

*The Development of the EU as a Sea-Policy Actor* represents an important work within the body of contemporary studies dedicated to EU as a fully developed player in international relations. The metaphor of Blue Europe is beneficial in pragmatic terms, too, for the mapping and the investigation of the treaties sustaining the marine and maritime policies of the European Union (EU). This multi-layered analysis is complex and especially important in understanding the achievements and the potential of the EU as an actor of the seas.

Not only the history of Europe after the EEC, but also different theories are revisited to argue that the understanding of the European maritime policies, the so-called Blue Europe can be understood only with a competent theoretical background illuminating the structure induced, the agency, the process and the hypothesis orienting the policies sustained. The exceptional synthetic table (p. 22-23) dedicated to such analytical and theoretical considerations regarding policy development in the EU might be useful for the analysis of other policy achievements in other domains, too. A clear view upon contemporary theories regarding policy making and collaborative bargaining over diverse interests – international relations theories (realism and liberalism), classical integration theories (liberal intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism), neo-institutionalist theories (historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism), and the models based on domestic policies granting a great influence of the sub-national interests is allowing for a complex and nuanced perspective on policy-making.

Finn Laursen emphasizes: “Developing the treaty basis of Blue Europe has been an incremental process including several small steps when the member states concluded that it was necessary to take another step. Often the process was pushed by developments in international politics and political economy, including especially the Law of the Sea” (p. 42). There is a “constitutional” basis of Blue Europe. This investigation approaches both treaties and sea-policies concerning fisheries, maritime transport, maritime environment and maritime safety policies, describing a complete picture of the EU as a sea-policy actor and its particularities, internally and externally. These particularities are defined „from *mare liberum* to UNCLOS”, via the extension of the coastal state sovereignty stated by the Third UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III, 1982) and the UN Law of the Sea Convention (UNLOSC) regarding the off-shore marine resources. At the same time, an important role is granted to the special interest to assess the initiation and development of sea policies in the EU, the existing conceptual frameworks and their relevance and the

potential reforms in terms of EU's sea policies.

The EU's sea policies developed initially as common environmental policies and the book analyzes the Single European Act (SEA), the efforts of EEC to be recognized as part of UNCLOS III with an equivalent standing as the member states, in order to clarify the scope and the functionality of Blue Europe. However, "The EU now coordinates LOS activities through the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) Working Party on the Law of the Sea known by its French acronym COMAR, composed of experts from member states, the Commission and the Council Secretariat. It has also become more of an international leader in the LOS areas, for instance by supporting the development of legislation for the promotion of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, by showing the way in an EU regulation in 2008." (p.62)

Discussing the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the book presents the equal access principle in the 1970s and its changes until the establishing of the specific (200-nautical mile) fishery zone in the North Sea and North Atlantic Ocean in 1977. International interdependence, "complex interdependence" (Keohane and Nye) as well as the policy consequences of Custom Union, Common Agricultural Policy, the Commission, domestic policies and the demands of the fishermen, all played a role in CFP. The conservation and management policy was adopted in 1983 and several reforms were adopted until more recent reforms (2013), provided that new wider international changes and development imposed renewed attention to environmental agreements, or to new needs and interests or even new actors, such as NGOs and the European Parliament (entitled by the Lisbon Treaty, pp. 104-105).

Common Maritime Transport Policy (CMTP) along with other Blue Europe achievements are ultimately a proof of European and international cooperation and of common concerns (standards, equity, environment safety, pollution etc.) in front of diverse interests. Based on the international conventions, but going further than those the EU developed a body of law regulating fishery maritime transport, the protection of the quality of the environment, the prudent and rational use of resources, the protection of human health. The book captures the legislative developments the explanation of changes, the impact of the recent pro-environment discourse on the attitudes of the laggard member states.

The architecture of internal and external competences of the EU is also explained. EU has

exclusive competence for the conclusion of international agreements enabling the Union to act as a whole and to enforce upon these internal common rules, as well as in “conservation of marine biological resources under CFP” (p. 165). The EU has become an important international actor, it has “normative power” and “market power”, but also “environment power”, however, remaining solely a potential agent, just a part in the “coalitions of the willing”, not a military actor, in the full meaning of the term. Eventually, as the author indicates in different occasions, the nature of the European policy, its enforcement, sustainability and future depend on the political will and administrative capacity of the member states, and especially on the forms undertaken by the European collective action and its force.

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