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Book Reviews

Stephanie C Hofmann
European security in NATO's shadow: Party ideologies and institution building
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Historians and political scientists have long considered domestic politics an important factor in the formulation of foreign policy. Demonstrating the link, however, is frequently confounded by a lack of evidence. While politicians and policy makers are keen to explain their decisions as motivated by national interests and security, leaders are often unwilling to concede (especially in the documents which end up in archives) that electoral concerns motivated their decisions.

Stephanie Hofmann's excellent book offers a different way of understanding the causal relationship between partisan politics and foreign policy making. In *European Security in NATO's Shadow*, she argues that party ideologies are the root cause of changes in foreign and security policy because they define the perceived national interest, shape efforts at international cooperation, and facilitate international cooperation with like-minded leaders abroad (2). Ideology, in Hofmann's formulation, comprises three core elements of European foreign and security policy, complicating the term beyond simple left or right leanings: a party's approach to multilateralism in the use of force; its concept of sovereignty and willingness to embrace supranational institutions; and its view of the nature of Europe as a political community (4). With this contribution, Hofmann prompts a broader understanding of national preference formation which takes into account the role of political parties' complete ideologies.

To support her thesis, Hofmann explores post-Cold War security institution-building in Western Europe. Specifically, she investigates the ongoing struggle to construct an autonomous European defence institution "in NATO's imposing shadow" motivated by party ideology (4). During the last decade of the twentieth century, she argues, increasing similarity between states' ruling parties' ideologies facilitated cooperation in institution-building (36). Hofmann's analysis is predicated upon the reader accepting her assertion that, essentially, when it comes to European security, the only states that matter are Britain, France, and Germany by virtue of their preponderant influence in the European policy ecosystem and their military strength (73). Throughout the text, Hofmann identifies and rebuts

alternative explanations for the construction of European security institutions outside NATO, including rational choice institutionalism, realism, and an understanding of partisan politics predicated on the left–right dichotomy alone (57).

Hofmann's ensuing chapters, however, narrow the scope of her theory from her initial assertion about the broad explanatory power of parties' political ideology to an examination of its impact on three countries' efforts on one specific issue over the span of a decade. The book's main chapters trace the evolution of European security cooperation, in particular institution-building, through three key episodes: the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of 1990–1991, the 1996–1997 Amsterdam Treaty negotiations, and finally the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) from 1998 to 2000. This is the most disappointing aspect of Hofmann's analysis. Despite the strength of these three admirably researched case studies, Hofmann does not connect her conclusions with broader questions. Should policy makers observing events in Europe at present be focusing on ideological congruence in questions of foreign and security policy? Does ideological congruence impact other European issues? Finally, are the lessons Hofmann extracts from this period in European history applicable to extra-European international cooperation?

During the 1990s, Hofmann demonstrates, the degree of ideological correlation among the three key European states increased, and with it their ability to create a European security institution autonomous from NATO. First, the three key players could not reach an ideological consensus regarding post-Cold War Europe because of their respective ruling parties' ideological proclivities. This lack of consensus led to the creation of a new but primarily symbolic security institution in the CFSP. The symbolism of the CFSP, Hofmann argues, set an important precedent by moving the European Union (EU) into the security policy sphere, which theretofore had been the sole purview of NATO (123). Second, after the violent breakup of Yugoslavia, European states negotiating the Amsterdam Treaty hoped to create a more robust security institution but were hamstrung by their ideological incompatibilities. Hofmann characterizes the outcome of these negotiations as a failure, since the EU did not receive any autonomous military assets or capabilities as a result. The election of Tony Blair's Labour Party government near the end of the negotiations came too late for the sudden ideological congruence between the French, German, and British governments to change the outcome substantively. Blair's election, however, made it possible for the three to construct the ESDP in the future (161).

Hofmann's final case study constitutes her most satisfying chapter, detailing how ideological congruence enables, as opposed to hinders, institution-building. On the eve of the twenty-first century, Blair's Labour government in the UK, the presidency of Jacques Chirac in France, leader of the Rassemblement pour la République Party, and to a lesser extent the Social Democratic Party–Green coalition in Germany all viewed the important questions of sovereignty, multilateralism, and Europe in a similar fashion (164). Naturally, NATO casts a long shadow over the European security policy sphere, and the European states could have

maintained the status quo without imperilling their sense of security. Over the course of their meetings between 1998 and 2000, however, all three countries concluded that the EU must have the means for autonomous military action, both in terms of troops and materiel as well as institutions, to complement NATO (177, 188).

This is a valuable book, offering insights into the development of the ESDP and EU specifically, as well as the evolution of post-Cold War Europe more generally. Given the relatively contemporary nature of her topic, Hofmann has mustered an impressive breadth of sources, especially a wealth of seemingly candid interviews with contemporary policy makers (though some scholars might take issue with her inclusion of anonymous interviews). *European Security in NATO's Shadow* is therefore a significant contribution to scholarship on European security policy. It will be of value to both policy makers and scholars seeking to deepen their understanding multilateral policy making.