Mai'a K. Davis Cross. *Security Integration in Europe: How Knowledge-Based Networks Are Transforming the European Union.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011. viii + 281 pp. $65.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-472-11789-5.

Reviewed by James I. Walsh

Security Integration in Europe is an interesting and timely book in which author Mai'a K. Davis Cross observes that the European Union (EU) has, over the course of the last two decades, come to play a critically important role in coordinating and harmonizing its member states' internal and external security policies. The EU deploys troops to peacekeeping missions around the world, coordinates the imposition of trade and economic sanctions, identifies terrorist groups, provides development assistance, develops internal security measures and laws, is active in the areas of immigration and asylum, and takes on many other tasks. This is a remarkable development for an institution that has devoted most of its direct attention to economic affairs since its creation in the 1950s.

As Cross points out, this shift has received surprisingly little notice from scholars and policy analysts. One reason for this lack of attention is no doubt the fact that the EU's greater role in security has been a very gradual process. Unlike, say, the creation of the single currency, no treaties

have been signed that expand the EU's security responsibilities dramatically. In addition, no major crises that threaten the hold on power of the EU's leadership or of member state governments in this area have occurred. Another reason this change has gone unnoticed by many is that it has also involved a subtle redefinition of the meaning of such terms as "defense" or "security policy." For many, the most important aspects of this policy domain is security defined in terms of threats from one state's conventional or nuclear forces directed at another member of the international system. Such concerns largely disappeared for western Europe with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Security concerns still exist in Europe, of course, but have changed in nature and scope. Today's security issues tend to have lower stakes and thus attract less public attention.

Security Integration in Europe is meant to fill this gap. The book makes two important contributions to our understanding of contemporary security policy. It documents in considerable detail how the definition of security has changed since

the 1990s, and the considerable legal, institutional, and policy progress that has occurred in the same period to better direct and coordinate security policy. Cross shows that the EU now plays a important, in some areas dominant, role in security issues, including terrorism; combating extremism; responding to terrorist attacks; countering transnational organized criminal groups that are based inside or external to the EU; managing the EU's internal and external borders to control the flow of legal and illicit goods and services, travelers, migrants, and asylum seekers; developing common legal frameworks for civil and criminal justice; and integrating the military research and procurement activities of the EU's member states, among other issues. She also lucidly describes the origins, membership, and activities of the alphabet soup of European-level agencies and working groups that coordinate these activities among the member states and between the member states and the institutions of the EU. This detailed and comprehensive description of the origins, institutions, and procedures of the bodies that make security policy in Europe today is valuable precisely because the policymaking process in this arena is so new and complex.

Cross also offers an explanation for the evolution of security policy. Her focus is the extent to which security issues are governed at the European level. The explanation that she adopts focuses on epistemic communities, defined by Peter M. Hass as "a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue area."[1] Such epistemic communities influence policymaking because they have expertise that is not immediately available to outsiders. Members of epistemic communities converge on policy goals, and these "policy aims have to reflect their expert knowledge, not some other motivation, or they may lose authority with their target audience, which usually is made up of elite decision makers" (p. 20). The key point is that members of

epistemic communities believe that they better understand how policy will operate in a particular domain. This understanding may come into conflict with the understandings or objectives of their political masters. But epistemic communities that lack formal power can still influence policy outcomes when these political elites defer to their greater expertise and understanding.

The empirical chapters focus on how specific epistemic communities--especially networks of diplomats in the Committee of Permanent Representatives and other forums, and military officers who operate within the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization--influence decision making on a range of security policy issues. One particularly useful aspect of this analysis is Cross's acknowledgement that the epistemic communities that she analyzes vary in the degree to which their members have shared expertise and goals. This variation in the degree of commonality among members shapes the extent to which members have a powerful influence on policy outcomes.

Cross thus establishes that policy-relevant epistemic communities operate across a range of security policy issues in the EU, and that the "most powerful networks are those with the richest backgrounds of historical professionalization as well as those whose motivations derive from their expert knowledge" (p. 218). But is the relationship cause or effect? Cross's theory and empirical investigation leads her to suggest that stronger epistemic communities influence policy. An alternative explanation might be that such communities arise in precisely those areas where their members' principals have common interests, and are willing to allow the epistemic community's expertise to shape the margins of policy choice. Here such communities would in fact have influence, but primarily on issues of secondary importance and within tight bounds set by their political leaders. If the members of the epistemic community recognize this, they might be wise enough to

avoid pushing the boundaries set, implicitly or explicitly, by political elites. This would produce a situation in which the members of the epistemic community strategically select only policy tools that these elites would view favorably or at least would not see as a direct challenge to their positions and interests. At points, Cross directly acknowledges the tensions produced by such a delegation of authority from political leaders to epistemic communities of experts, for example, noting that "they must get approval from elected officials at home before moving forward with their internal compromises.... They need the backing of those at home. Ambassadors and military generals are directly appointed by elected officials based on careful deliberation and meritocratic criteria. Members of the epistemic communities described here are thus not far removed from national accountability, and they can always be removed from their positions if they abuse their power" (pp. 222-223).

Distinguishing the role of knowledge and expertise in political decision making is a longstanding challenge for scholars of international politics, including those who focus on arenas with dense networks of policy experts, such as the EU. *Security Integration in Europe* takes on this question, and provides a number of interesting insights into how and when epistemic communities matter for security policymaking, as well as documenting the surprising range of internal and external security issues that have been taken on by the EU in recent decades.

Note

[1]. Peter M. Hass, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," *International Organization* 46, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 3.

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