European Foreign Policy Unit Working Paper 2005/1

Still 'civilian power EU?'

Karen E Smith, London School of Economics

> The idea of Europe as a purely civil power is behind us. The great debate of the 1980s over Europe as a civil power or a military power definitely seems to be a thing of the past.[1]

Well, not quite. Not only did the debate continue into the 1990s, but lumbers on today, in spite of the recent developments in European security and defence policy – including, notably, the intention to set up *battle* groups. Numerous papers and articles written in the last few years insist that we can (and should) still characterise the EU as a 'civilian power'(or civil power, as Gnesotto would phrase it).

The contention here is that clinging to the notion of civilian power EU not only stretches the term 'civilian' past its breaking point, but also tends to induce excessively rosy-eyed views of the EU as an international actor. 'Civilian' often means 'good', and deploying the 'civilian power EU' argument can close down critical analysis of actual EU foreign policy activities. This article thus attempts to knock off once and for all the idea of 'civilian power EU', and indeed the idea of naming the EU as a specific kind of international actor. The first section defines an ideal type of civilian power; the second argues that the EU is no longer a civilian power. The third section pleads for more critical analysis – and judgment - of EU foreign policy goals in particular.

1. What is (a) civilian power?

An initial clarification is needed between (exercising) civilian power and (being) a civilian power. Most observers seem to agree that there is a difference between civilian means and military means. Civilian is non-military, and includes economic, diplomatic and cultural policy instruments; military is, well, military, and involves the use of armed forces. There is, however, considerable fuzziness in the literature over where to draw the line between civilian and military power: for example, peacekeeping forces are frequently considered to be a 'civilian foreign policy instrument'. To keep things simple we should maintain a distinction between civilian

power strictly speaking, and anything that involves the use of the military. Peacekeepers may or may not be armed, but they are still troops who are trained *also* to kill. Furthermore, the trend throughout the 1990s has been one in which United Nations or ad hoc operations depart from traditional peacekeeping principles and allow for the use of more 'robust' forms of intervention. In sum, there is a range of instruments, with pure civilian power on one end (completely civilian means) and military power on the other. The point made here is that while there are numerous instruments within that range, we can draw a clear line on it between civilian and non-civilian, and peacekeeping is not civilian.

Being a civilian power, however, has been most frequently defined to entail not just the means that an actor uses, but also the ends that it pursues and – less frequently – the way those means are used, and the process by which foreign policy is made. There are, in other words, four elements to being a civilian power: means; ends; use of persuasion; and civilian control over foreign (and defence) policy-making. All four matter, but the line between what constitutes civilian and what does not in the last three elements is much harder to determine than in the first one. An approximate definition of each of the last three elements is put forward below (the difference between civilian and military means having been outlined immediately above), on the basis of definitions provided in the literature on civilian power.

The most classic definition of civilian power refers really to only two of the four critical elements. For Hanns Maull, being a civilian power implies:

    a) the acceptance of the necessity of cooperation with others in the pursuit of international objectives;
    b) the concentration on non-military, primarily economic, means to secure national goals, with military power left as a residual instrument serving essentially to safeguard other means of international interaction; and
    c) a willingness to develop supranational structures to address critical issues of international management.[2]

Maull's definition emphasised primarily civilian means and an inclination to cooperate with others, which is more a case of how the means are used rather than what they are used for (in fact he merely refers to 'national goals' above). He did not specify what sort of objectives a civilian power pursues, other than to point out that transferring sovereignty allows the development of the rule of law in international relations, which pushes forward a process of 'civilising' international politics. He also

urged, however, the development of a set of values encompassing 'solidarity with other societies, and a sense of responsibility for the future of the world – and particularly the global environment'.[3]

The most well-known definition developed with exclusive reference to the European Union (or Community as it was then) is that of François Duchêne, though he did not explicitly offer up a clear definition of either the exercise or essence of civilian power. Duchêne's definition also emphasised two of the four elements, namely means and ends. Duchêne urged the Community to be an 'exemplar of a new stage in political civilisation. The European Community in particular would have a chance to demonstrate the influence which can be wielded by a large political co-operative formed to exert essentially civilian forms of power.'[4] Because the European Community is a 'civilian group of countries long on economic power and relatively short on armed force', it has an interest in trying to domesticate relations between states, and Duchêne urged the Community to 'bring to international problems the sense of common responsibility and structures of contractual politics which have in the past been associated almost exclusively with "home" and not foreign, that is, *alien* affairs.' He further warned that 'the European Community will only make the most of its opportunities if it remains true to its inner characteristics. These are primarily: civilian ends and means, and a built-in sense of collective action, which in turn express, however imperfectly, social values of equality, justice and tolerance.'[5]

The 'civilian ends' cited (or rather, preferred) by Maull and Duchêne are, therefore, international cooperation, solidarity, domestication of international relations (or strengthening the rule of law in international relations), responsibility for the global environment, and the diffusion of equality, justice and tolerance. These are 'milieu goals' rather than 'possession goals', to use Arnold Wolfers' distinction. Possession goals further national interests. Milieu goals aim to shape the environment in which the state – or the EU, in our case – operates. Milieu goals may only be means of achieving possession goals, but they may also be goals that transcend the national interest and are shared widely.[6] The problem here is that these 'civilian ends' are still quite fuzzily defined (for example, what does 'solidarity' mean in terms of policy practice?), but this is discussed at greater length in section 3.

Also important is how an actor uses its means to try to achieve its ends. K.J. Holsti put forward six ways in which an international actor can influence other international actors: using persuasion (eliciting a favourable response without

explicitly holding out the possibility of punishments); offering rewards; granting rewards; threatening punishment; inflicting non-violent punishment; or using force.[7] Christopher Hill uses four broad categories of ways to exercise power and influence. An actor can *compel* another actor to do something, using force (the stick) or deterrence (the threat of the use of force). Or it can *sway* another actor's decisions, using persuasion (the carrot) and deference (latent influence).[8] Similar to this latter method is Joseph Nye's conception of 'soft power', which co-opts rather than coerces people. 'A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries – admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness – want to follow it.'[9] It is essentially the power of attraction, and Nye explicitly differentiates this from coercion or inducement, which he calls command power.[10]

Foreign policy instruments can be used in these different ways: the 'stick' is not just military, nor is 'the carrot' solely economic. Economic instruments encompass the promise of aid, aid itself, sanctions, and so forth; likewise, military instruments range from the actual use of force to compel or deter an enemy to training and aiding militaries in other countries to ensuring defence of the national territory against a military invasion. So theoretically, just because an actor has only civilian instruments does not mean that it will only use those instruments to sway other actors; civilian instruments can be used quite coercively. Can, therefore, a civilian power use coercion, even if only with civilian means? For Christopher Hill, 'civilian models' rely on persuasion and negotiation in dealing with third countries and international issues. In contrast, power blocs use coercion, which in the case of the EU would mean that it uses its economic and diplomatic strength in pursuit of its objectives.[11] Hill's distinction will be used here too: civilian powers rely on soft power, on persuasion and attraction, not on coercion or carrots and sticks.
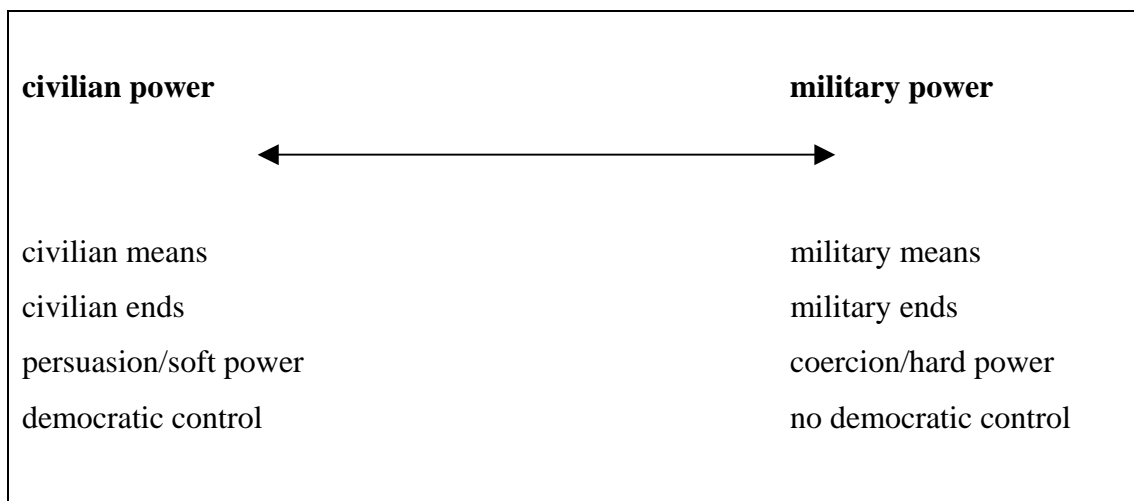
But it is also quite problematic to determine when coercion ends and persuasion begins – especially when the actor doing the coercing or persuading is much more powerful (even just in the sense of material capabilities) than the target state. Persuasion may be the intention, but may not be perceived as such by outsiders. Nonetheless, though a clear break between persuasion and coercion is not easy to establish, broadly speaking there is a spectrum with pure persuasion on one end and coercion on the other.

The final element of the definition of civilian power is discussed more rarely in the literature. For Hill, civilian models are willing 'to envisage open diplomacy and to encourage a more sophisticated public discussion of foreign policy matters.'[12] As he points out, 'European foreign policy discussions are unusually open in world terms…This may denote therefore colossal irrelevance, but it may equally be interpreted as a major contribution to the emergence of a wider, more knowledgeable, and ultimately more legitimatized debate among the peoples of the world.'[13] Stelios Stavridis, drawing on Juliet Lodge, also asserts that democratic control over foreign policy-making is an important element in civilian power, though he does not develop this further.[14] Hazel Smith argues that the EU is being pushed in the direction of an ethical foreign policy precisely because it is so open and visible (watched by the member states, their parliaments, the European Parliament and public opinion). It simply cannot engage in the 'worst types of foreign policy *realpolitik*'.[15]

Again, exactly what is meant by 'democratic control' is difficult to establish. Does this mean the European Parliament should have veto power over EU foreign policy initiatives? Or that national parliaments should? Or that all Foreign Affairs Council meetings should be public, or their minutes published? But again, broadly speaking, a spectrum from open to secretive decision-making processes can be envisaged, as can the extent to which such processes are subject to civilian, democratic control or not.

For the moment, we can pass over the difficulties of establishing precisely what 'civilian' might mean, beyond the realm of policy instruments. By combining the four elements, we can construct an (albeit approximate) 'ideal type': a civilian power is an actor which uses civilian means for persuasion, to pursue civilian ends, and whose foreign policy-making process is subject to democratic control or public scrutiny. *All four elements are important*.

We can also contrast the ideal-type civilian power with its opposite ideal type, a military power. This would be an actor which uses military means (exclusively, though admittedly this is difficult to envisage), relies on coercion to influence other actors, unilaterally pursues 'military or militarised ends' (again, difficult to envisage this, but we might include here goals such as territorial conquest and acquisition of more military power), and whose foreign policy-making process is not democratic. We thus have a spectrum of powers in international relations, with two ideal-types at either end:

civilian power	military power

$$\longleftrightarrow$$

civilian means	military means
civilian ends	military ends
persuasion/soft power	coercion/hard power
democratic control	no democratic control

The vast majority of international actors can be located at points along the spectrum but not at either end, though there may be several close to an ideal-type: for example, North Korea, Saddam's Iraq, Hitler's Germany, could all arguably be described as ideal-type military powers. Ideal-type civilian powers are much harder to find. In fact, the actors which arguably now come *closest* to pure civilian power are Europe's neutral states (Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland) – even though they all have military forces and have participated in UN operations around the world. Their military posture is primarily defensive (of the national territory). However, they are not pure civilian powers, because they have military forces, and more, importantly, four of them participate in the development of the EU's security and defence policy.

2. Is the EU (still) a civilian power?

There is not enough space here to delve into the question of whether the EU/EC ever was a *real* civilian power, before the end of the Cold War.[16] There has always been tension within the EU between those who thought that integration would be incomplete without a defence dimension and those who preferred the EU to remain civilian, whether for 'ideological' reasons (such as an attachment to neutrality) or because a military EU would undermine NATO. The civilian power group held sway until the late 1990s. As a consequence, the EU did develop a civilian international identity, and numerous actors within the EU (the Commission, the Parliament, various member states) made much of this, often recalling that the EU was born of an

innovative attempt to reduce the threat of war within western Europe, by transforming the anarchic international relations between sovereign states into a law-bound framework resembling domestic politics, and that this experience and philosophy translated into a civilian foreign policy. But rather than analyse whether the EU was completely true to this civilian identity, the concentration here is on whether we can consider the EU to be a civilian power now.

The spectrum suggested above can help us to characterise the EU; we can attempt to form a general view of the EU (or any other state) as an international actor, as well as characterise specific foreign policies. We could thus gauge the extent to which it is a civilian power, or is just a distinctive actor, or is 'normal', and in what ways.[17] For example, the EU's enlargement policy could reasonably be placed close to the civilian ideal-type, given that it appears to be quite a milieu policy (though elements of self-interested possession goals are there too) and relies on the EU's power of attraction. But because the EU uses – quite coercively at times – membership conditionality to influence applicant states, this is still not an ideal-type civilian power policy. Or in a hypothetical example, the EU may have to use force to ensure order in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which would place it towards the right end of the spectrum in terms of the use of military means and coercion, but its goals in so doing would place it towards the left end of the spectrum.

But many authors cling to the idea that the EU is a civilian power. They do so primarily by arguing that the means are, in effect, irrelevant: an actor can use military instruments and still be a civilian power. They rely mainly on the second part of Maull's definition of civilian power, in which he states that civilian powers concentrate on non-military, primarily economic, means to secure goals, but retain military power to safeguard other means of international interaction. So for contemporary Brussels-watchers, the EU can have military instruments and still be a civilian power. Furthermore, they argue that what counts most is that the EU is pursuing 'civilian ends'.

In so doing, they are following an example set by Maull in an article in which he maintained that despite all of the developments of the 1990s which saw Germany shed its inhibitions about deploying military force outside the NATO area, and despite its participation in the 1999 bombing of Serbia (a war which took place without, as Maull notes, a mandate from the UN Security Council or a clear justification in international law), Germany was still a civilian power:

> even during the Kosovo War, German policies clearly corresponded quite closely to the ideal type of civilian power in the most important aspects. German attitudes and policies towards Kosovo were driven by concern about the atrocities there. … Germany also led diplomatic efforts to consider ways to reconstruct and stabilise the war-torn Balkans. Additionally, German policies were shaped by the desire to stick with its allies. … Germany's policies continued to be obsessed with European stability. … Germany was also in the forefront of searching for political alternatives to the war.[18]

The problem with this argument is that 'Germany' in the quotation above could be replaced by any one of the NATO partners (some of whom were in fact much more uneasy about the use of force than was Germany). Are all NATO states civilian powers now? By diminishing 'civilian power' solely to ends, we are left with a definition that would exclude few states in Europe, or even beyond. If anything, this should make the case for being able to compare 'reality' with an ideal-type of civilian power, so that we can usefully distinguish between actors and identify changes in an actor's foreign policy orientation. If West Germany was a civilian power during the Cold War, Germany is not now, for all that it may be struggling with that shift.

But despite the problems with this stretching of the definition of civilian power, many writers on the EU have followed Maull's line of reasoning. Richard Whitman writes, that 'developing and strengthening the military instrument is not sufficient to validate or invalidate the notion of civilian power Europe.'[19] EU military power is developing just as a residual instrument to safeguard other means of international interaction.[20] Proof of this is that the EU privileges civilian over other forms of power, and that the Petersberg tasks include humanitarian operations and peacekeeping, which limits the EU's military aspirations and locks the EU into a 'civilian power military posture'.[21]

Stelios Stavridis also argues, forcefully, that just because the EU has acquired military means does not invalidate the concept of civilian power EU. In fact, he contends that the EU *must* have military means in order to be a civilian power, because it is only by wielding military power that civilian ends can be pursued. Force can be necessary to promote human rights and democratic principles, and the EU should not hesitate to use it for those purposes.[22]

Henrik Larsen analyses the discourse that the EU uses to describe itself, and finds that the EU continues to portray itself as a civilian power even though it has

acquired military means. 'The new dominant discourse in the Union post-St. Malo is therefore not an absolute break with the civilian power image in the sense that the dominant discourse presents military means as just one of the Union's tools; they are one kind of means among many. Military means are articulated as part of a range of means for dealing with international problems, where civilian (political and economic) means continue to occupy a central position.'[23]

There are several problems that stem from dropping the civilian means element of the definition of civilian power (either by the EU itself or EU-watchers). The first is that it denies us a clear way of distinguishing and comparing actors and of determining whether they are moving along the spectrum in one direction or another. Maintaining the civilian means element of the definition at least allows one to establish a clear break on a spectrum where clear breaks are few: either one has military instruments, or doesn't. What we are instead left with are fuzzy interpretations of where the break lies: forces for peacekeeping and humanitarian missions 'don't count' as military means. But not only, as stated above, are peacekeepers military personnel, but peacekeeping and humanitarian missions may not be or remain even primarily 'civilian' in nature: the catastrophic descent of the humanitarian mission in Somalia into a war-fighting mission is just the clearest example. Of course, the use of force may be needed to ensure that peacekeeping missions succeed (and this can be a good thing), but the point is that where do we decide that a mission has passed from 'civilian' to 'military'? I would argue that therefore we define peacekeepers as a military instrument, and an actor possessing this instrument is not a pure civilian power.[24]

The second problem is that even as the EU expands the Petersberg tasks, commentators still insist it is a civilian power, because military instruments are only one of several the EU could use. We are therefore left with no clear idea of when the EU might no longer be a civilian power; in fact, according to these definitions, it will always be a civilian power because it also uses civilian instruments. But so do virtually *all* states: e*very* state has recourse to a range of instruments that includes military and civilian means (that range may be wider and deeper for some actors, obviously).

The third problem with dropping the means element of the definition is that analysts have stated - uncritically – that by doing so, the EU is 'safeguarding other means of international interaction'. But what *are* 'other means of international

interaction'? Diplomacy? International trade? And what does 'safeguarding' them mean? That force can be used to maintain traditional trade links? To put this baldly, does this mean that the EU can use force to maintain the flow of oil and still be considered a 'civilian power'?

To sum this part of the argument up, saying that acquiring or using a bit of military means still qualifies an actor as a civilian power leads to the inevitable question of how much military: where is the cut-off point? It is much easier and more coherent to maintain a distinction between purely civilian means and military means. And so why keep up the pretence that EU is still civilian?

The other justification provided by authors for continuing to use the civilian power description is that the EU is pursuing civilian ends so therefore it is a civilian power.[25] The problem is that we really lack a good, clear definition of what civilian ends might be (see part three below). The definition offered in part one – milieu rather than possession goals – helps, but not when it comes to the grubby details. To take the civilian end of domesticating international politics, or furthering the international rule of law: does that international law include non-intervention in the domestic jurisdiction of other states? If so, how does it fit with the more recent oft-cited civilian end of promoting human rights and democratic principles?[26] And even if we could all agree that promotion of human rights should take precedence, we still might want to know which human rights are promoted (only political?) and which democratic principles (majority rule?). The point of this discussion here is to argue that not only do we not have a good idea of what 'civilian ends' are, but also we cannot uncritically state that the EU is actually pursuing civilian ends – any of the ones so far mentioned - and therefore is a civilian power. This is discussed at greater length below.

Furthermore, we should also consider the extent to which the EU measures up in the remaining two elements of civilian power. As Christopher Hill noted when he defined a civilian model as one using persuasion, the Community (as it was then) was not just a civilian model but also occasionally behaved like a 'power bloc': that is, it used its economic and diplomatic instruments to pursue Community interests.[27] And over the last decade in particular, the EU has been increasingly willing to exercise, as Nye puts it, command power, to induce or coerce third countries to do certain things. Conditionality is now a well-established feature of EU foreign relations.

The EU is increasingly and extensively using both positive and negative conditionality.[28] Agreements, aid, loans, and dialogue are now regularly promised,

provided partner countries fulfil certain political and economic conditions. But there are problems with the way the EU uses positive conditionality: it does not always deliver the incentives promised (extra aid, for example), or at least it does not deliver them quickly. And the benefits the EU holds out may not be the most desirable: the exclusion of free trade in agricultural products from its contractual agreements with third countries is a classic example of this. But in general, the EU is comfortable with applying positive conditionality and third states continue to demand the benefits that are on offer.

The EU's use of negative conditionality is a different matter: the EU finds it quite difficult to apply negative conditionality, not least because the member states often cannot all agree to take a hard stance. It thus often ends up behaving inconsistently towards violators of the EU's conditions. Some states suffer negative measures; others don't. This is due mostly to calculations of the relative strategic and commercial importance of targeted countries, but is also – to be fair – due to serious doubts within the EU about the merits of applying sanctions or negative measures. But regardless of why there is the reluctance to use negative conditionality, the outcome is inconsistent. And the EU still does use negative measures – coercion, in other words. It is certainly not just a civilian model with respect to this element.

As for the last element of civilian power, we can ask how democratic the EU's foreign policy-making process is. Yes, it is pretty easy to find out what is going on, but formal parliamentary control in the CFSP (or over trade agreements, or, as is increasingly important, the external aspects of the Justice and Home Affairs agenda) is not assured – even by the new draft constitutional treaty. And (European and national) parliamentary input – and public debate – over the use of the armed forces by the EU and/or by the member states is minimal.[29] And this is not just limited to discussion of actual operations (so it isn't just that some states went to war with Iraq in the face of intense public opposition while some did not). But the entire development of the European Security and Defence Policy has occurred with very little public discussion, or even knowledge. And when the ESDP did appear to have (partially) influenced the electorate of one country – Ireland – to vote against the Nice Treaty, a second referendum was held to erase those doubts. Serious questions should thus be raised about whether there is adequate (not just civilian) democratic control over EU foreign policy.

To sum up, civilian power EU is definitively dead. Arguably, its passing should have occasioned more thought than it has – for the strengths of the EU civilian model were powerful and revolutionary in the long run.[30] Law should replace power politics, thus fundamentally transforming the practice of international relations. Member states didn't need military instruments – even in 'reserve' – in their dealings with each other. Now they have been converted to a vision in which a larger territorial unit must have military instruments to deal with others. Robert Cooper, for example, argues that the EU cannot protect its post-modern paradise much less spread its post-modern message if it is not prepared to play by the rules of the jungle outside it.[31] Of course, we are still some way from the emergence of such a Hobbesian EU, but the development of the EU's military capabilities is certainly intended to allow it to back up its diplomacy by force. Yet, to hark back to David Mitrany, if the problem (of war) is the existence of self-interested sovereign states, then effectively creating a larger version of a 'sovereign state', an armed 'superpower' of sorts, is not the answer, and in fact just makes the problem bigger.[32] The EU – for a brief moment in time – offered an alternative vision of international relations. By folding to the supposedly superior hand of military force, the EU discredits and discards its post-modern cards (the most powerful instrument of soft power it had). But this is admittedly an argument past its prime, since the EU now has military instruments.

3. So if the EU is not a civilian power, how can we characterise it? And judge it?

Using the spectrum above allows us to characterise the EU without resorting to categories that patently do not (or no longer) fit, though 'naming' the type of international actor it could be is rather more difficult. Deciding *where* to place the EU on the spectrum, however, means taking a hard look at EU foreign policy activity (what it actually does in international relations), and, it is argued here, at the EU's 'ends' above all. It is, and should be, very hard to define 'civilian ends', but we should debate what they *should* be and then consider the extent to which the EU does indeed pursue such ends. How far the goals are actually achieved (rather than just intended) forms a necessary part of any such discussion, as does the way in which those ends are pursued. But the emphasis on ends is not just justified because much of the civilian power literature discussed above does so too, but also because, obviously, goals pursued are a crucial part of analysing what the EU (or any actor) does in

international relations. A few suggestions to spark debate about defining civilian ends are made here.

To an extent, the concept of 'good international citizenship' is helpful. In December 1988, the (then) Australian foreign minister, Gareth Evans, proclaimed that Australia aimed to contribute to the cause of 'good international citizenship'.[33] The concept has since been developed by Andrew Linklater, and, particularly with reference to British foreign policy, Tim Dunne and Nick Wheeler.[34] For Linklater, liberal-cum-social democratic states 'are obliged not only to comply with their basic moral and political principles by placing real constraints on self-interest; they are also obliged to promote, where circumstances permit, liberal-cum-social democratic principles in other societies and in the conduct of international relations more generally.' This does create the 'risk of cultural imperialism and excessive interference and intervention' but this can be reduced if 'the emphasis is placed on proceeding where there is international consensus and if the exponents of good international citizenship are sensitive to issues of unwarranted exclusion.'[35]

Dunne and Wheeler argue that 'states that are good citizens not only have to place order [the rules of international society] before the pursuit of narrow commercial and political advantage, they are also required to forsake these advantages when they conflict with human rights.'[36] Good international citizens pursue 'the following goals: strengthening international support for universal human rights standards; obeying the rules of international society; acting multilaterally and with UN authorisation where possible; and recognising that a sustainable ethical foreign policy requires the deepening of civil rights and constitutional reform "at home"'.[37] Furthermore – and much more controversially - 'good international citizens are morally required to use force in exceptional cases where it is judged that all credible peaceful alternatives have been exhausted, where delay in acting will lead to large numbers of civilians being killed, and where there is a reasonable prospect of success.'[38] So UN Security Council authorisation for humanitarian intervention is desirable but not required (and therefore, the Kosovo war was justifiable for good international citizens).

We can easily take these conceptions of good international citizenship and apply them to particular EU foreign policies or EU foreign relations overall. In fact, much of the literature on civilian power EU could simply substitute 'good

international citizen' for 'civilian power'. But we must then go on to ask, is the EU actually a good international citizen?

There are, however, at least a couple of problems with the concept, which limit any analysis or judgment of EU foreign policy. Firstly, it implies a distinction between (self)'interests' and 'ethics': only by sacrificing self-interests will an actor be 'ethical' in the sense of being a good citizen. But as Chris Brown has argued:

> an "ethical dimension to foreign policy" far from being a novel idea is actually part of what is involved in the very idea of membership in international society. States have a primary duty to pursue the interests of their peoples but in the context of a set of wider duties towards other states, and through other states, the rest of humanity. Both of these duties involve moral obligations, and it is a mistake to think of the first as simply interest-based, while the second constitutes the "ethical dimension" of foreign policy. Both sets of duties involve both interests and ethics. On occasion the (ethical) duties states have towards their own citizens may seem to conflict with the (ethical) duties they have to the wider world.[39]

Such clashes can only be resolved by political argument. The point here is that the EU too faces such obligations, and simplifying the debate into one between ethical conduct and interests does not help us to analyse or judge the EU's foreign policy activity, and the moral dilemmas it has faced or is facing.[40]

The second problem is the tendency to prioritise human rights in the conception of good international citizenship. This is also obvious in the discussions of the EU as a civilian power: promotion of human rights figures highly in many recent writings on it – as well as in the EU's own conceptions of its international identity. The 'ethical duties the EU has to the wider world', to paraphrase Chris Brown, are often interpreted to entail promotion of human rights, and include militarily intervening in other countries to stop violations of human rights. This is somewhat odd, because the original conceptions of civilian power – in Duchene and Maull – had a wider vision of what such ethical duties might entail.

In other words, we need to enquire further and ask what sort of milieu the EU is trying to build, rather than limit the inquiry to the EU's external human rights and democracy policy. And this, I contend, requires us to ask age-old questions about order and justice in international relations. Not only must we enquire as to how the EU is choosing between, or balancing, or trying to combine, order and justice, but we must also ask what the EU's conceptions of order and justice are.[41]

Limiting 'justice' to human rights is unsatisfactory, yet commonplace, as Andrew Hurrell notes:

> Indeed, it is very striking that, for many Western states after the Cold War, "justice" was taken uncontroversially to mean human rights, defence against murderous dictators, and democracy and political self-determination. It is also noteworthy that many of those who celebrated the values of a global liberal order proclaimed the virtues of democracy within states but steadfastly ignored calls for the democratization of decision-making within international institutions. Still more telling has been the deafening silence regarding either social and economic rights or global distributive justice. In 1998, for example, some 558,000 deaths were due to war; 736,000 were due to homicide and social violence; but starvation and preventable disease claimed around 18 million lives.[42]

Just analysing the extent to which the EU promotes human rights, and with which instruments, and how consistently, is not enough. We should look at the whole of the EU's impact on international relations and other states (whether deliberate or not), as well as what the EU is *not* doing, to promote justice, understood more widely than is usually the case – though we must debate what it should mean (and therefore what a civilian power's conception of justice should be). And does/should it use coercion, including the use of force? Is this acceptable? Required? Or should the EU instead simply try to avoid harm above all? or rely principally on soft power and persuasion? Furthermore, as Kalpyso Nicolaidis and Justine Lacroix argue, we should examine how consistent the pursuit of justice by the EU outside its borders is with its pursuit of justice within its borders.[43]

The EU's conception of, and contribution to, 'order' should also be analysed and judged. Domesticating international relations by fostering the rule of law is certainly one conception of order, but so might be fighting 'rogue states' or terrorists or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. How does the EU conceive of order? And how does – and should - it pursue it? Does/should it use coercion or not? Is (military) intervention in another state permitted or not? Under what circumstances? How consistently does it act: is the way that the EU has fostered order within compatible with the way it does so outside?[44]

To illustrate, the EU's external aid programmes can be scrutinised. How much aid does the EU give, as a proportion of EU GNP – does it meet the UN target of 1%? To whom does aid go – the poorest or strategically or politically important partners

(particularly in the neighbourhood)? What conditions are attached to development aid and how are they applied in practice? Answers to these questions might be considered unacceptable by some observers, as nowhere close to that worthy of a civilian power.

Or to take another example, legitimising the use of force. Robert Kagan argues forcefully that the Europeans are hypocritical because they insisted on UN Security Council approval of the Iraq war but were willing to bypass the UN Security Council when they wanted action in Kosovo.[45] The European Security Strategy declares that the UN Security Council has the primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security, but it is not clear how crucial UN Security Council authorisation is for the EU's enforcement of 'effective multilateralism'. Yet this thorny issue could determine whether the rest of the world sees the EU as a relatively benign power or one inclined to break international rules when it sees fit (or even to try to reshape those rules, along with other northern/rich countries, to suit its own interests). Again, EU behaviour in this respect might be considered to be quite far from that of an ideal-type civilian power.

And a final example: the EU has declared numerous policy objectives and stressed that they all fit well together. Promoting regional cooperation, economic interdependence, human rights, democracy, sustainable development and so on not only will reinforce each other but will also contribute to preventing conflicts and fighting terrorism, organised crime, illegal immigration, and so on. There is, in other words, no trade-off between order and justice. In theory, perhaps this is the case. In practice, and especially in the short term, it patently is not. For example, which should come first in war-torn areas such as south-eastern Europe or central Africa: reconstruction, democratisation, or pursuit of war criminals? Of course, the package as a whole is desirable, but may not be realisable except in steps. And given the EU's capabilities constraints, it has to decide where to devote funding and diplomatic resources. What seems to be a trend is the priority given to the fight against international crime (particularly international terrorism and illegal immigration), over the pursuit of milieu goals such as promotion of democracy or human rights, at least in the short run.[46] Is this behaviour consistent with what we think a civilian power should do?

Conclusion

This article has argued that the EU is no longer a civilian power; instead it finds itself, like almost every other international actor on the planet, somewhere along a spectrum between the two ideal-types of civilian and military power. Likewise, like all other international actors, it faces moral dilemmas between carrying out duties towards its citizens and carrying out duties towards foreigners. Such moral dilemmas cannot be resolved, as Chris Brown has said, by 'some calculus drawn from moral philosophy', but only by political argument.[47] We can thus debate what it takes to be an ideal-type civilian power, particularly in terms of the kinds of goals – the balance between order and justice – a civilian power should pursue (though it is unlikely we will agree on this). We can then compare EU foreign policy activity with our ideal-type conceptions, not only to 'measure' the EU against this 'standard' and compare it with other actors, but also to debate what the EU should be doing (or not doing). This is quite normal political debate, of the kind that goes on in a polity, or at least that should go on in any polity, about foreign policy. What is slightly more unusual is that the polity discussed is the EU, and that debate will also inevitably involve what should be done by the EU and what by its member states. But given the extent of the EU's foreign relations, it is not a premature debate, and we should move on from classifying or categorising the EU – and celebrating its distinctiveness – to debating what it actually does and what it should do in international relations.

---

[1] Nicole Gnesotto, 'European strategy as model', European Union Institute for Security Studies, Newsletter no. 9, January 2004, p. 1.

[2] Hanns Maull, 'Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 69, no. 5, 1990, pp. 92-3. Maull was, of course, referring specifically to the cases of Germany and Japan; but the definition has been regularly used with reference to the EU. Maull also took care to distinguish civilian power from Richard Rosecrance's notion of the 'trading state', which Maull takes to be primarily economic-oriented. Maull, 'German and Japan', p. 93, fn. 2. This is thus a different conception than that of Ian Manners, who takes civilian power to be primarily economic. Manners, 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2002, especially table 1, p. 240.

[3] Maull, 'Germany and Japan', p. 106.

[4] François Duchêne, 'The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence', in Max Kohnstamm and Wolfgang Hager, eds, *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign-Policy Problems before the European Community* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 19. Emphasis added.

[5] Duchêne, 'The European Community', p. 20.

[6] Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), pp. 73-6.

[7] K.J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis* 7th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NG: Prentice-Hall, 1995)*, pp. 125-6.

[8] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2003), chapter 6 ('Implementation') in general, but especially figure 6.2 on p. 137.

[9] Josesph S. Nye, Jr, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), p. 5.

[10] Nye, *Soft Power*, p. 7.

[11] Christopher Hill, 'European foreign policy: power bloc, civilian model – or flop?', in Reinhardt Rummel, ed., *The Evolution of an International Actor* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990). Crucially, Hill allowed for the possibility that the EU could be either – as well as a 'flop'.

[12] Hill, 'European foreign policy', p. 44.

[13] Hill, 'European foreign policy', p. 47.

[14] Stelios Stavridis, 'Why the "Militarising" of the European Union is Strengthening the Concept of a "*Civilian Power Europe*"', Robert Schuman Centre Working Paper no. 2001/17 (Florence: European University Institute, 2001), p. 9. Michael Smith has also argued that democratic control is a crucial part of civilian power, in a seminar on civilian power, University of Loughborough, November 2002.

[15] Hazel Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy: What It Is and What It Does* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p. 271.

[16] Interesting questions in this respect include whether the Community was a civilian power by default or by design, and whether the Community could ever really be a civilian power if most of its member states were not civilian powers.

[17] This is not to deny that the EU is indeed a unique international actor – it is, if anything because it is 25 states trying to act collectively in international relations, sometimes succeeding and sometimes not, through a relatively highly institutionalised process. But we can also treat the EU as a solitary actor with foreign policies, and thus judge and compare it accordingly.

[18] Hanns Maull, 'Germany and the Use of Force: Still a "Civilian Power"?', *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 2, 2000, pp. 71-3.

[19] Richard Whitman, 'The Fall, and Rise, of Civilian Power Europe?', Australian National University, National Europe Centre Paper no. 16, 2002, p. 19.

[20] Whitman, 'The Fall, and Rise', p. 25.

[21] Whitman, 'The Fall, and Rise', p. 21.

[22] Stavridis, 'Why the "Militarising"', especially pp. 17-20.

[23] Henrik Larsen, 'A Global Military Actor?', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2002, p. 292. Larsen does, however, also identify a competing discourse, 'according to which the EU's access to military means was central for the EU's international status and prestige' (p. 297).

[24] Furthermore, we could argue that collective defence – which the EU does not do - is much more 'civilian' than the use of force to intervene in other countries – which is what the Petersberg tasks are about.

[25] I am deliberately *not* describing this activity as 'civilising' international relations. This reeks of colonialism (the white man's burden and all that), and is especially dangerous when it is Europe that is supposed to be doing the civilising (again).

[26] This is the heart of Stavridis' argument in particular: civilian powers must sometimes use force to promote human rights and democratic principles.

[27] Hill, 'European foreign policy'.

[28] Positive conditionality entails promising benefits to a state if it fulfils the conditions; negative conditionality involves reducing, suspending, or terminating those benefits if the state violates the conditions.

[29] Two authors note that it 'is remarkable that European governments collectively have doubled the number of troops deployed abroad within the past decade, with so little national or Europe-wide debate on the implications of this development.' Bastian Giegerich and William Wallace, 'Not Such a Soft Power: The External Deployment of European Forces', *Survival*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2004, p. 179.

[30] See Karen E. Smith, 'The End of Civilian Power Europe: A Welcome Demise or Cause for Concern?', *The International Spectator*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2000.

[31] Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Atlantic Books, 2003).

[32] David Mitrany, 'The prospect of integration: federal or functional?', in Joseph S. Nye, Jr, *International Regionalism* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968).

[33] See Paul Keal, 'Can Foreign Policy Be Ethical?', in Paul Keal, ed., *Ethics and Foreign Policy* (Canberra: Allen and Unwin, 1992), pp. 12-13.

[34] Andrew Linklater, 'What is a Good International Citizen', in Keal, ed., *Ethics and Foreign Policy*; Nicholas J. Wheeler and Tim Dunne, 'Good International Citizenship: A Third Way for British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 4, 1998; and Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler, 'Blair's Britain: A Force for Good in the World?', in Karen E Smith and Margot Light, eds, *Ethics and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[35] Linklater, 'What is a Good', pp. 38-9.

[36] Dunne and Wheeler, 'Blair's Britain', p. 171.

[37] Dunne and Wheeler, 'Blair's Britain', p. 182.

[38] Dunne and Wheeler, 'Blair's Britain', p. 183.

[39] Chris Brown, 'Ethics, interests and foreign policy', in Smith and Light, eds, *Ethics and Foreign Policy*, p. 26.

[40] We could even argue that the challenges of trying to foster solidarity within the EU (now enlarged) - or, to put it slightly differently, of trying to foster 'thick' international society within the EU – are so great that they should be privileged over any ethical duties towards outsiders. But just as no state can avoid these moral dilemmas, neither can the EU – also because the EU is involved with, and affects, outsiders.

[41] This is somewhat linked to Manners' conception of normative power. The EU's 'normative power', as he puts it, is the ability to shape conceptions of what is 'normal' in international politics (Manners, 'Normative Power Europe'). But we must still analyse – and judge – what the EU considers to be 'normal', that is, what is its order agenda and what is its justice agenda and how does it balance the two.

[42] Andrew Hurrell, 'Order and Justice in International Relations: What is at Stake?', in Rosemary Foot, John Lewis Gaddis and Andrew Hurrell, eds, *Order and Justice in International Relations* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 42.

[43] Kalpyso Nicolaidis and Justine Lacroix, 'Order and Justice Beyond the Nation-State: Europe's Competing Paradigms', in Foot, Gaddis and Hurrell, eds, *Order and Justice*, p. 136.

[44] To return to the civilian power argument once again, 'how could a political entity so successful at creating order *within* through the logic of interdependence now turn to the old logic of coercive action externally?' Nicolaidis and Lacroix, 'Europe's competing paradigms', p. 141.

[45] Robert Kagan, 'America's Crisis of Legitimacy', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83, no. 2, 2004, pp. 73-7. The EU supported NATO's military action against Serbia. 'An aggressor must know that he will have to pay a high price', declared the European Council in March 1999. 'Conclusions of the European Council meeting in Berlin, 24-25 March 1999', document 4b/89 in Christopher Hill and Karen E Smith, eds, *European Foreign Policy: Key Documents* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 393.

[46] There are numerous examples of this, just two of which are: support for military government in Pakistan because that country is a key ally in the 'war against terror'; and encouraging neighbouring countries to crack down on migration towards the EU even though this might entail violating the rights of asylum seekers. Karen E Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003).

[47] Brown, 'Ethics, Interests', p. 26.