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Jozef Bátora

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DOES THE EUROPEAN UNION TRANSFORM THE INSTITUTION OF DIPLOMACY?

Jozef Bátora

Introduction

The European Union (EU) has been described by scholars as challenging basic principles that the Westphalian state order rests upon (Schmitter 1996, Keohane 2002, Cooper 2002, Fossum 2002, Kagan 2002). Given that the Westphalian state order and modern diplomacy have co-evolved and remain mutually constitutive institutions, a plausible working assumption would be that the EU also challenges diplomacy. Yet this ***problematique*** has hardly been explored so far. This paper is an attempt to bridge this gap and will seek to answer the following questions:

- What kind of an institution is diplomacy?
- How does diplomacy change?
- Does European integration represent a change of diplomacy?

Realist approaches in IR theory depicting the world as an atomized collection of sovereign states with no overarching authority present diplomacy as a means of promoting state interests and tend to overlook the role of diplomacy as a constitutive framework of principles, rules and organized patterns of behavior in interstate relations. Indeed, as different and various as states around the world are in terms of cultures, political regimes and national interests, diplomacy is something that they have in common, that enables them to communicate in a predictable and organized manner, that provides a common organizational platform for their interactions and existence. Diplomats are the primary guardians and promoters of national interests of the respective states they represent in the international arena but are at the same time members of a transnational group of professionals with a shared corporate culture, professional language, behavioural codes, entry procedures, socialization patterns, norms and standards. Diplomacy has a Janus-faced character with a national side anchored in particular sovereign states and a transnational side anchored in the set of interstate diplomatic principles and rules. A closer look unveils an elementary tension within the institution of diplomacy between its role as a carrier of the interests and policies of a

particular state in its relations with other states in an anarchic international environment and its parallel role as a system of transnational principles, norms and rules of conduct maintained and enacted by the representatives of states in mutual interaction. This tension has been accommodated through the emergence of diplomats as a specialized group of professionals recruited and socialized precisely into the dual role that the enterprise of diplomacy requires them to fulfil.

To address the questions outlined above, this paper is anchored in new institutionalist theoretical approaches (March and Olsen 1989, DiMaggio and Powell 1991, Peters, 1999, Scott, 2001). The first and second section, discuss respectively the character of diplomacy as an institution and its modes of change. In the third section, the institutional dynamics of diplomacy in the context of European integration are explored a) at the level of bilateral diplomatic relations between EU member states, b) in the multilateral setting of the Council, and finally c) at the level of the EU's external diplomatic relations.

Diplomacy as an institution

The terms ***diplomacy*** and ***foreign policy*** are often used interchangeably (e.g. Kissinger 1994) which may be a part of the reason why the character of diplomacy as an institution has been understated in most of the International Relations literature to date. The difference between the two terms was well summarized by Watson (1982:10), who points out that while foreign policy is the substance of a state's relations with other states and agencies and the goals it strives to achieve by those relations, diplomacy is "the process of dialogue and negotiation by which states in a system conduct their relations and pursue their purposes by means short of war." In its most elementary forms, diplomacy existed ever since the first human collectives emerged and communicated with each other. The form it has today as a set of rules and principles regularizing communication and negotiation between independent states it acquired along with the emergence of the Westphalian system of states – diplomacy became one of its central features (Held et al. 1999:38-39). Modern diplomacy and territorial (later nation-) states co-evolved in a mutually constitutive set of processes, which makes diplomacy both carrier and product of the interstate system. Most social structures exhibit this dual role in that they are "both the medium and the outcome of the practices they recursively organize" (Giddens 1984:25, cf. Scott 2001:75). This understanding differs from most of IR literature, where structures and actors

are seen as mutually constitutive. Agency is here seen as embedded in structures, rules and identities. As pointed out by Der Derian (1987:106-107), it is no coincidence that modern diplomacy and the Westphalian state system evolved as mutually reinforcing concepts, because.

what uniquely characterizes the paradigm of diplomacy is its utility for states in balancing the forces of hegemony and anarchy. In other words, diplomacy emerges as the collective and reflexive embodiment of the states' ultimate task – self-preservation in an alien environment (ibid., p.111).

A central precondition for the functioning of diplomacy as a system of norms and rules regulating interstate relations is the existence of a common institutional basis shared by all states. What could explain the emergence, diffusion and maintenance of such a social structure in the absence of a superior authority in the interstate environment? On the one hand diplomacy could be conceptualized as an **organizational field** in the sense of DiMaggio and Powell (1991) distributing shared structures to all states. On the other hand, we could also see diplomacy as being the expression of a transnationally shared **logic of appropriateness** in the sense of March and Olsen (1989, 1995) informing actions of and identities of states. As the former approach primarily focuses on the emergence of homogeneity in structures and the latter approach conceptualizes the emergence of shared meanings, identities and expectations, it is most fruitful to view these two perspectives as complementary in an attempt to conceptualize the emergence of diplomacy as an institution.

The organizational field of diplomacy was **structured** through an increased interaction between foreign ministries of various European countries as the primary actors in 19th Century international relations. Stable patterns of coalition building and domination were clearly present in the European diplomatic system in particular after its standardization in 1815. The fact that foreign ministries were constituted primarily to administer growing diplomatic archives is clear evidence of an increase in information flow between the participating organizations within the field. And finally, a fundamental principle embedded within the diplomatic system is that of mutual recognition of diplomatic agents and their rights (such as immunity), which shows the growing awareness of actors within the field as being involved in a common enterprise. These conditions created a favourable situation for the institutionalization of diplomacy. As Watson (1982:17) points out,

in the European society of states, diplomacy has emerged as an organizing institution, bearing its distinctive styles and manners and its own networks of procedures, rules, treaties and other commitments. The European system, so organized, was able to exercise assertiveness and restraint over their members because they were bound from the beginning by much more than mere political arrangement. [...] And it is generally recognized that the sophisticated techniques and heightened awareness of how the states system operated, which European diplomacy required from its independent member states, contributed not a little to the remarkable phenomenon, contrary to the experience of other states systems [e.g. Hellenistic, early Chinese and Indian], that no single state proved to be so powerful that it could for any length of time absorb or even dominate all the others.

Isomorphic pressures within the organizational field have contributed to the diffusion of diplomatic practices, structures and norms around the world. Western cognitive frameworks and meaning systems in the realm of inter-state relations have been distributed on a global scale. Over time and through mutual interactions, diplomats from various countries have gradually developed a shared professional identity. As Nicolson ([1939]1988:14) points out:

[b]y 1815 therefore the Diplomatic Services of the nations had been recognized as a distinct branch of the public service in each country. A definite profession had been established, possessing its own hierarchy and rules, and destined [...] to evolve its own freemasonry and conventions.

The Congress of Vienna in 1815, as Neumann (2002) observed, was a turning point because specific diplomatic practices were codified and formalized, and because this was a form of diplomatic interaction that went beyond discussing particular treaties and situations. In other words, the Congress established practices and routines for future relations between states. The common set of professional norms, rules and values have since been transmitted through standardized socialization procedures at foreign ministries so that professional diplomats around the globe form a group of professionals with

the corporate feeling, which the diplomatic service creates. Even as scientists, philatelists and other experts find, when they meet together, that the interests of their calling transcend all differences of nationality or language, so also do the diplomatic services of the several countries

evolve a form of solidarity and establish certain tacit standards which they all respect (ibid. p.40).

As such it is plausible to think that they structure their actions according to a particular logic of appropriateness anchored in diplomatic rules, norms and principles. The latter determines, who are legitimate actors and participants in the inter-state system and what are legitimate actions and situations. States as actors in the international arena do not act randomly but fulfill particular roles determined by the established set of diplomatic rules and principles. Indeed, states' actions in the international arena only make sense within the established institutional framework of diplomacy. Diplomacy as an institution hence decreases complexity in interstate relations and thereby increases the capability of states as actors in the international environment. In this way, diplomacy makes the actions of states comprehensible and to some extent predictable due to the limited number of available (or legitimate) options. Despite differences in cultures, political regimes and interests, states share a common institutional identity to a large extent defined and determined by the institutional framework of diplomacy, so that, as Wendt (1999:242) points out,

[t]he vast majority of states today see themselves as part of a 'society of states' whose norms they adhere to not because of on-going self interested calculations that it is good for them as individual states, but because they have internalised and identify with them.

Hence, to rephrase the original definition of institutions by March and Olsen (1989:160), ***diplomacy as an institution is a set of rules and routines that define appropriate actions of states in the international environment in terms of relations between their roles as states and situations.*** This set of rules and routines is embedded in organizational practices, structures and cultures at foreign ministries, which, in aggregate, form the organizational basis of diplomacy. The common logic of appropriateness enables diplomats from various countries to categorize events in the same way, which in turn facilitates communication and in fact enables inter-state negotiation.

As observed by Berridge (1995:1), diplomacy as a professional activity is regulated by custom and by law. These two conditions are central to the emergence and maintenance of the transnationally distributed diplomatic logic of appropriateness: general respect for the common set of legal rules and routines delineating diplomacy as a practice anchored in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Conduct (1961) and the recruitment and

socialization processes at foreign ministries socializing diplomats into the dual role of promoting national interests in ways conforming to the transnationally accepted diplomatic norms and procedures. Diplomacy as an institution is hence characterized by the following features:

- Transnationally accepted legal set of rules (the 1961 Vienna Convention) defining who are legitimate participants, what is legitimate conduct, what are the rights and obligations of the participants
- Transnationally shared professional values and identity perpetuated by similar recruitment methods and socialization procedures at foreign ministries
- Transnationally shared professional language
- Transnationally shared norms and principles (such as mutual recognition of diplomatic agents, extraterritoriality, immunity)
- Transnationally distributed working methods and standard operating procedures (such as standard formats of negotiation and written communication)

These five elements are mutually constitutive and contribute to the maintenance of a common logic of appropriateness informing diplomacy. At the same time, these features standardize interstate negotiation and communication, as well as the promotion of national interests. Diplomats in every country are socialized into the set of transnational diplomatic norms and values in addition to being socialized into national communities and organizational cultures in their respective foreign ministries. The professional actions of a diplomat are informed by at least three sources of appropriateness: the transnational set of diplomatic rules and norms, national identity, and organizational culture and values at the respective foreign ministry. These three logics of appropriateness need to be in balance so that a diplomat can accommodate his/her specific role as a rule-based mediator between home and abroad. The transnationally distributed practice of diplomats rotating in 3-4 year periods between assignments abroad and at the home ministry is an institutional mechanism for maintaining the balance between these logics of appropriateness. Yet, national interests and organizational cultures vary across states and over time, and hence it is the five elements described above that form the backbone of diplomacy. Their stability and persistence ensures the survival of diplomacy as an institution.

In foreign ministries, these institutional characteristics are embedded in organizational structures, procedures, practices and cultures, which include:

- a hierarchically ordered standardized system of diplomatic ranks
- a culture and practice of secrecy
- one-way communication with the public
- specialized processes of recruitment, socialization and re-socialization (the system of rotation between assignments at home and abroad)

These are, of course, ideal type features and most real-world foreign ministries of today also do have flexible structures, there is a certain degree of openness and transparency, communication with the public happens in a bilateral or multilateral context, and there are an increasing number of personnel who have not passed through the foreign service socialization processes and still occupy high positions both at headquarters and at missions abroad. But if one is to conceptualize institutional change, one needs to identify an analytical status quo, an ideal typical set of minimal common features that characterize foreign ministries around the world. In other words, one needs to create a typification (in Schütz' sense) of a set of features characterizing the organizational field, and hence also every foreign ministry. Change of one or more of the institutional elements constituting diplomacy, or change in organizational features characterizing and standardizing the organizational basis of diplomacy would potentially cause diplomacy as such to change in various ways. The next section addresses such processes.

Diplomacy and institutional change

Diplomacy has a long history of adaptation and change (Hocking 1999, 2001, Melissen 1999). As with any other robust institution, it provides 'institutional lenses' for interpretations of events in its environment, facilitates the creation of shared accounts of history, and hence produces a protective belt of ideas and meanings around its own existence. Thus, changes in the environment such as the rise of non-state foreign policy actors, the information revolution or the process of European integration, are perceived and accommodated in accordance with the established logic of appropriateness informing diplomacy (i.e. in accordance with basic notions of what a state is and how it interacts with other states) and they are reflected in a path-dependent adaptation of the organizational basis of diplomacy. This implies the gradual development of new structures, procedures and agendas at foreign ministries, while the established notions of what diplomacy is and what role foreign ministries play remain unchallenged. Such a path-dependent adaptation congruent with current institutional identity could be referred to as ***change in diplomacy***.

Yet, as will be discussed in more detail below, the process of European integration features a set of tendencies and developments that may challenge the logic of appropriateness that diplomacy as an institution is based upon. Metaphorically, answers to the fundamental questions of what a state in the EU is, what kind of a situation this or that is and what actions are appropriate are becoming increasingly problematic as the integration process moves forward. In general, any situation that cannot be met with established practices, rules and behavioral patterns by an organization or a society presents a crisis (Schütz 1964:231). When the conditions under which an institution has functioned change dramatically in a fashion inconsistent with the institutional identity, the institution perceives a performance crisis according to its own criteria of success and radical institutional change is imminent (Olsen 1996:253). In the context of the current analysis such a process would represent ***change of diplomacy***. Based on the new institutionalist approaches presented above, there are theoretically at least four tentative paths the latter kind of change could take: isomorphism, fragmentation, metamorphosis and breakdown.

Isomorphism would involve a general enhancement in acceptance of the institution of diplomacy, i.e. an enhancement of the existing logic of appropriateness. This would involve increased transnational standardization in terms of organizational forms, practices and socialization procedures at foreign ministries (for instance by establishing a small number of diplomatic schools that would educate foreign service officers for all states), perhaps the re-introduction of one main diplomatic language (such as French used to be in the 19th Century), increased acceptance of common norms and routines. In other words, there would be a development from a multitude of structures, values and interests that characterize states in the diplomatic system towards a homogenization of structures and identities of states, so that the national side of the Janus-faced character of each foreign ministry would be diminished in importance.

Fragmentation, on the other hand, would involve development of different standards of diplomatic appropriateness in various states or various groupings of states, i.e. a multitude of logics of appropriateness. Some states would for instance consider it appropriate to sign treaties with NGOs or give private enterprises a seat in the United Nations. Furthermore, there would be differences in terms of structures, procedures and norms, so that some foreign ministries would operate as flexible networks involving non-diplomatic envoys and representatives, while others would keep strict hierarchies and diplomatic ranks, which would distort the established norms of reciprocity and would make the status and privileges of diplomatic envoys ambiguous. In a similar

fashion, some states would apply stricter rules of secrecy in dealing with sensitive issues, while others would be more open and inclusive in handling diplomatic agenda, which again would fragment the shared assumption of mutual adherence to common secrecy standards. Hence, the enterprise of diplomacy would in case of fragmentation involve not only negotiation between states, and between states and other actors, but necessarily also some form of meta-mediation to establish temporary *modi vivendi* between various diplomatic logics of appropriateness.

Metamorphosis is a metaphor for a situation, when foreign ministries around the globe would get an entirely new role with an entirely new logic of appropriateness informing the worldviews and identities of diplomats. As an example, diplomacy could gradually become commercialized and would no longer serve as a system of norms and rules regulating relations between states, but would serve as a system of norms and rules regulating trade promotion and information about foreign markets (suggestions of this kind have been made by for instance Schmitz 1997). Organizational structures, secrecy norms, communication with the public and socialization procedures at foreign ministries would reflect the collective move towards a new kind of a role. This would no longer be diplomacy as we know it, yet it would remain a set of rules distributed transnationally and accepted by all states.

Finally, **breakdown** would involve a complete disintegration of the shared logic of appropriateness governing diplomatic relations, which could be caused by the diminishing role of states. There would be no transnationally accepted legal set of diplomatic rules, no shared professional diplomatic values and identity, no transnationally shared diplomatic language, and no commonly shared diplomatic routines, practices and procedures. In other words, it would be a return to a situation, where “all sorts of principals sent diplomatic agents to all sorts of recipients” (Anderson 1993). An alternative reason for a breakdown of the diplomatic logic of appropriateness would be the rise of a world state. Obviously, in such a case, the whole rationale behind having diplomacy and foreign ministries would disappear.

Following this exposition, it is now time to turn the analytical focus on the nature of change that diplomacy undergoes in the context of the EU.

Diplomacy and the institutional dynamics of European integration

Today's EU is a polity where relations between member states are no longer organized solely by the transnationally distributed set of norms and rules

embodied in diplomacy, but are increasingly anchored in a thickening network of “domestic” relations in a number of policy fields coordinated at the central level in Brussels. With neither a clearly established centre of authority nor a clear source of sovereignty the EU is currently the most radical peaceful challenge to the established Westphalian system of states (Fossum 2002:9). One should expect such a situation to have implications for the institution of diplomacy. Indeed, but where exactly is diplomacy as an institution embedded within the EU? Where should one explore its change? Is it in the member states and their bilateral relations? Is it in the multilateral diplomatic setting of the Council at the central level in Brussels? Or is it in the emerging capacity of the EU as a whole to conduct diplomatic relations with third states? These questions indicate at least three levels at which change of diplomacy in the process of European integration could be explored and these will be examined in the remainder of the paper. Before proceeding, a caveat is necessary. Given that the following discussion is based primarily on secondary literature, and given the present dynamism in the institutional development of the European polity, this paper cannot aspire to provide definitive answers. I will rather point at possible tendencies of change and indicate ways how we could start reexamining the assumptions about diplomacy in the EU. A more thorough set of analyses based on primary data will be necessary to test the assumptions presented below.

Bilateral diplomacy within the EU

The process of European integration is marked by a growing interconnectedness of domestic administrative systems of member states where sector-specific policies are coordinated across national borders without involving diplomats (Egeberg 2001, Trondal and Veggeland 2003). Nevertheless, despite growing European integration, the structure of bilateral diplomatic relations between EU member states remains intact so far. An indication of this is the fact that embassies of EU member states in other member states have structures, functions and staff on a par with their embassies in third countries. What is more, the structure of bilateral diplomatic representations is not only maintained, but is in fact being renewed in an isomorphic manner in accordance with established traditions and standards within the diplomatic organizational field. This development is brilliantly documented by the level of enthusiasm, pride and glamour with which EU member states’ governments have been establishing and inaugurating their embassies of great architectural value in Germany’s new capital – Berlin. Moreover, although foreign ministries in a number of

member states have created organizational units dealing specifically with EU matters, most of them also maintain bilateral sections managing relations with specific geographical regions of the world, where EU member countries usually fall within the category of “Europe” with no regard to EU membership (Cascone 2000). The principle exceptions are Austria, Greece, Ireland and Luxemburg. The retention of structures indicates institutional robustness, where changes in the environment such as European integration are mediated or interpreted through established institutional frameworks at foreign ministries in ways that support marginal and path-dependent change of the established structures (see March and Olsen 1989, 1995).

However, in spite of this structural path-dependence, the process of European integration does open the possibility for a *metamorphosis*, i.e. a change in the standards of appropriateness, at the level of bilateral diplomatic relations *within* the EU. The very fact of membership in the Union precludes the possibility of war between member states. Hence, one of the primary motivations of diplomacy, i.e. ensuring national security from threats by other states in the anarchic inter-state environment, is of diminishing importance in intra-European diplomatic relations and is in the process of being substituted by increased attention to other parts of the diplomatic agenda, such as trade, cultural issues and human rights. In general, the metamorphosis at the bilateral level involves the development of what could be called an *intra-European mode of diplomacy* stripped of traditional national security concerns and focusing on facilitating the sectoral and functional cooperation between national administrations. This in turn implies different standards of appropriateness in member states’ relations to fellow member states in the Union on the one hand and to third states on the other hand. In Joschka Fischer’s (2002) words,

...the new challenges and threats to our [Germany’s] security no longer originate primarily in Europe but outside of it. [...] This does not mean a return to a presumably harmless ‘normality’ in a pacified Europe, but it is about our freedom to take on international responsibility.

The reason for the change of the standards of diplomatic appropriateness *within* Europe as opposed to *outside* Europe is apparent – while the Westphalian system is based on the notion of an anarchical collection of states, the EU is a community of states regulated and bound by law. As Kagan (2002) has suggested, Europe is

a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. [...] Within the confines of Europe, the age-old laws of

international relations have been repealed. Europeans have stepped out of the Hobbesian world of anarchy into the Kantian world of perpetual peace.

While Westphalian diplomacy is a system of norms and rules enabling states to survive and interact in an anarchical environment, intra-European diplomacy is an emerging set of norms and rules regulating interaction of states in a rule-based legal environment. This does not, however, mean that member states' foreign ministries would be de-prioritizing the security agenda. On the contrary, the transnational character of the emerging security threats (e.g. terrorism, ecological disasters, illegal arms proliferation), the development of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), as well as different forms of allegiance to military alliances in member states (some are members of NATO, while others are neutral), speaks for continued attention to the security agenda, although in transformed ways. In short, security in the EU is achieved through openness and cooperation rather than through balance of power and mutual threats (Cooper 2002, Kagan 2002). The system of bilateral diplomatic relations within the EU is hence characterized by a move from the traditional set of diplomatic rules and norms premised on the idea of international anarchy towards the emerging logic of appropriateness based on the assumption of a European legal community and common security. This in turn implies that the enterprise of diplomacy within the EU no longer involves just the mediation of relations between states and between states and other actors, but also a form of meta-mediation focused on shaping the European legal-political environment, where the EU member states are operating and interacting. Such a metamorphosis entails in turn also the development of an additional repertoire of roles and identities at member states' foreign ministries for facilitating the intra-European mode of diplomacy, which requires enhancements and changes in socialization procedures. Hence, diplomats engaged in intra-European diplomacy would ideally develop expertise in for instance settling trade disputes, in promotion of the so-called national soft power, the human rights agenda, and in framing European legal norms.

However, although the common legal framework within the EU creates new conditions for intra-European bilateral diplomacy, there is no guarantee that all member states will change in the same manner. Such a homogenous uni-directional collective metamorphosis would require the structuration of an intra-European diplomatic organizational field distributing isomorphic pressures. In such a situation, member states' foreign ministries would have to be mutually aware of being involved in a common enterprise of intra-

European diplomacy, there would have to be an increased interaction and information flow between them supporting such a diplomatic mode, and clear patterns of coalition building and domination would have to evolve. However, in the absence of a coherent set of isomorphic pressures and shared normative expectations, the change at member states foreign ministries could involve the development of multiple and varying standards of diplomatic appropriateness, which would ultimately result in **fragmentation** of intra-European bilateral diplomacy. Such a fragmentation would reflect the existing differences between member states when it comes to the notion of what kind of a political unit the EU is / should be. This could happen for instance if each of the member states (or groupings of member states) adhered to its/their own kind of intra-European diplomacy, and meta-mediation between these various sets of norms would be required. If this occurred, we should expect discussions of what should be the appropriate institutional arrangements in intra-European diplomacy. There would be an intensification of struggle for people's minds (identities and normative beliefs), upon which, as Olsen (2002a:594) suggests, the future distribution of power in the EU will depend.

Whether homogenous or fragmented, the emerging intra-European mode of diplomacy adds a third dimension to the Janus-faced character that modern diplomacy has traditionally shown. Member states' foreign ministries then are increasingly three-dimensional, with an intra-European side added to the national and the transnational side of diplomacy that each foreign ministry has traditionally been informed by. Robert Cooper (2002; see also Kagan's [2002] discussion of his ideas) touches upon this issue when he suggests that

[t]he challenge to the postmodern world is to get used to the idea of **double standards**. Among ourselves, we operate on the basis of laws and open cooperative security. But when dealing with more old-fashioned kind of states outside the postmodern continent of Europe, we need to revert to the rougher methods of an earlier era – force, pre-emptive attack, deception, whatever is necessary to deal with those who still live in the nineteenth century of every state for itself. Among ourselves, we keep the law but when we are operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle [italics added].

Further research is needed to explore whether an organizational field is emerging supporting an intra-European mode of diplomacy and whether such 'double standards' are emerging in European foreign ministries. What kind of relationship will develop between the emerging intra-European diplomatic logic of appropriateness and the transnationally distributed set of norms and rules informing Westphalian diplomacy? Would they be congruent or

competing? And finally, to rephrase Olsen's (2002b:938) question, what is the attractiveness (or potential for diffusion) of the emerging intra-European mode of diplomacy beyond EU territory?

Further questions arise as one turns to multilateral diplomacy at the central EU level.

Multilateral diplomacy at the central EU level

The most important multilateral diplomatic forum at the central level in Brussels is the Council of the EU. Being the most "unashamedly national of the EU institutions", the Council is organized in a fashion ensuring specifically national, as opposed to supranational, inputs into the EU system of governance (Hayes-Rensaw and Wallace 1997:211). Of particular importance as the primary forum of interstate multilateral diplomacy within the Council, is the ***Comité des représentants permanents*** (COREPER). COREPER (and thereby also each national foreign ministry) has traditionally been a ***filtering point*** enabling constructive coordination of member states policies at the EU level, while at the same time consulting and instructing national actors as to what is negotiable at the EU level (Hayes-Renshaw and Wallace 1997:141). The status as mediators of relations between the EU and member states has been further strengthening the traditional gatekeeper role of diplomats as mediators between their home state and external actors. The traditional kind of diplomatic identity is further strengthened by the professional respect and the sense of cross-national collegial solidarity in the common endeavor. As Westlake (1995:289-290) points out,

[t]he two COREPERs meet every week and so, clearly, the permanent representatives and their deputies see a lot of one another. Inevitably, such close and regular contact leads to familiarity, if not friendship, and mutual trust and respect. (In addition permanent representatives have in common their calling as professional diplomats.) In time – and [...] permanent representatives have far more time to develop relationships than their political masters, a sense of institutional solidarity develops, so that ambassadors find themselves defending not only the interests of their respective Member States but also the more general institutional prerogatives of the Council [...] and of COREPER itself. There is a definite sense of teamwork among COREPER members. The permanent representatives may frequently find themselves on different sides of a discussion, but they are all engaged in the same basic activity. Even when a permanent representative is totally isolated and under great pressure, there is mutual understanding and a tendency to

criticize, implicitly or explicitly, the national capital and its instructions rather than the individual concerned.

Among the socialization mechanisms there are the **COREPER luncheons**, where attendance is heavily restricted and no notes are taken in order to ensure a confidential atmosphere for resolving the most difficult negotiation issues, as well as the **informal COREPER trips**, which are long weekends of socializing “rich in food and culture” with the purpose of reinforcing interpersonal relationships (Lewis 2003). Although socialization is fairly intensive within COREPER, as well as within its various sub-groups, diplomats most often see their posting in Brussels only as one in a number of postings in their career (Hayes-Renshaw and Wallace 1997:223). Usually they serve in Brussels for three or four years before they are reassigned to different diplomatic missions irrespective of the EU-competence they have acquired. By contrast national technical experts spend longer periods in the Council (COREPER I.). Even after their return to home governments they are likely to continue working with an EU related agenda (ibid.). Hence, the values and norms acquired by diplomats through basic socialization at their home foreign ministries, which makes them members of the diplomatic community remains their most elementary professional identity.

Still, contrary to what some of the conservative diplomatic milieus such as for instance the Quai d’Orsay would like us to believe, the multilateral setting of the EU is different from traditional multilateral diplomatic fora such as Conventions, Conferences or International Organizations. This is primarily due to the collection of institutions that participate in the negotiation and development of European legal norms along side member states. COREPER and the Council are anchored in an institutionalized set of relations at the central level in Brussels that are not purely inter-state, and hence not purely diplomatic. According to Westlake (1995:294-296), there are primarily four kinds of negotiator in COREPER: 1) member states; 2) the Presidency of the EU (one of the member states assuming the function for a six-month period); 3) the EU Commission; and 4) the EU Parliament (participating indirectly). In particular the latter three actors make negotiations within COREPER more than a purely inter-governmental affair. The national interests of member states are accommodated within an institutional framework informed by the supranational inputs of the Commission, the interventions of the Parliament, as well as the coordination efforts of the Presidency. The latter, in addition to furthering its own interests, plays the role of a go-between in relations to the Parliament, whose representatives do not participate physically in the COREPER meetings (ibid.). It could be argued that there is a clash of

cultures and logics of appropriateness between the member state representatives (diplomats) and the representatives of the Commission, because the latter, as Egeberg (2002:10-13) points out, are informed by a strongly supranational culture, where explicit furthering of national interests is considered inappropriate. Similarly, the Parliament and to some extent also the Presidency of the EU are informed by different logics of appropriateness than are member states.

It would certainly be far fetched to propose that furthering of national interests coherent with norms and rules of traditional diplomacy does not happen at COREPER. However, it happens in an institutional setting infused by supranational interests and common European legal norms, which challenge established notions of diplomatic appropriateness - that is the idea of who member states' diplomats within COREPER are and what roles they fulfill in specific situations. In Jeff Lewis' (2003) interpretation, socialization in COREPER does not lead to the rise of a supranational identity of diplomats but rather to new understandings of national identities as they become nested into a Brussels context. As one of the ambassadors pointed out:

There is a COREPER language with its own code words and code phrases. When used, this language is clearly understood by everyone. For instance, if I have bad instructions that I'm against, I can say, 'but of course the presidency has to take its responsibilities,' which means put it to a vote and I'll lose, I accept this (interview quoted in Lewis 2003).

Member states' diplomats negotiate with counterparts also representing the interests of the very same member states (e.g. the Presidency, the Commission), albeit from different standpoints. To use a metaphor, the Council resembles a **Cerberus** with at least three heads engaged in an ongoing negotiation about what direction its common body should move. In such a situation, the diplomatic process is infused by non-diplomatic structures, values and norms, which in the interplay with the supranational setting of the Council ultimately facilitates a gradual democratization of multilateral diplomacy within the Council. Any country holding the EU Presidency is a good example of the multiple roles that need to be accommodated - its diplomats need to represent national interests, the interests of the EU in relation to third states, as well as the interests of the Council in relation to other EU bodies - which necessarily involves continuous interaction and coordination with various kinds of non-diplomatic actors.

In addition to the transformative dynamics at work within the Council, further challenges come from the institutional environment – the European polity. As Sverdrup (2002:131) points out, it is increasingly difficult to pinpoint particular national interests of member states, which often results in tensions between foreign ministries and sectoral ministries on various policy issues. He argues that the 1990s have brought about increased demands by the media and the public for openness and transparency which would accord legitimacy to the issues negotiated at intergovernmental conferences of the EU. A great deal of their agenda may become subject to public debates prior to or during negotiations, which challenges the traditionally closed character of the work performed by the Council. This tendency towards openness and democratization is further strengthened by the recent establishment of the Convention on the Future of the EU (or European Constitutional Convention as it is frequently dubbed). The Convention assembles representatives of parliaments (national and European) and governments of member states and accession countries, who in plenary sessions and issue-oriented working groups discuss the future legal norms and institutional reforms of the EU with the goal of presenting a single consensual constitutional proposal to the forthcoming IGC. By being an institutionalized forum of deliberation and decision-making, the Convention may be labeled a **strong public**. This indicates a change in the way constitution-making is conducted in the EU (Eriksen and Fossum 2002). While the development of the legal-political framework of the EU traditionally has been an exclusive realm of diplomats and national experts meeting in closed negotiations in the Council, the Convention process is transparent, far more open and inclusive featuring inputs from civil society actors (NGOs, interest groups) and academics besides those of national and European parliamentarians. While the diplomats certainly are present at the Convention, their role has been reduced from that of exclusive negotiators to that of participants in the deliberative process and that of administrative facilitators. The Secretariat of the Convention is led by a senior British diplomat, and the spokesperson as well as a number of the drafters are career diplomats from member states, all with backgrounds in EU sections within their respective foreign ministries. It is uncertain whether the Convention-process of constitution-making will be kept up beyond the next IGC, but at the present time the Convention indicates the possibility of a **metamorphosis** of diplomacy in the multilateral setting at the central EU level. This would involve a change in the established notions of who the member state diplomats in Brussels are and what their role is in the development of the legal-political framework of the EU.

While the role of diplomats in the mediation of relations between member states at the bilateral and multilateral level within the EU is being redefined, diplomats acquire new responsibilities at the level of EU's external relations.

External diplomatic relations of the EU

A central factor in the construction of the EU as a diplomatic actor is the development of the ***Unified External Service of the European Commission*** (UES), which is in the process of becoming a full-fledged foreign service of the EU. Opening its first delegation in London in 1955, the UES today manages delegations of the EU Commission in 123 countries and 5 international organizations. Its original purpose was the management of the EU's trade agenda and development aid in third countries. First after the introduction of the CFSP in the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, the UES has been charged with more traditional diplomatic functions such as political analysis and reporting. It can be argued that a nucleus of an EU foreign office is about to be created in the near future by the planned administrative integration of all officials at EU Delegations under the newly integrated Directorate General of External Relations (DG RELEX). As Hix (1999:37) points out, DGs "are the organizational equivalent of government ministries in domestic administrations and they also fulfill many of the same functions as government ministries: of policy development, preparation of legislation, distribution of revenues, monitoring of legislative implementation, and advise and support for the political executive." It is a stated goal of the Commission "to develop a culture of diplomatic service" in the UES, which is being implemented through standardizing the personalized preparation of UES officials prior to departure to a Delegation, as well as training plans reflecting "the need for multi-skilling" of officials due to their rotation between assignments in third countries and at headquarters in Brussels. There is clearly an effort to create ***EU-diplomats-generalists*** on a par with the professional diplomats-generalists in any of the traditional foreign ministries of the member states.

At the level of structures and procedures, EU Delegations in third countries are becoming standardized to be able to execute functions on a par with traditional nation-state embassies and for this purpose a single manual featuring a standardized set of procedures for all Delegations is available as of December 2002. The relationship of EU Delegations and member state embassies in third countries is not to be that of competition but rather that of cooperation, where the EU Delegation should play the role of the central coordinator with the purpose of "projecting the image of a Union which is

active, imaginative and truly united". Under Article 20 of the Maastricht Treaty, cooperation and coordination between member states' embassies and the EU Delegations in third countries is legally binding. The UES is keen on making use of the experience of member states' diplomats and other national experts that could strengthen the effectiveness of its operations. A step towards physical integration of diplomatic resources was taken in Abuja / Nigeria, where the construction of a common embassy compound housing EU member states' embassies and the EU Delegation with shared facilities such as a common Visa Section with the purpose of reducing operative costs (but with separate "national" premises) was initiated in November 2001. The primary strategy of the Commission in developing the UES seems to be to tap into resources and experience of member states' foreign services while gradually developing its own human resources in the UES so as to be gradually able to exercise a unified foreign policy of the Union. This ambition is confirmed also in the ***Final Report of Working Group VII on External Action*** of the European Convention, where it is pointed out that

[w]hen considering external representation in bilateral relations [with third states], members felt that current arrangements could be improved with a view to enhancing clarity and continuity. The situation was particularly unsatisfactory with respect to political dialogue meetings, where too many spoke on behalf of the EU (Presidency, the HR, the Troika, the Commission, Member States). It was pointed out that in diplomacy a lot depended on trust and personal relationships. (p. 32)

The Working Group therefore proposes

the creation of an EU diplomatic academy and an EU diplomatic service, alongside those of Member States. The Commission's delegations would become EU delegations/embassies, and would be staffed by officials of the Commission, the Council Secretariat and seconded members of national diplomatic services. (pp. 6-7)

Returning to the theoretical concepts developed in the first section of this paper, one could argue that in an attempt to become a legitimate member of the transnational diplomatic organizational field the EU has created diplomatic structures in an isomorphic manner. It copies prevailing structures and socialization procedures established in national diplomatic services, which would reduce the existing uncertainty as to what kind of an actor in the transnational diplomatic system the EU actually is. The fact that the EU is developing its own diplomatic structures in an isomorphic manner is in line

with the overall pattern of new states establishing their presence in the diplomatic system. What is novel and challenging, though, is the fact that the EU is not a state, and its legal personality is still developing. Its participation in the diplomatic system based on a particular logic of appropriateness creates expectations of the EU fulfilling particular roles on a par with the roles fulfilled by the states. Yet given that the EU is not a state, it is far from evident that it will be in a position to do so. It is as yet unclear, how this tension will be resolved, but one could anticipate two alternatives: a) the EU becomes a state; b) the global diplomatic system will be transformed due to the adoption of new standards allowing non-state entities (such as the EU) to act as standard diplomatic actors on a par with states. Each of these represents radically different potential trajectories of change and is evidence of the fact that the EU at this point in its development presents a challenge to the established Westphalian inter-state order. It is also evidence of the fact that the EU could be in the process of becoming a full-fledged state, which would undermine the ambition of the EU to become an innovative way of organizing governance beyond the state.

Conclusions

In an inter-state environment with no overarching authority diplomacy is a shared set of rules, norms and principles regulating relations between states. It forms the elementary structure of the inter-state system, in which states fulfill roles as a consequence of their identity as states. Diplomacy then emerges as the embodiment of a set of logics of appropriateness associated with the nation-state in world politics. It simplifies the complexities of events enabling classification of situations, determining legitimate actors and legitimate options for action. The collection of foreign ministries forms an organizational field through which standards and notions of appropriateness are distributed in an isomorphic manner to states around the world. This means that diplomats form a global professional community with a shared set of values, practices, behavioral patterns, professional language and identity, perpetuated by similar recruitment methods and socialization.

The process of European integration challenges these established notions of appropriateness within the diplomatic organizational field in at least three ways. The first challenge is most obvious at the level of bilateral relations between member states of the Union, which are conducted in the common European legal environment. There may be a metamorphosis of diplomacy towards an intra-European mode of bilateral relations marked by the absence

of the threat of intra-European war. This in turn moves the attention of member states' intra-European diplomatic efforts from the traditional preoccupation with mutual threats to national security towards shared strategies of ensuring common security, and towards other agendas such as trade, human rights, cultural issues and regional cooperation. It is so far uncertain whether common standards for the intra-European mode of diplomacy are evolving or whether the member states' involvement in intra-European diplomacy has a fragmented character in terms of structures, procedures and norms applied by the respective foreign ministries. Nevertheless, it seems plausible to expect the member states' foreign services to gradually develop additional set/s of norms, structures and procedures regulating their participation in the mode of relations with fellow member states of the Union.

The second challenge that European integration poses to diplomacy can be recorded in particular at the central level of the EU administration in Brussels in the multilateral setting of the Council. As permanent representatives of member states to the EU, diplomats have traditionally had the key role in forging treaties constituting the legal-political framework of the Union in negotiations behind closed doors, which at first glance appears to be congruent with the diplomats' traditional role as exclusive managers of foreign policies of their respective states. The negotiations within COREPER, however, feature a set of institutionalized interactions with the Commission, the Presidency, and the Parliament, which creates a series of ambiguities about the diplomats' role and brings about democratization of diplomatic processes. Moreover, the recent explorative processes of treaty development through the Convention method have introduced new standards of openness and inclusiveness representing a metamorphosis of the role of diplomats from gatekeepers to process facilitators and participants.

Finally, the development of the EU's capacity to conduct external diplomatic relations challenges the role of states as the only legitimate participants in the transnational diplomatic system. The fact that the EU mimics the transnationally distributed standards for organizing diplomacy and tries to implement socialization procedures normal at national foreign ministries to enable its representatives a more diplomat-like role indicates that the EU is attempting to gain more legitimacy as a member of the global organizational field of diplomacy. Yet due to its non-state nature and supranational character, the EU as a legitimate member of the global diplomatic field could imply the introduction of completely new standards. This raises the question whether such a development would transform the field in its entirety.

The Westphalian state order and modern diplomacy have co-evolved as mutually reinforcing institutions and through them European ideas in the realm of statecraft and inter-state relations have been disseminated around the world. The now global diplomatic system based exclusively on European political traditions, experience and ideational structures is an excellent example of early Europeanization understood as the diffusion or export of forms of European political organization and governance beyond European territory. If as Joschka Fischer points out, “[t]he core of the concept of Europe after 1945 was and still is a rejection of the European balance-of-power principle and the hegemonic ambitions of individual states that had emerged following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648”, and if, as Romano Prodi suggests, Europe’s role in global governance is that of replicating the European experience on a global scale (both quoted in Kagan 2002), then the question arises whether the new logic of diplomatic appropriateness emerging in Europe may be carried by the pressures within the global diplomatic organizational field also beyond the EU territory. Could diplomacy be Europeanized once again, and if so, what would then be left of diplomacy as we know it?

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