partnership.

It is argued here that the changes in role conceptions and the emphasis put on each role could be explained by studying changes in capability. The launch of the ESDP in 2003 is considered to be crucial.

Keywords

CFSP

Foreign policy analysis

Role theory

Content analysis

Stabilizer

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Abstract

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1. Introduction

"Ladies and gentlemen, there was a time when the EU's foreign policy was criticised for being all talk and no action. And some people still feel today that we put too much emphasis on producing papers or creating structures in Brussels. I disagree because probably the biggest change in the past two years is that the EU is taking on important operational tasks: in the Balkans, the Southern Caucasus, Africa and elsewhere. As the Security Strategy suggested: Europe needs to be more active and capable – and that is exactly what we have become."

Javier Solana speaking at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation
24 January 2005 [www] p.6

The ambitious concept of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was proclaimed in the Maastricht treaty of the early 1990s. More recently, 12 December 2003, a European Security Strategy was formulated that makes explicit reference to the notion of Europe as a force for good. The European Union (EU) member states have also agreed to a European Rapid Reaction Force comprising of 60 000 troops. The EU is now involved in an unprecedented way in peace-keeping operations in such places as Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Macedonia. In these missions, the EU demonstrates its unique capacity to combine a comprehensive set of civilian means (such as aid, economic incentives and civilian police forces) with military power for crisis management and conflict prevention. The process of European integration sure continues to produce ever more astonishing results.

Despite these achievements, and despite Javier Solana's conviction, the exact status of the EU's international role remains highly contested in the academic debate, and the question about a European foreign policy is still in the early 21st century a controversial issue on the political agenda. For some analysts, the EU can be legitimately considered as a global actor in both economic and security terms (Bretherton et al, 1999 p.78 f. and 221 f.). For others the notion of an EU foreign policy still seems distant (see Aggestam, 2004 p.9 and Hill et al, 2002 p.13). 'One conclusion to be drawn from this analytical heterogeneity is that the EU remains largely an unidentified international object with a rather mercurial existence and impact' (Elgström et al, 2005 p.1 f.). So there are good reasons for this thesis to focus on the European Union and its role on the global arena.

In a recent study, examining the role conceptions and the politics of identity in Great Britain, France and Germany in the 1990s, Lisbeth Aggestam (PhD at Stockholm University) concluded that 'a common European role, giving substance to the CFSP, emerged not before the very end of the 1990s' (Aggestam, 2004 p.249). My intention here is to find that role.

1.1 Statement of Purpose

The central research problem that this thesis sets out to explore is the international role of the EU as an agent of foreign policy action during the first years of the 21st century. This problem is analysed by examining how the EU look upon itself as an international actor. The analytical focus, in other words, is directed towards the *subjective* dimension of foreign policy and the self-understanding of the policy maker. It is argued here that by focusing on the self-understanding we can get a glimpse of the EU's definition of its own role, its meaning of action, and consequently what the EU intends to be in the world.

"the most important initial step to take, when inquiring into the meaning of an action, is to determine what meaning this given act has for the actor whose behaviour we wish to clarify and explain."

Carlsneas quoted in Aggestam, 2004 p.3

The concept of role, and the role an actor is perceived to be playing in the international system, is also often seen as a crucial component of an actor's international identity (Aggestam, 2004 p.3 f.).

This thesis intends to fulfil its purpose by answering two questions:

Which foreign policy roles does the EU ascribe to itself?

How has the distribution of roles evolved since the beginning of the 21st century?

1.2 Material

The empirical material consists principally of primary sources. Secondary sources, such as academic studies and books have only been used as background reading and as a guide through empirical material. The analysis, and the conclusions drawn from it, is based on the reading of official foreign and security policy speeches, and to a certain extent statements, delivered by the Secretary-General of the Council of the EU and High Representative for EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) – Javier Solana – the years 2000-2005. To choose Solana as the main source for defining authoritative conceptions of role was natural. Javier Solana is the highest ranking civil servant within the framework of the CFSP, and shall according to the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) assist the Council in matters coming within the scope of the common foreign and security policy, in particular through contributing to the formulation, preparation and implementation of policy decisions, and, when appropriate and acting on behalf of the Council at the request of the Presidency, through conducting political dialogue with third parties.

In the initial face of the research process the aim was to include, as the empirical basis of this study, a minimum of ten speeches pertaining to each year. In order to

minimize potential biases the criteria for selection were that a speech should as a rule have the format of a key foreign policy speech, i.e. be of a general and strategic nature were Solana set out the broad outlines of EU foreign and security policy. The sources of these speeches were found on the Internet, and first and foremost the official homepage of the Secretary-General of the Council. However, because of the limited supply of general speeches held by Solana and posted on the eu.int domain, especially for the time period 1st January 2002 – 31st December 2002, some shorter and more issue specific speeches, and as a last resort statements, were included to fill up the minimum quota of each year. For the same reason also other Internet domains were consulted such as the *European Foreign Policy Bulletin*, provided by the European University Institute in Florence, and NATO. The empirical material representing year 2005 consists of seven speeches/statements only, the last speech held in Warsaw 11 May 2005. This of course constitutes a problem that has to be considered when reflecting upon the empirical analysis. In total eighty speeches and statements are included.

The secondary sources providing the theoretical framework and to a large extent the methodology employed is essentially made up by Stephen G. Walker's (ed.) *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis* including a chapter by K.J. Holsti which is an abridged version of *National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, in turn published in *International Studies Quarterly* 14 (1970): 233-309. Two other publications that deserve to be mentioned here is Aggestam's thesis *A European Foreign Policy? – Role Conceptions and the Politics of Identity in Britain, France and Germany* and Philip G. Le Prestre's (ed.) *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era*. Aggestam's thesis has been the primary source of inspiration when conducting this study.

1.3 Delimitations

Foreign policy is multi-dimensional in the sense that it embraces a number of different policies. Far from simply concerning the high politics of national (or some other entities) security, foreign policy may be conceived as embracing the total sum of the individual actor's external relations. The internationalisation of politics has significantly broadened the scope for what we may consider foreign policy. It is therefore important to be precise about the issue area that is the object of the analytical focus.

The EU is often pictured as a 'foreign policy system', composed of the three pillars as well as the member states' foreign policies (Smith, 2003 p.2). The emphasis here, though, lies with the EU, not at the national, level. The CSFP pillar most obviously concerns foreign policy, but foreign policy at the EU level is not only a product of the CFSP. The European Community (EC) has the competence to conduct external economic relations, and thus contains important foreign policy instruments employed by the Commission.

However, this study is traditional in the sense that foreign policy is primarily analysed in terms of political, diplomatic and security relations. Consequently the

focus rests entirely on the CFSP. There is at least one reason for this restrictive notion of foreign policy. It has been important to keep the empirical work within manageable proportions. A more inclusive definition or application of EU foreign policy would run the risk of loosing analytical clarity, as well as making the study extremely work-intensive. As a consequence the EU's (or more properly the EC's) repertoire of roles in the world political economy, based on its position as a trade policy actor, will be included only to the extent they are conceived by Javier Solana as a part of the EU role-set within the CFSP.

1.4 Disposition

The thesis consists of five chapters. This introductory chapter is followed by a discussion about the EU's status as an international actor in chapter two. The aim is to give an insight into the debate concerning EU actorness and the notion of an EU foreign policy. The discussion will depart from two claims that are fundamental to this project; 1) the EU is to be considered as an international actor and 2) the EU has a foreign policy of its own.

Chapter three provides a presentation of the theoretical framework employed in this study. The chapter is structured in two parts where the first one address the relevance of role theory when conducting foreign policy analysis. The second part introduces the role concept and how it's applied here in order to fulfil the purpose.

Chapter four has two parts, the first one being the methodological discussion which naturally aims to present and discuss the method employed. The second part constitutes the heart of this thesis, which is the empirical analysis.

The final chapter, chapter five, intends to properly present the answers to the two research questions.

2. A European Foreign Policy?

The European Union has evolved considerably from its 1950s origin as a common market with six member states. Today the EU is the world's largest unified market and trading bloc, conducting economic and political relations with virtually every country on earth. Already in the 1970s Johan Galtung portrayed the EC/EU as 'a superpower in the making' and while, in 1973, Galtung's arguments were rather controversial, the discussion of the EU as a global power with global responsibilities is no longer remarkable (Galtung, 1973). 'To say that the EU has considerable presence in international affairs is no longer a radical statement' (Smith, 2003 p.24). Even so there has been during the past twenty years an almost continuous debate about the nature of the EU as an international actor. At one end of the spectrum are those who see the EU as a potential state, or at least the performer of essential state functions in the international political arena (Elgström et al, 2005 p.1). At the other end are those who see the EU as at best a 'patchy and fragmented international participant, and a little more than a system of regular diplomatic coordination between the member states' (Elgström et al, 2005 p.1).

This thesis sets out to explore how the EU perceives of itself as an actor in international politics, through its foreign policy role conceptions. Consequently, this thesis basically rest on two claims: 1) the EU is to be considered as an international actor and 2) the EU has a foreign policy of its own. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the ambiguity surrounding these two claims.

2.1 EU Actorness

"Indeed we are a global actor. With 25 member states, with over 450 million inhabitants, a quarter of the world's GNP, and around 40% of the world merchandise exports; and with the comprehensive array of instruments – economic, legal, diplomatic, military – at our disposal, that claim is not an aspiration but a statement of fact."

Javier Solana speaking at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation
24 January 2005 [www] p.2

Through its economic strength the EU has gained a lot of influence in almost all corners of the world, and the union has for many years been a respected actor in the global economy (McCormick, 2002 p.194). Despite Solana's conviction however, the situation is somewhat different when it comes to foreign and security

policy. Security and foreign policy issues have mainly been a domain reserved for the individual member states. It is so not least because of the traditional view on security and actorness being closely linked to the notion of the sovereign state and its military capabilities. Is it then totally wrong to label the EU as an international actor?

The primary issue here is how we define actorness. Which are the characteristics of the units that constitute the international system? A formal answer to the question “How do we recognize an actor?” is provided by public international law. This, by definition, focuses upon the interstate system, and has developed its own formal concept of actorness in terms of the notion of legal personality. Legal actorness confers a right to participate, but also to be held responsible by other actors, and to incur obligations. In conventional International Relations the answer to the question ‘How do we recognize an actor?’ is essentially the same as that given by the lawyers: states. Thus international law and International Relations define actorness through looking at the properties of the sovereign state (Bretherton et al, 1999 p.16 ff.). This is in many ways a narrow and simplistic view which basically excludes both international organisations and multinational cooperation’s, and deny them any kind of real political influence, including the EU.

As has been mentioned before judgements concerning EU actorness abound, although systematic analyses of the bases of actorness are relatively uncommon (Bretherton et al, 1999 p.36). In many cases, viewed externally, the EU is simply assumed to be an important actor. This implies, of course, that the EU possesses the characteristics and capability of an important international actor. All the same there are scholars who have, through their research, come to the same conclusion.

In the mid seventies Gunnar Sjöstedt argued that the European Community was to be regarded as an international actor. Already then the community possessed those basic prerequisites that Sjöstedt believed was absolutely essential for an international actor, i.e. *autonomy* and *capability* (Sjöstedt, 1977 p.18). To be autonomous, according to Sjöstedt, a unit has to 1) be delimited from others and from its environment, and 2) have a minimal degree of internal cohesion (Sjöstedt, 1977 p.15). The second actor criterion is, according to Sjöstedt, capability. The short definition of capability would be that an actor has to be able to act or produce actor behaviour (Sjöstedt, 1977 p.16). Through identifying a number of structural prerequisites for the production of actor behaviour Sjöstedt constructed a model to determine the EC actor capability at a certain point in time. To be labelled as an international actor a unit have to possess qualities that represent every one of these (ten) prerequisites (Sjöstedt, 1977 p.75).¹

Capability is also central to Christopher Hill’s definition of actorness. Hill argues that ‘true actorness requires not only a clear identity and a self-contained decision-making system, but also the practical capabilities to effect policy’ (Hill et al, 2002 p.13). The results of Hills research shows that the EU falls some way short in at least some of these dimensions.

¹ 1. Community of interest; 2. Goal articulation system; 3. Resource mobilisation system; 4. Resources for action; 5. Interdependence management system; 6. Crisis management system; 7. Normal decision-making system; 8. Control and steering system; 9. Network of agents; 10. Network of transaction channels.

"(...) actorness in the world is something which most non-theoretical observers automatically assume that the European Community possesses, but which on closer examination might be seriously doubted (...). The truth, (...), is that the Community is a genuine international actor in some respects but not all."

Hill 1993 p.308

According to Hill the lack of military capabilities stand between the EU and real actorness. At the same time it is hard to deny the fact that the member states of the European Union have established 'a collective presence in the international arena', and it is impossible to ignore the effects of EU action in the international system (Hill et al, 2002 p.13). If the other actors in the system perceive of the EC as a real international actor it is hard to argue something else (Hill, 1993 p.318). Thus, Hills definition of actorness doesn't totally exclude the EU. Certain shortcomings in capability don't have to imply a total lack of ability. Hill concludes that the EC 'could conceivably reach the position of being able to act purposefully and as one while eschewing a military capability' (Hill, 1993 p.318). However, it has to be pointed out that Hill consider the EU's lack of assured access to military instruments to be a significant impediment to its actor capability. 'Defence is the key to the development of the union's place in the world' and even if the EU has reached a certain degree of actorness 'they (the EU member states) depend on favourable conjunctions of external circumstances and operate largely in the longer term' (Hill, 1993 p.318 and Hill et al, 2002 p.13).

Bretherton et al define actorness as the individual unit's ability to independently formulate goals and engage in some form of purposive action to fulfil them (Bretherton et al, 1999 p.37 ff.).² They argue that an attempt to view the EU through the conceptual lenses of statehood will result in an image that obscures the unions fundamental characteristics as an international actor (Bretherton et al, 1999 p.258). Even if the EU has a lot to wish for in "traditional" capability the union possesses a number of unique qualities that have to be taken into account, not least the mere scope that EU policies cover. To a greater or lesser extent, all the significant issue areas of contemporary global politics can be addressed by the union as an actor, except for strictly military and strategic relations, but even here is "soft EU non-military security measures" of great use (Bretherton et al, 1999 p.170 and 249).

"(...) the EU may not be a superpower (a term that implies the possession of great military power as well as economic strength) but it is certainly a global power."

Bretherton et al 1999 p.36

At least two of the three scholars referred to here have more or less granted the EU status of an international actor (Hill being somewhat hesitant). Accordingly I

² Bretherton et al propose five basic requirements for actorness: 1. a shared commitment to a set of overarching values and principles; 2. the ability to identify policy priorities and to formulate coherent policies; 3. The ability effectively to negotiate with other actors in the international system; 4. the availability of, and capacity to utilize policy instruments; and 5. domestic legitimation of decision processes, and priorities, relating to external policy (Bretherton et al, 1999 p.38).

consider claim number one to be valid, the EU is to be considered as an international actor. The EU may not exercise influence to the extent that, say, the United States does, but the union is an increasingly important international actor that plays an influential role in world politics.

"The question is not whether we play a global role, but how we play that role."

Javier Solana speaking at the Conference of Ambassadors in Rome
24 July 2002 [www] p.4

The next section in this chapter address claim number two – the EU, as an international actor, has a foreign policy of its own.

2.2 EU Foreign Policy

"Foreign policies consists of those actions which, expressed in the form of explicitly stated goals, commitments and/or directives, and pursued by governmental representatives acting on behalf of their sovereign communities, are directed toward objectives, conditions and actors – both governmental and non-governmental – which they want to affect and which lie beyond their territorial legitimacy."

Carlsneas quoted in Aggestam, 2004 p.5

In the quote above Carlsneas present his answer to the question "What is foreign policy?". Carlsnaes' definition emphasises sovereign communities, which reflects a traditional view of foreign policy as the pursuit of national interests and state security through formal, intergovernmental relations. Karen E. Smith presents a somewhat similar definition when stating that:

"Foreign policy (...) means the activity of developing and managing relationships between the state (or, in our case, the EU) and other international actors, which promotes the domestic values and interests of the state or actor in question. Foreign policy can entail the use of economic instruments, but its aims are explicitly political or security-related."

Smith, 2003 p.2

Hence, foreign policy is roughly defined as the individual actor's external behaviour (statements and other types of action), and the existence of foreign policy is consequently in the end connected to the notion of actorness. The three scholars referred to in the discussion regarding actorness above all stress the fact that actorness is dependent on some kind of ability to act.³ Actorness is dependent on performance instruments or, to be more specific, in order to be an international actor the autonomous unit has to be able to produce foreign policy. Since I already

³ Sjöstedt ten structural prerequisites for actorness include *a system for resource mobilisation* i.e. a system for the transformation of resources into behaviour. Hill demands *practical capabilities to effect policy* and Bretherton et al *the availability of, and capacity to utilize policy instruments*.

in the previous section determined that the EU should be considered to be an international actor I automatically also ascribe the union a foreign policy. This is of course is not an uncontroversial claim.

Aggestam argues that the foreign policy competencies pooled on a European level mean that the whole concept of foreign policy has become problematic; indeed what is European foreign policy? (Aggestam, 2004 p.9). Even if the EU over the years has compiled an arsenal of competencies and capabilities in foreign policy providing it with an actor presence and 'international identity' it is, according to Aggestam, important to stress that 'we are not talking of national foreign policy writ large. European foreign policy is more appropriately analysed as a non-unitary or disaggregated entity in world politics' (Aggestam, 2004 p.9). This is so because the EU members are not necessarily seeking to formulate a single foreign policy, but seeking to combine national foreign policies into a common policy on those issues of joint interest.

"(...) foreign policy making in western Europe is still the foreign policy of 15 nation-states rather than the foreign policy of one supranational state."

Soetendorp quoted in Aggestam, 2004 p.9

Historically the most obvious joint interest connecting the member states has been of an economic nature. The construction of the common market has made the EU an important economic actor and there is no doubt about the presence of a foreign economic policy where the objectives and means are strictly economic. Foreign policy however is 'explicitly political or security related' which is a relatively weak domain of the EU's international presence (Aggestam, 2004 p.9).

Elgström join the debate by stating that it is the distinctiveness of the EU foreign policy that is the crucial point. While some scholars underline fundamental dissimilarities between EU and nation-states in employing foreign policy, 'a large number of observers tend to emphasise the uniqueness of the EU as an actor in international politics' (Elgström et al, 2005 p.13). Elgström disregard the absence of certain policy instruments and lack of influence over certain policy issues and instead argue that the EU is a unique actor 'owing to its peculiar configuration of policy instruments' (Elgström et al, 2005 p.15). The EU use persuasion and positive incentives (rather than coercion) and constructive engagement (rather than isolation), and of course the use of economic instruments remain central in EU foreign policy (Elgström et al, 2005 p.15 and Smith, 2003 p.21 f.).

My opinion is that even in foreign and security policy 'the European Union is much more than the sum of its member states' (Solana, 17 March 2004 [www] p.2). Just because the EU lacks certain competencies, or tools for that matter, and to a large extent is dependent on the political will of its consisting parts; one cannot deny the fact that today there are very few areas of foreign policy where the EU, as an actor, refrains from making a statement of some sort. The common foreign and security policy may not be the only expression of European foreign policy but nonetheless an important part of it. I therefore consider claim two to be valid, the EU, as an actor, is able to produce external behaviour and consequently has a foreign policy of its own.

3. Theoretical Framework

In an article published in 1970, Holsti called attention to the utility of a sociological understanding of role as an actor's characteristic pattern of behaviour. Holsti argued that he had found a way to conceptualise and operationalise the relationship between identity and foreign policy behaviour when conducting empirical analysis. Based on an extensive cross-national study, he set out to investigate decision-makers perceptions of their own nation, thereby focusing on the subjective dimension of foreign policy.

"A national role conception includes the policymakers own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems."

Holsti, 1987 p.12

This chapter will present an outline of the theoretical framework used in this thesis. The first part addresses the relevance of role theory when making foreign policy analyses. The second part discusses different approaches of role theory and how it will be defined and used here.

3.1 The Relevance of Role Theory to Foreign Policy Analysis

"(...) because the notion of national role suggest general orientations and continuing types of commitments, actions and functions, it has a level of generality appropriate for both foreign policy theories or frameworks, and systems studies."

"(...) a very powerful tool for explaining variations in many types of foreign policy behaviour."

Jönsson, 1984 p.17

Historians, officials, and theorists of international relations often characterize foreign policy behaviour by terms which suggest patterned or recurring decisions and actions by governments. Typical classifications would include 'non-aligned', 'bloc leaders', 'balancers' and 'satellites'. When one classify a state as non-aligned, it implies that in a variety of international contexts and situations; its diplomatic actions and decisions will be consistent with the 'rules' subsumed under the general category of states called "non-aligned" (Holsti, 1987 p.5). Thus, the

term summarizes a broad but typical range of diplomatic behaviour and attitudes. Theorists of international politics have made references to national roles as possible causal variables in the operation of international systems, or in explaining the foreign policies of individual nations.

Le Prestre argues that the concept of 'role' and its potential contribution to foreign policy analysis has been largely neglected. While the concept has been widely used in sociology and anthropology, its application in political science has largely focused on attempts to understand the domestic behaviour of individuals (Le Prestre, 1997 p.5). This general 'neglect' can, according to Le Prestre, be attributed to several factors, such as the popularity of other approaches – political economy, psychological theories, bureaucratic policies etc (Le Prestre, 1997 p.5).

However, defining a 'role' and having it accepted by others is still a basic objective of states. A role reflects a claim on the international system, a recognition by international actors, and a conception of national identity (Le Prestre, 1997 p.5). It can be regarded as the active behavioural dimension of a state's international identity in foreign policy. The analytical originality basically builds upon the fact that ideas about who 'we' are tend to serve as a guide to 'our' understanding of basic values and 'our' choice of action in a given situation. Role articulation, expressing rights and obligations, can thus help explain the general direction of foreign policy choices.

"The articulation of a role betrays preferences, operationalises an image of the world, triggers expectations, and influences the definition of the situation and of the available options. It imposes obligations and affects the definition of risks. Focusing on this concept, therefore allows one to go beyond the traditional explanation of foreign policy, which is based on security or on the national interest defined as the prudent search for power. Roles help define national interests and divorce them from power."

Le Prestre, 1997 p.5

Le Prestre's argumentation is in line with Holsti's conclusions. Holsti's research, using an inductive approach to explore what role conceptions policy makers themselves perceive and define, indicate that the practitioners of foreign policy express different and numerous roles for themselves than the general ones stipulated deductively by academics (Holsti, 1987 p.28). Significantly, this seems to suggest that roles have multiple sources and are not exclusively generated by the distribution of power. This means that Holsti's and Le Prestre's findings are in contradiction to the role concept that has traditionally been used in IR-theory where the sources or roles are predominantly systemic and based on material factors. A role has mainly been deductively conceived of in the singular, as a general role, denoting 'role expectations' within a system of balance of power (Walker, 1987 p.71). Thus, 'contrary to the thesis of structural realism, capabilities alone do not define a role' (Aggestam, 2004 p.12).

Even if Le Prestre is displeased with the amount of emphasis on, or general neglect of, role theory as a tool in foreign policy analysis Holsti's ground-breaking work has been followed by a series of scholarly work, by for instance Christer Jönsson (*Superpower* 1984) and Stephen G. Walker (*Role Theory and Foreign*

Policy Analysis 1987). In the 1990s, it generated renewed interest as part of the revival of sociological approaches to international relations theory and social theory in political science (Aggestam, 2004 p.13). Here one finds Le Prestre's own work from 1997 focusing on *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era*.

Nonetheless, even if Walker argue that the potential utility of role analysis for understanding foreign policy is threefold: 'it has descriptive, organisational, and explanatory value', it is important to point out that there does not exist a general role theory per se, which provides coherent answers as to why, when and how certain role phenomena occur (Aggestam et al, 2000 p.49 f. and Walker, 1987 p.2). Role theory is really more a research orientation or a framework rather than a powerful theory. The role concept can both theoretically and methodologically be applied to different perspectives based on the questions one set out to answer.

The purpose of the next section is therefore to discuss different interpretations of the role concept and present the role theoretic angle used in this study.

3.2 Role Theory

The word *role* has evolved from the theatre, where roles were originally the parts from which theatrical characters were read (Aggestam, 2004 p.63). The actor operates with a script and is motivated to follow the script to comply with the rules of the game. Putting the theatrical analogy aside 'role' is a concept that initially was developed in sociology and social psychology to denote an actor's characteristic patterns of behaviour given a certain position. 'Role [also] represents a link between individual personality and social structure, since the individual actor as role-player performs on the stage of the broader society' (Aggestam, 2004 p.56). Individual roles are the result of individual qualities developing in a particular environmental setting and in interaction with other individuals.

Holsti argues that the term role, or *role performance*, refers to behaviour (decisions and actions) and can be kept analytically distinct from *role prescriptions/expectation*, which in turn are the norms and expectation attached to particular positions. The foundations of human behaviour are both the position and the norms and expectations the 'alter' projects on the position (Holsti, 1987 p.7). Role theory thus emphasises the interaction between the role prescription of the 'alter' and the role performance of the occupant of a position, the 'ego'. While some aspects of behaviour are best examined on the personal level, attention could also successfully be shifted to the ego's own conception of his/her position and functions, and the behaviour appropriate to them, *role conception* (Holsti, 1987 p.7). The concept of role can thus be used in different ways.

Role prescription/expectation refers to roles that other actors (alter) prescribe and expect the role beholder (ego) to enact. These expectations emanate from the basic cultural, institutional or judicial setting (Holsti, 1987 p.8).

Role conception refers to the normative expectations that the role-beholder expresses towards itself, i.e. the ego's own definition. A role conception defines

responsibilities and obligations in foreign policy. According to Holsti a role conception is a product of a nation's socialisation process and influenced by its history, culture and societal characteristics (Holsti, 1987 p.7). A role conception embodies a mixture of norms, intentions and descriptions of reality.

It is important to note that not only do actors conceive different roles at different times but also of several roles at the same time. Holsti, for instance, identifies seventeen different role conceptions in his cross-national survey (presented 1970), and finds that no state conceives of only a single national role.⁴ This is what one call an actor's *role-set*. The different roles within the role-set vary in importance and according to the situation at hand. Studies employing role theory have also shown that the fact that actors typically engage in multiple role-taking may create *role strains* in situations when two different roles in the role-set are contradictory (Jönsson, 1984 p.17).

Role performance or the actual behaviour in terms of attitudes, decisions and actions undertaken in specific situational contexts, refers to how, in what ways, a role is played. Holsti suggest that behaviour is characterised by role performance, which in turn can be explained by the role conceptions held by decision-makers and the role prescriptions/expectations from the alter (Holsti, 1987 p.7 f.).

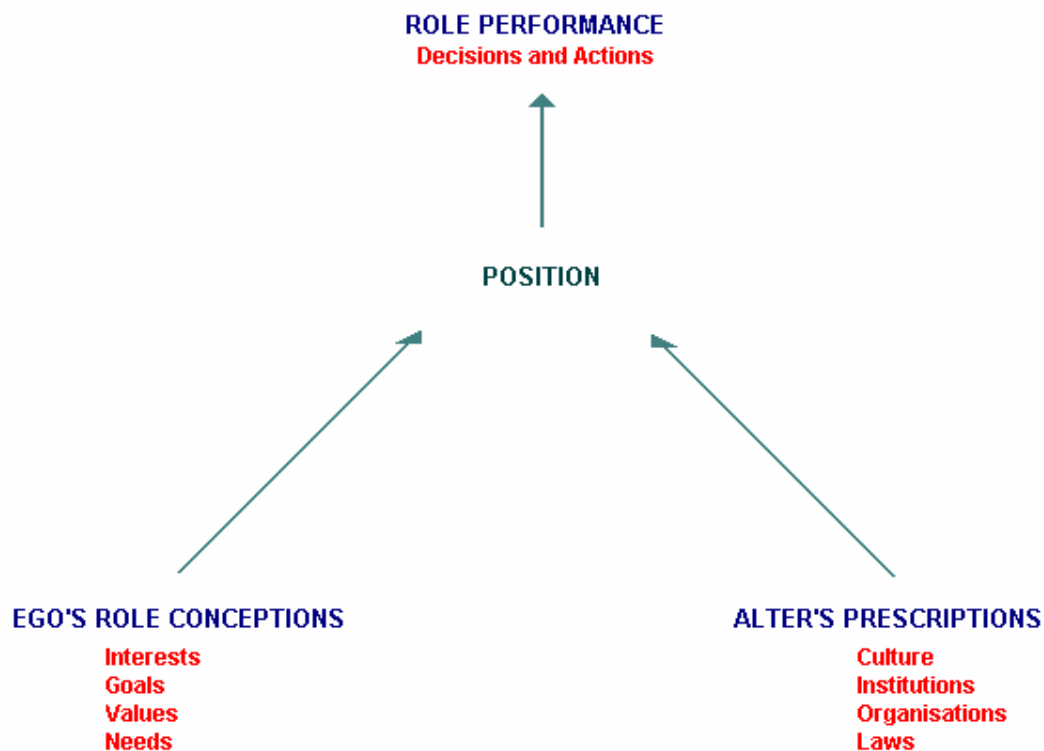


fig.1 Holsti, 1987 p.8

⁴ In Holsti's sample the average number of different role conceptions per country was 4.6. The highest number of different role conceptions found was 8 (United Arab Republic and USA) and the lowest 0 (Ivory Coast) (Holsti, 1987 p.31). In a more recent study by Le Prestre the US role-set consisted of 11 different roles (Le Prestre, 1997 p.69).

As displayed in fig.1 role conceptions and role prescriptions/expectations forms a *position* from where role performance or behaviour is generated.⁵

Role indicators, when conducting role analysis, could obviously be either actions (role performance) or cognitions (role conceptions + prescriptions). Among psychologically oriented role analysts there has been a marked tendency to rely on role performance indicators, and studies employing the concept of role, primarily explain behaviour (role performance) by examining the relationship between the *position* and the *sources of role prescriptions/expectations* (Holsti, 1987 p.9 and Jönsson, 1984 p.17). To some extent scholars within the field of political science differ in this respect finding it preferable to focus on perceptions of the alter and the ego. In role-theoretic foreign policy analysis, in particular, there is a general emphasises on the self-conceptions of policymakers (see Jönsson 1984; Walker 1987; Le Prestre 1997; Aggestam 2004).

3.2.1 The Role Concept and Foreign Policy Analysis

The three analytical distinctions of roles, outlined above, are of course closely interlinked and sometimes hard to detach. Nonetheless, given the aim of this study the empirical focus resides predominantly with the notion of role conception. Thus, this is not an objective analysis of which roles that could be ascribed to the EU given its position as an actor in the international system. Instead this thesis sets out to investigate the subjective dimension of EU's foreign policy.

Holsti suggests that the best way to understand the roles of foreign policy-makers is to try to see them as they do. 'The great strength of this approach is that it tries to careful account of political reality as it is experienced by the policy-makers who construct it in a dynamic interaction between rules and reasons' (Aggestam, 2004 p.66). Holsti also describes national role conceptions as being more influential than the role prescriptions emanating from the external environment in shaping foreign policy behaviour (fig.2), or as Jönsson puts it 'the norms or role prescriptions emanating from the external environment are weak' (Walker, 1987 p.242 and Jönsson, 1984 p.18). It is argued to be so mainly because of the fact that foreign policy behaviour in the end is based on national interest. 'When incompatibility exists between highly valued national interest and the norms of behaviour established through treaties and the like, the latter normally give way to the former' (Holsti, 1987 p.10). This claim has led some academics to draw parallels between state-centric realism and foreign policy role analysis. Lisbeth Aggestam however call these conclusions misleading and argues that a sociological theorising on role does not build upon realistic assumptions, but contends that prevailing beliefs and assumptions within a national society predisposes foreign policy-makers towards certain ranges of foreign policy (Aggestam, 2004 p.7 f.). 'Focus-

⁵ The concept of *position* is a behavioural setting with more or less well-defined functions, duties, rights, and privileges. Roles are often associated with certain *positions* i.e. banker, military chief, great power roles, presidency roles etc. (Holsti, 1987 p.9 and Elgström et al, 2005 p.10).

ing on role conceptions allows one to go beyond the traditional explanation of foreign policy as the prudent search for power' (Aggestam, 2004 p.8). I would like to argue that role conceptions can help us understand the obligations and commitments that states and other types of actors perceive for themselves beyond mere considerations to maximise their own interest.

Regardless of the arguments that leads us towards a general focus on the ego's role conceptions it is a clear that such an approach undermines the role theoretic concept of *position* as the base for action (when applying role theory to foreign policy analysis), thus making the ego's own conception the main determinant of role performance (fig.2). Instead the nation-state position or *status* is suggested to be contextually determined, i.e. dependent on the issue and multinational setting at hand (Holsti, 1987 p.10 f.).⁶

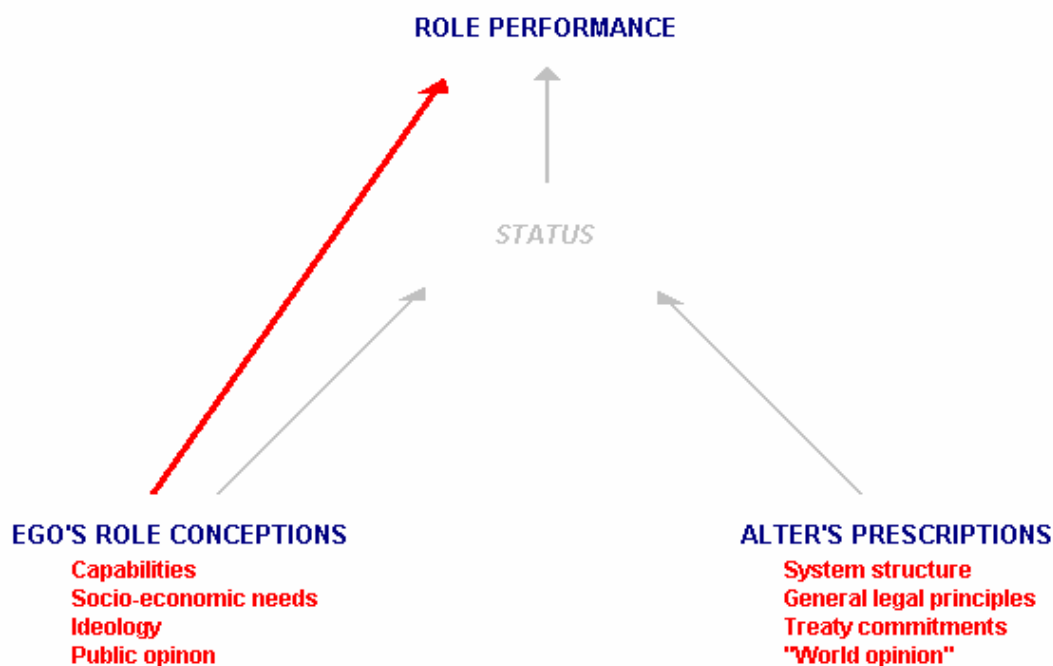


fig.2 Holsti, 1987 p.11

In a more recent study however, more emphasis is put on the alters influence in determining role performance. Elgström argues that actors 'cannot independently decide what roles to play, as roles also are influenced by the expectations of other actors (...). Actors behave in the way they believe is expected from them in a particular situation or context' (Elgström et al, 2005 p.9).

Either way it is important to note here that national role conceptions, and role theory in general, do not provide us with information about specific details in foreign and security policy; they rather touch on the subject in a broader sense.

⁶ The term status replaces the position and denotes only a rough estimate of a state's ranking in the international system (Fig.2), which may or may not have appreciable consequences on the ways that policymakers define what they believe to be the appropriate international orientations or tasks for their nation (Holsti, 1987 p.11).

“role theory addresses itself to continuities and patterns rather than to small samples of behaviour or events (...) those who have applied role concepts to the international context have been interested in long term patterns of foreign policy rather than direct actions or events .”

Jönsson, 1984 p.17

Role conceptions point at intentions and betray preferences, even if the final result in form of role performance can be, and often is, different and diluted.

In this thesis the role concept is viewed as a cognitive construct evolving in correspondence with the conception of self in foreign policy, and providing a subjective meaning of the world from the individual actor's ability to place “himself” into its context.

The next chapter represents the heart of this thesis – the empirical analysis. The first section present and discuss the methodology employed, in other words, the way from theory to empirical analysis.

4. Role Conceptions of EU Foreign Policy

At this point it's hardly any secret that the main objective of this thesis is to explore how the European Union perceives of itself as an actor in international politics, through a general focus on the Union's foreign policy role conceptions. Following on Holsti's work on role theory in foreign policy analysis, the empirical study of roles is conducted inductively in terms of how policy makers themselves (in this case Javier Solana) perceive and define roles. The purpose is to reveal conceptions of commitments, responsibilities and duties, hence the EU's perceived meaning of external action.

To achieve this I started off in chapter one by formulating two overarching research questions: *Which foreign policy roles does the EU ascribe to itself?*, and *How has the distribution of roles evolved since the beginning of the 21st century?* The purpose of this chapter is to provide answers to these two questions.

4.1 From Theory to Empirical Analysis

A common research strategy in previous role studies has been to measure the frequency of different role statements by combining contents analysis with quantitative techniques (Holsti, 1970, Jönsson, 1984, Thumerelle, 1997 etc.). In this regard this study is not different. Is it then possible to combine a qualitative approach with quantitative techniques?

Traditionally in political science, quantitative and qualitative methods have been used by different researchers, to study different things and to answer different questions. However, is there really a clear distinction between qualitative and quantitative methods? Even the most obvious distinction between quantitative and qualitative data, that quantitative analysis involves large data sets which are usually analysed using statistical packages, while qualitative analysis involves a small number of cases analysed more in depth, is questionable. Not all quantitative data sets are large and not all qualitative data sets are small. Neither is it true that statistical analysis is only preformed on what are normally understood as quantitative data (Read et al, 2002 p.235). Read argues that 'evidence from research practice suggest that the traditional philosophical division between quantitative and qualitative methods is increasingly becoming viewed as a false dichotomy' (Read et al, 2002 p.235). The question, whether it is possible to combine a qualitative approach with quantitative techniques, Read basically answers by stating that there is no reason not to.

"(...) there is no reason why interview data cannot be analysed using quantitative techniques (...). Similarly, we might undertake a content analysis of various official documents or politicians' speeches to establish how often globalisation is mentioned and whether, in these documents/speeches, there is a dominant discourse that presents globalisation as a constraint and argues that the nature of this constraint means that the government has no alternative but to pursue neo-liberal economic policies."

Read et al, 2002 p.235

4.1.1 Content Analysis

'Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages' (Holsti quoted in Le Prestre, 1997 p.12).⁷ The emphasis is on imaginative procedures and new angles with which to probe a text, but also on 'objectivity and comprehensiveness' (Le Prestre, 1997 p.12). Content analysis relies on a series of judgements about the nature of the data, the choice of techniques, the categories used for coding, the coding itself, and the interpretation of the results. Le Prestre argues that because of these trades this approach comes with a magnified risk for bias and the dangers of wishful thinking, thus 'putting a premium on the questions that are asked and on the rigour of the analysis' (Le Prestre, 1997 p.12).

In the following analysis, roles will be identified by coding all the assertions that refer to the conceptions that Javier Solana hold of the commitments, duties and responsibilities of the EU in the international system. With the limitations stressed by Le Prestre in mind, the analysis, and the conclusions drawn from it, is based on the reading of official foreign and security policy speeches, and to a certain extent statements, delivered by Javier Solana the years 2000-05. The number of speeches pertaining to each year varies depending on availability.

Since only one coder was involved there is no problem of inter-coder reliability, but another critique to the approach employed here is that a general focus on official speeches offers no insight into the speaker's own mental representations of the problem he or she faces, or of the norms that govern his or her reflection and action. It is argued to be so mainly because in general speeches are not written by the speaker, and their function is primarily instrumental (Aggestam et al, 2000 p.53 and Le Prestre, 1997 p.13). These observations however, although very much accurate, do not cripple the method. One counter argument is that in the age of instant communication no speaker can control the audience. A speech at a small official dinner in Niger could easily become front-page news in Europe. Speeches, and especially the general policy speeches preferred in this study, can only to a certain extent be tailored for a specific audience. Another argument is of course that the speech writer doesn't put words in the speakers' mouth. They rather provide an expertise in articulation.

⁷ An alternative definition of content analysis – 'the classification and counting of data drawn from the text of media or political debates' (John, 2002 p.218)

“Speeches seek to generate support, persuade citizens, and reinforce their beliefs, but they can also guide government’s action.”

“What statesmen and diplomats say is often as vital as what they do. It would not be far-fetched to go further and declare that speech is an incisive form of action.”

Abba Eban quoted in Le Prestre, 1997 p.14

This project started inductively with a survey of twelve randomly selected speeches (two speeches from each year). The initial study sought to take note of all role statements articulated by Javier Solana with reference to duties and responsibilities that indicated expectancy of a particular form of foreign policy behaviour on the part of the EU. Methodological inspiration was especially obtained from Jean-François Thibault and his study on role conceptions in The Soviet Union and Russia. By first isolating sentences by their use of the following words: “we”, “us”, “our”, “European Union”, “EU” (and other EU abbreviations), and “Europe” it was easier, at least initially, to identify the conceptions of role (see Thibault et al, 1997 p.18). The different role conceptions identified builds mainly on typologies found in earlier studies employing the role concept, which have been redesigned to capture the unique perceptions of the EU (i.e. Holsti, 1970, Jönsson, 1984, Le Prestre, 1997, Beylerian, 1997 and Aggestam, 2004).

The initial study provided a sample of eight role conceptions as well as clues to the way themes might appear in other sources.⁸ This typology, or the EU role-set, was then refined and added to as the research process progressed and ended up containing ten different roles in total, the additional two derived from the readings of the rest of the empirical material.⁹ These results basically fulfils the purpose of the first part of this thesis, which is, to provide an answer to the question – *Which foreign policy roles does the EU ascribe to itself?*

Again with the limitations presented above in mind, the purpose of the second interpretation of the data is to identify trends. I would like to stress here that speculations about the meaning of frequencies for a specific year or category are speculations and nothing else. The primary aim is to determine how the distribution of roles has evolved since the beginning of year 2000 up until today.

4.2 EU’s Role in the World as Perceived by Javier Solana

The eighty sources for this study provided evidence of ten different role conceptions. This section provides a presentation of the individual roles and describes the type of commitments, duties and responsibilities to which Javier Solana referred in each case. The order in which they are presented is randomly selected.

⁸ Model; Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security; Regional Leader; Stabilizer; Developer; Defender/Promoter of “EU” values; Promoter of Multilateralism; and Partner.

⁹ Global Leader; and Liberation Supporter.

Model. This role conception emphasises the importance of promoting “the European experience” of reconciliation and integration only by setting a good example. *Model* is placed at low position on the passivity-activity dimension because it does not require any formal outward directed diplomatic program or special efforts to be made.

“The reconciliation achieved through the establishment of the Union is a powerful example of what regional integration can achieve. (...) Enlargement will serve to increase the role of Europe as a force for peace in the world by the example it sets.” Solana, 25 January 2000

“The EU offers a model for regional integration as a guarantee for peace. It is a powerful and effective symbol of reconciliation.” Solana, 23 June 2000

“(...) we have ended wars and oppression by transforming the European continent into a zone of unprecedented prosperity, security and freedom. (...) Others around the world are paying close attention. The African Union, Mercosur, Asean – these are all examples of strengthening regional regimes. They are explicitly taking their inspiration from the EU experience.” Solana, 24 January 2005

Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security. This role corresponds to a universalist policy and refers to commitments, duties and responsibilities related to a general promotion of international peace and security. It also includes EU’s perceived responsibility regarding the issue of sustainable development, which, according to Javier Solana, to a large extent is dependent on participatory democracy and free-market economic policies.

“The EU has to use its potential to create a safer and more prosperous world. This is not just a moral obligation; it is also the only path towards real security and stability within the EU’s own borders.” Solana, 27 July 2004

“In the last twenty years the Union has done a fantastic job of spreading prosperity, democracy and stability on our continent. But the main challenge for the coming twenty years will be how to best to spread prosperity, democracy and stability beyond our borders.” Solana, 19 November 2004

Global Leader. Similar to the previous role *Global Leader* refers to commitments, duties and responsibilities related to the promotion of international peace, security and prosperity. However, here the emphasis is on the initiative. The *Global Leader* role expresses an intention or a responsibility to assume leadership, be the commander or main guardian, and not a follower, on a global scale.

Le Prestre found a somewhat similar role when applying Holsti’s framework on the United States and labelled it *Hegemon* (Le Prestre, 1997 p.69 f.). The difference between the *Global Leader* role of the EU and the *Hegemon* role of the US is that the latter is somewhat “stronger” in the sense that it expresses commitments closer to being a unilateral world policeman rather than just being the lead vehicle or catalyst in a group of many.

“The end of the Cold War has meant that the EU is able more than ever to offer leadership in the area of security. (...) We are the only group of countries which together has the potential to match the United States in offering leadership.” Solana, 3 April 2001

"As a global actor the Union must now face up to its responsibility for global security. (...) Lets be clear: Europe would be foolish to strive for a global role in rivalry with the United States. But this does not mean that the European Union should refrain from becoming a more credible actor on the world scene. This Union is already a global actor and must therefore not shrink from global responsibilities."
Solana, 2 October 2003

"Our world is growing less safe and we do not have eternity before us. We have to act. Act rapidly. We have to give our response: Europe must play its role as a global actor. Yes, Europe today is the main vector of peace and democracy right across the world." Solana, 18 April 2005

Regional Leader. Again there are similarities to the two previous roles. The main difference between *Global Leader* role and *Regional Leader* role is of course the geographical area which it addresses. *Regional Leader* refers to duties and responsibilities that the EU perceives for itself in its relation to states in the region. It basically relates to a wish of being a good neighbour through strong engagement and sound leadership. It also refers to EU's commitment to embrace the region through further enlargement, and its responsibility for promoting intra-regional cooperation and a good milieu for development in general.

"Today we can say that the EU is more necessary than ever, and it is the main or perhaps the only stability and prosperity factor on our continent. It also constitutes the only real prospect for peace and growth for the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe." Solana, 14 January 2000

"Extending the zone of security around Europe: our task here is to create a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean (...)." Solana, 18 June 2003

"The European Union is powerfully attractive to many of our neighbours. But we must avoid a pattern of connections that point only to a single magnetic pole. All roads should not lead to Brussels. Our neighbours must deepen their own bilateral and regional relationships. That is why, with both our Balkan and Mediterranean neighbours, we must place such emphasis on intra-regional integration."
Solana, 19 November 2004

Developer. The themes in this role conception indicate a special duty or obligation to assist underdeveloped countries and countries that for some reason are in need of financial assistance.

The provision of financial assistance is often considered to be one of the most powerful foreign policy instruments available to the EU (Smith, 2003 p.53).¹⁰ This instrument however falls under the remit of the European Community and, as been stated above, role conceptions pertaining to the EU's activities through the EC are discriminated by the delimitations of this study. Although discriminated the *Developer* role is included to the extent it is conceived by Javier Solana as a part of the EU role-set within the CFSP.

"The EU as the first world donor. That capacity is an important feature in the European construction." Solana, 7 July 2000

¹⁰ Along with the capacity to enter into international agreements (Smith, 2003 p.53).

"Each month we commit nearly EUR 500 million for assistance to third world countries. (...) our obligation remains: to ensure that the money is being spent in the best possible way." Solana, 18 April 2005

Stabilizer. Compared to the *Developer* role the *Stabilizer* role refers to a deeper engagement not just limited to providing financial aid. It pertains to an active role in settling conflict, and is fundamentally based on conflict prevention, peace keeping, crisis management and humanitarian as well as development aid. The *Stabilizer* role could also be described as a more hands on version of the *Defender /Promoter of Peace and Security* role, using the entire toolbox of foreign policy instruments available to the EU, which means everything from sending special envoys and political dialogue to sending military personal with the mission to keep the peace.

"Maintaining law and order and fighting organised crime are integral parts of our crisis management and conflict prevention work throughout the Balkans. Only when we have managed to re-establish law and order in the region and tackle the organised crime that stretches across the Balkans into the European Union will our crisis management efforts have succeeded." Solana, 10 May 2001

"The European Union, for its part, is determined to make use of all its means to support the political process now under way. This involves technical and financial support for the Ituri Interim Administration and the Ituri Pacification Commission as well as for the process of disarming, demobilising and reintegrating the combatants in the district. It also undertakes to support the Ituri socio-economic rehabilitation programme and the local reconciliation process." Solana, 18 July 2003

Liberation Supporter. This is one of the seventeen role conceptions introduced by K.J. Holsti in his study from 1970. Holsti define it as a commitment to 'support liberation movements without assuming any formal responsibilities', and argues that usually statements suggest rather unstructured and vague attitudes about actions required to enact this role conception (Holsti, 1987 p.22). Of course one could discuss the definition of formal – what is formal responsibility in international politics? – but in general Holsti's definition applies to this study. *Liberation Supporter* refers to perceived commitments to support movements against oppression and dictatorship.

"There can be no durable stability in the region as long as Milosevic remains in power. Our aim has to continue to be to support the forces of democracy, and to maintain pressure on the regime. We agreed recently to widen our dialogue by developing contacts with civil society (such as the church, NGOs, the media and academics). This is essential if we are to extend the support against Milosevic and to encourage the development of a true democratic process." Solana, 30 Mars 2000

"(...) during the last year the Union has devoted considerable efforts to helping give a voice to those in Serbia who are genuinely committed to democracy." Solana, 7 November 2000

Defender/Promoter of “EU” Values. The objective or commitment conceived of is quite simply to defend and promote a set of rights and values such as democracy and human rights. It also concerns the close relationship between democracy, human rights, and the market economy.

“We must uphold those values and principles on which the union itself is based.”
Solana, 25 January 2000

“(...) it is equally our duty to protect human rights. This is a very deep European conviction. It is a matter of preserving our basic values.” Solana, 24 January 2005

Promoter of Multilateralism. Many assertions in this role conception are about having the obligation to fulfil duties towards the United Nations and other international organisation. It is also referring to a general commitment to encourage others to cooperate within the framework of multilateral initiatives.

“It is only through working closely together that we can effectively address the new challenges to our security and stability. We need a network of interlocking international institutions and organisations if we are to have confidence in our ability to protect our own collective interest”. Solana, 18 January 2001

“In a world of global challenges, our security and prosperity depends on an effective multilateral system. Strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively must be a European priority.” 18 June 2003

“I believe that our future security will depend more – not less – on an effective multilateral system, a rule-based international order and well-functioning international institutions. Multilateralism is not an instrument of the weak. It is an instrument of the wise.” Solana, 27 July 2004

Partner. This role refers to the commitments Javier Solana articulated towards other international actors such as the United States and Mercosur. To talk about partnerships is quite popular in foreign policy rhetoric, and to put it in Holsti’s words; if one were to count up all the contemporary alliance commitments and other types of treaties, half the states in the system would have to be classified as faithful partners to the other half (Holsti, 1987 p.24 f.).

An effort has been made here to include only conceptions with a firm statement of commitment towards the other actor. Looking at the quote below only the first part, referring to the EU-US relationship, is considered to be a conception of the *Partner* role in this study.

“The Transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. (...) we belong to the same family; we share the same ideas and values. The US also needs Europe. The EU is the only global partner available to the US and vice-versa. (...) Being a global actor the EU also maintains close links with other parts of the world such as Africa, Latin America and Asia. Russia, Japan, China Canada and India (...) are all major international actors and cooperation with them is essential for the EU.” Solana, 27 July 2004

4.2.1 The Structure of the Role-set

The number one aim of this project has been to determine the EU foreign policy role. The previous section gave a short presentation of each of the ten roles that could be derived from speeches held by Javier Solana, and therefore here considered to be part of the EU set of foreign policy roles.

Table 1.

EU Roles, 2000-05

(absolute and relative [%] frequencies)

	n = 80	Abs	%
Stabilizer		56	18
Promoter of Multilateralism		44	14
Partner		41	13
Regional Leader		40	13
Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security		40	13
Defender/Promoter of "EU" Values		37	12
Developer		25	8
Model		13	4
Global Leader		10	3
Liberation Supporter		6	2
Total	10	312	100

Table 1 presents the role-set along with absolute and relative frequencies. Among the ten role conceptions, *Stabilizer* is mentioned most frequently and is the most widely distributed over the eighty speeches analysed here. This role, along with *Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security*, *Regional Leader*, *Defender/Promoter of "EU" Values*, *Promoter of Multilateralism*, and *Partner* are fairly equal regarding the extent they are conceived of by Solana. The *Developer* role, which often is considered to be one of EU's more profound international roles, is only mentioned

in twenty-five of the eighty speeches and scores rather low in relation to the other roles in the set. This is of course a more or less predicted outcome considering the expected effects of delimitations of the study which has been discussed above.

It was a surprise to see that *Stabilizer* scores so high, conceived of in fifty-six of the eighty speeches (70%). Considering the debate regarding EU actorness and EU capabilities one easily presumes that the more general, and to certain extent softer roles, such as *Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security* and *Defender/Promoter of "EU" values*, would totally dominate the role-set. To speculate about the reason for this would of course only be speculation, but even so, my explanation is as follows:

In the early stages of the research process, when conducting the initial pre-study, there was a certain ambiguity concerning whether or not to include an additional "could be" role in the EU role-set – *Promoter of EU influence*. Charles Thumerelle argues that one of the roles conceived of by French foreign policy-makers in the early 90s was to – *Maintain or increase national power*. This role refers to an ambition to 'broaden France influence in the world and upgrade its rank, its prestige, and the respect it commands' (Thumerelle et al, 1997 p.145). Fulfilling this role depends for instance on achieving greater competitiveness and influence through expanding the foreign policy toolbox, or convincing other actors about EU's real potential.

"The headline goal is ambitious. At Helsinki, Member States agreed that they must be able, by 2003, to deploy within 60 days and sustain for at least 1 year military forces of up to 60 000 persons capable of the full range of the so-called "Petersberg tasks". (...) The military option will of course always be a measure of last resort. [But] We must have the capacity to intervene militarily in order to be credible (...)." Solana, 1 March 2000

The decision taken here was to not include this additional "role" in the study. The decision was primarily based on the argument that *Promoter of EU influence* doesn't refer to any foreign policy commitments, responsibilities or duties. It is rather an expression of an *ambition* for the EU to be able to take on additional tasks in the future, or to be more convincing in the performance of the roles already included in the role-set. However, even though it has been rejected from status as a foreign policy role of the EU, this so called "ambition" is still highly relevant here.

As been argued before in this thesis policy-makers use speeches as an instrument to generate support, reveal intentions and to persuade other actors on the world scene. My point here is that the dominating position of the *Stabilizer* role in the role-set could be explained by the ambition to convince other actors about EU's real potential. The EU is already a recognised *Partner*, *Developer* and general *Defender/ Promoter of Peace and Security*, but the ability to take on missions pertaining to peace enforcement and crisis management has long been questioned. So quite simply by emphasising EU's *Stabilizer* role in his speeches, Javier Solana seeks to persuade other actors about the merits of the Union.

In next section the topic for discussion will be how the distribution of roles has evolved since the beginning of the 21st century. The purpose is to identify trends.

4.2.2 Distribution of Roles per Year

In table 2 the gradual strengthening of the perception of EU's international role as a *Stabilizer* becomes clear. From being mentioned in less than half of the speeches in year 2000, it is now emphasised on almost every occasion Solana makes an appearance to talk about the general outline of EU's foreign and security policy.

Table 2.

Distribution of EU's Roles per Year, 2000-05

(absolute and relative [%] frequencies)

n = 80	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of sources	20	12	11	14	16	7

	Abs	%	Abs	%	Abs	%	Abs	%	Abs	%	Abs	%
Stabilizer	8	9,0	9	20	9	17,6	12	25,0	12	22,2	6	24,0
Promoter of Multilateralism	6	6,7	8	17,8	9	17,6	8	16,7	10	18,5	3	12,0
Partner	8	9,0	6	13,3	7	13,7	7	14,6	9	16,7	4	16,0
Regional Leader	13	14,6	3	6,7	6	11,8	8	16,7	7	13,0	3	12,0
Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security	15	16,9	8	17,8	7	13,7	3	6,2	6	11,1	1	4,0
Defender/Promoter of "EU" Values	16	18,0	3	6,7	6	11,8	5	10,4	5	9,3	2	8,0
Developer	10	11,2	4	8,9	6	11,8	2	4,2	2	3,7	1	4,0
Model	7	7,9	3	6,7	1	2,0					2	8,0
Global Leader			1	2,2			3	6,2	3	5,6	3	12,0
Liberation Supporter	6	6,7										
Abs Total/%	89	100	45	100	51	100	48	100	54	100	25	100
Number of roles	9		9		8		8		8		9	

This development could of course be explained by the fact that since the beginning of the year 2000 the EU has gradually increased and broadened its capabilities to enact its role as a *Stabilizer*. In this sample the *Stabilizer* role peaks in 2003 which corresponds with the launch of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), and the EU police mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Another noteworthy trend, or rather continuity, is the development of the *Partner* role. The emphasis placed on the EU as a partner is rather constant (one can note a small increase). The conclusion to be drawn from this is that the EU role as a *Partner* is at any given time considered to be one of the more important functions for the EU as an international actor. As to the role as *Promoter of Multilateralism* and *Regional Leader* the situation is fairly similar. Even if they have experienced some fluctuations, they are still highly emphasised roles of the EU.

The *Developer* role goes from being a middle range role during the first three year period, to being emphasised only at a few occasions in the following three years. Again the most obvious explanation is that the aid instruments fall under the EC domain of the Union, but this time along with the gradual increase of capabilities to enact the other roles. During the first years EU action, almost exclusively, was based on performance through the use of its economic instruments and economic influence. With the launch of the ESDP in 2003, a brand new set of instruments was added to the foreign policy tool box. This of course affects the way the Union perceives of itself as an actor. Solana no longer exclusively have to turn to the economic trades of the Union when talking about its foreign policy outline and international role.

An interesting fact is that the “softer” roles referred to earlier, *Defender/Promoter of Peace and Security* and *Defender/Promoter of “EU” values*, that on beforehand was predicted to dominate the role-set actually did so in 2000. The “decline” could of course be explained by using the same arguments as before, new instruments imply changes in relative weight.

Global Leader and *Liberation Supporter* were added to the role-set during the main readings of the empirical material. These two are also emphasised the least when looking at the whole time period (table 1). *Liberation Supporter* disappears after 2000, actually with the fall of Milosevic and his regime. In fact all the conceptions of the *Liberation Supporter* role were connected to the struggle against the regime in Belgrade. Perceptions related to *Global Leader* appear for the first time in 2001, but it is not until 2003 it makes a more solid appearance. It is tempting to once again explain this by referring to the launch of the ESDP, and I would like to argue that the ESDP, at least to a certain extent, is involved in the sudden appearance of the conception of the EU as a *Global Leader*.

5. Final Remarks

The quantified material presented in table one and two, and derived from the analysis of the eighty speeches, can most certainly be analysed further. However, this thesis started off by a making a clear statement of purpose that deserves some final attention. Even if there already has been some speculation about the facts behind the figures, the main intention was to seek answers pertaining to two overarching questions:

Which foreign policy roles does the EU ascribe to itself?

How has the distribution of roles evolved since the beginning of the 21st century?

These questions have already been answered in chapter four. The analysis presented an EU role-set consisting of ten roles in total. Out of these ten, five were accentuated in at least half of the analysed speeches. When looking at the different roles sorted by year one easily notices the strong evolution of EU's perceived role as a Stabilizer. Other obvious trends are the downfall of the role as Developer and Liberation Supporter, and the high emphasis on promotion of multilateralism and partnership.

It has been widely argued here that the changes in role conceptions and the emphasis put on each role, could be explained by studying changes in capability. The fact that the ESDP goes operational in 2003 has been considered to be crucial. With the introduction of the ESDP, being a UK-French initiative from the bilateral meeting at St Malo November 1998, the EU presented an ambition to widen its foreign policy toolbox with the ability to take on responsibilities such as humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks, and crisis management (including peace making). Yet, even though there was a general ambition it was not until 1 January 2003, with the police mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU really proved its worth, and proved that it's ready to take on more responsibility for global peace, stability and prosperity.

I am sure that the process of European integration will keep on producing ever more astonishing results, and that the EU gradually will strengthen its role as a Global Leader.

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European Parliament (Plenary): Strasbourg, 1 March 2000
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