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published in

Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods
2023

DOI (link to publisher)

[10.4324/9781003139850-2](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003139850-2)

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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citation for published version (APA)

Ostermann, F., & Mello, P. A. (2023). Methods of foreign policy analysis: Charting ground, engaging traditions, and opening up boundaries. In P. A. Mello, & F. Ostermann (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods* (pp. 3-18). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003139850-2>

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Methods of Foreign Policy Analysis

Charting Ground, Engaging Traditions, and Opening Up Boundaries

Falk Ostermann and Patrick A. Mello

Introduction

Contemporary politics faces a disintegration and questioning of global governance structures and a re-orientation toward national politics (Zürn 2014; Hooghe, Lenz, and Marks 2019). At the same time, geopolitics is on the rise again, certainly since Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, but the re-emergence of geopolitical thinking can indeed be traced back to the end of the Cold War (Guzzini 2012, 2017; Mérand 2020). The liberal international order, which had never been universal and uncontested but nevertheless structured global politics for the past seven decades, has come under pressure not only from its main stakeholders, the U.S. and Western democracies, but also from autocratic challenger states (Mead 2017; Cooley and Nexon 2020; Adler-Nissen and Zarakol 2021; Börzel and Zürn 2021). Political decision-makers and institutions are forced to accommodate these shifts, either on their own or in cooperation with others, and to scale down or reform global governance and the policies that shape it (Fioretos and Heldt 2019; Debre and Dijkstra 2021).

While foreign policy analysts, in a conscious departure from systemic theories of world politics, have always highlighted the considerable variation in national foreign policies and pointed at the relevance of domestic-level variables for explaining this behavior (Legro 1996; Elman 2000; Beasley et al. 2013; Kaarbo 2015), the current level of domestic and transnational politicization of world politics in areas as broad as trade, climate change, or security, and the resulting contestation of policies seems unprecedented. Exploring some of these dimensions, recent work has begun to examine the shifting context of foreign policy decision-making (Aran, Brummer, and Smith 2021), the influence of multi-party cabinet dynamics (Kesgin and Kaarbo 2010; Kaarbo and Kenealy 2016; Vignoli 2020; Oktay 2022), the party-political contestation of foreign policy (Wagner et al. 2017; Haesebrouck and Mello 2020; Raunio and Wagner 2020), the role of leaders, their reputations, and personal characteristics (Brummer et al. 2020; Lupton 2020), the rise of populist parties and their impact on foreign policy (Chryssogelos 2017; Verbeek and Zaslove 2017; Plagemann and Destradi 2019; Jenne 2021; Ostermann and Stahl 2022), the involvement, politicization, and influence of parliaments in security policy (Raunio and Wagner 2017; Mello and Peters 2018; Oktay 2018; Strong 2018), and the role of emotions for foreign policy-making (Eberle 2019; Koschut 2020; Ghalehdar 2021).

Yet, it is not only the increasing amount of pressure from below that is challenging foreign policy-making, but it has also become harder to forge and implement coherent national foreign policy agendas given the multitude of partially conflicting demands – i.e., between economic, climate, and welfare policies –, leading to increased volatility and instability. Adding to this, on a societal level, increased digitalization and technological innovations such as big data, social media, and related phenomena like fake news and outside interference in domestic affairs further complicate foreign policy-making (Schneiker et al. 2018; Fisher 2020). Clearly, this goes beyond established conceptions of two-level games or multilevel interactions in foreign policy (Putnam 1988; Oppermann 2008; Strong 2017; Conceição-Heldt and Mello 2018; Friedrichs 2022). Consequently, these phenomena make it necessary to direct analytical attention toward new arenas for understanding the making of foreign policy, while impelling traditional methods and approaches to analyzing foreign policy to address increasing complexity and, if necessary, to adapt their methods. This handbook is committed to providing space for this two-fold endeavor while also catering to those readers that are interested in learning substantially about a certain method for its prospective use.

Disciplinary Development of Foreign Policy Analysis

During the past two decades, Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) has developed into a thriving sub-discipline of International Relations (IR). If that were any measure for its existence or, if you wish, success, since 2005, FPA has had its own disciplinary journal – *Foreign Policy Analysis* –, and at the time of writing, the FPA section is the second largest sub-unit of the International Studies Association (ISA), with more than 1,000 members in 2022.¹ Recent years have also seen a host of seminal publications, including the magisterial *Oxford Encyclopedia of Foreign Policy Analysis* (Thies 2018), new FPA textbooks (Morin and Paquin 2018; Beach and Pedersen 2020), and new editions that have added to a growing canon of established FPA textbooks (Breuning 2007; Hill 2016; Smith, Hadfield, and Dunne 2016; Alden and Aran 2017; Brummer and Oppermann 2019; Hudson and Day 2019). Just to highlight two of these, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (Smith, Hadfield, and Dunne 2016) and *Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic and Contemporary Theory* (Hudson and Day 2019) have both already been published in their third editions. There have also been new handbooks focusing on the foreign policies of single countries, like Austria, Japan, and Russia, among others (McCarthy 2018; Tsygankov 2018; Senn, Eder, and Kornprobst 2022). Moreover, there have been recent initiatives to foster connections between FPA and other strands of research, including bridges toward *ethnography* (Hopf 2002; Neumann 2002, 2011; Kuus 2013, 2014; MacKay and Levin 2015; Cornut 2018), *feminist theory* (Hudson et al. 2008; Aggestam and True 2020; Okundaye and Breuning 2021), *public policy* (Oppermann and Spencer 2016; Brummer et al. 2019; Haar and Pierce 2021) and *history* (Brummer and Kießling 2019), as much as there has been new work on enduring topics such as *foreign policy change* (da Vinha 2017; Chryssogelos 2021; Joly and Haesebrouck 2021).

When looking at publication trends, it is apparent that the number of FPA-related books has been following an upward trajectory since the year 2008 (Google Books Ngram data).² Similar trends can be gleaned from journal-based data. During the first ten years since its formation, *Foreign Policy Analysis* published on average 21 articles per year. Since then, the number of articles in *FPA* increased substantially to an average of 35 articles per year (2015 to 2021). At the time of writing, *FPA* had published 471 articles in its lifetime. Data from Google Scholar (GS) and the Web of Science yield similar trends, as summarized in Figure 1.1. On GS, we conducted yearly searches for “Foreign Policy Analysis” (excluding citations). The results show a clear upward trend, from about 500 yearly publications in 2005 to nearly

3,000 publications in 2021. While GS is fairly inclusive in its count of publications and should thus be taken with a grain of salt, the Web of Science database only lists publication outlets that are included in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI). Here, we searched for journal articles related to “Foreign Policy”. The results show that the number of journal articles has been growing at a steady pace between the years 2005 and 2019, from about 329 articles to a peak of 1,085 articles. Notably, there has been a dip in the numbers since then, which is also reflected in the total number of articles published in IR journals that are covered in the Web of Science (these reach their highest value in the year 2019, at 9,864 articles, and have dropped to 8,853 and 5,411 articles in the years 2020 and 2021, respectively). It is apparent that the observed decrease in the years 2020–2021 coincides with the coronavirus pandemic. Hence, this may be an indication of the pandemic’s impact on academic publishing, especially the increased burdens on authors, editors, and reviewers. Notably, this trend is not visible from the GS data, possibly because GS also includes conference papers and other types of unpublished manuscripts that have not gone through peer review and the editorial process.

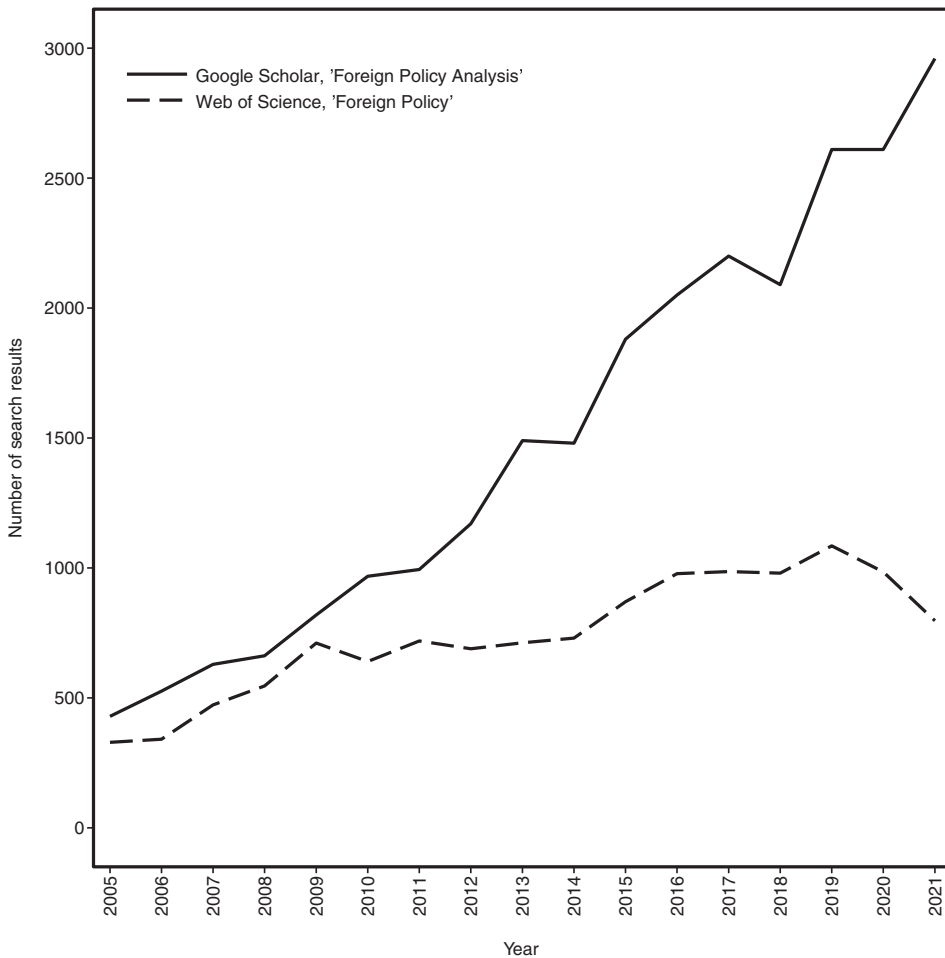


Figure 1.1 Publication trends (Google Scholar and Web of Science).

The situation within the past two years notwithstanding, FPA-related scholarly output has increased considerably since 2005.

Despite its relative youth, the birth of FPA is usually attributed to the 1950s and 1960s when work on public policy, decision-making, and on sub-state aspects of world politics emerged (Hudson 2005, 5ff.; Carlsnaes 2013, 300ff.; Hudson 2016, 13ff.). Starting from both individualist and group-based theories on organizational behavior (March and Olsen 1998), bureaucratic politics (Allison 1971), decision-making and political psychology in general (Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin 1962; Jervis 1976, 1978; Kahneman and Tversky 1979; Jervis, Lebow, and Welch Larson 1985; Welch Larson 1985), or leadership in particular (Leites 1951; Sprout and Sprout 1957; George 1969; Walker 1977; Hermann 1980), since the 1980s, FPA scholars have invested considerable efforts into developing foreign policy applications of major IR theories and approaches like constructivism (Risse-Kappen 1994; Buzan, Waever, and Wilde 1998; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Risse and Wiener 1999; Acharya 2004), feminism (Hudson et al. 2008; D'Aoust 2017), institutionalism (Putnam 1988; Holsti 2004), liberalism (Doyle 1986; Moravcsik 1997; Beasley et al. 2013; Kaarbo 2015), post-colonialism (Barkawi and Laffey 2006), neorealism (Grieco 1995; Elman 1996), or neoclassical realism (Rose 1998; Schweller 2003; Lobell, Ripsman, and Taliaferro 2009; Meibauer et al. 2021). These efforts had considerable impact on both IR and FPA scholarship because on the one hand, they stirred debate on theoretical underspecification, omitted variables, and problems of grand theories (Guzzini 1993; Vasquez 1997; Elman and Elman 2003), while on the other hand, they provided the “microfoundations” (Moravcsik 1997) for many IR theories’ grander interpretive schemes of world politics, like patterns of cooperation and conflict, the occurrence of balancing and bandwagoning behavior, the impact of democracy and liberalism on peace and conflict, or the role of identity in foreign policy.

Today, FPA theories, approaches, and scholarship can be found across the globe, albeit to varying degrees and building on different traditions (Brummer and Hudson 2015). FPA’s strongest institutional footing can still be found *in* the U.S. and academic systems that are close to the Anglo-Saxon tradition,³ in the same way as its empirical scholarship often focuses *on* the U.S. (Brummer and Hudson 2015), similar to what has been observed for IR at large (Waever 1998; Schmidt 2002). Nonetheless, despite a continuing need for theoretical, methodological, and regional diversification, FPA as a field has become more pluralist during the last decades, acknowledging an increasing number of different approaches as valid means for the analysis of foreign policy. While there are still differences in the pervasiveness of certain methods or methodologies among regions – with, for instance, interpretive and small-N qualitative (“understanding“ in the nomenclature of Hollis and Smith 1990)⁴ approaches having a stronger footing outside the U.S. with its comparative, large-N “explaining” (ibid.) tradition (see the various contributions in Brummer and Hudson 2015; also Hudson 2016, 28f.) –, scholarly debate, conferences, journals, and other publications have become more multi-faceted or are in the process of becoming so.

To be sure, one may question whether a differentiation between *qualitative* and *quantitative* approaches does justice to the existing plurality of methods and approaches in the social sciences more broadly, but also within FPA. The idea of “two cultures” gained currency not least because it can be a useful shorthand to distinguish research traditions that are predominantly oriented toward the quantitative template from those that are not (Mahoney and Goertz 2006; Goertz and Mahoney 2012). Yet, this binary distinction also prompted pushback and initiatives to move “beyond” the qualitative-quantitative divide (Tarrow 1995; Rihoux and Grimm 2006; Prakash and Klotz 2007; Collier, Brady, and Seawright 2010; Cooper et al. 2012). Moreover, recent empirical research confirms what “qualitative”

researchers have often highlighted, namely that there is much more diversity under the qualitative tent than the common label suggests (Kuehn and Rohlifing 2022). In light of these debates, as editors of this handbook, we firmly embrace the value of *methodological pluralism* rather than privileging certain methods and approaches over others. We side with Patrick Thaddeus Jackson who called for a “pluralist science of IR” and urged us to “stop worrying so much about the ultimate status of our knowledge—claims and get on with our primary task of producing knowledge about world politics” (Jackson 2011, 189). The contributions collected in this handbook differ in their methodological assumptions and their understandings of the scientific endeavor and the study of foreign policy. To the extent feasible in concise handbook chapters, we have pushed our contributors to make these assumptions explicit. Depending on their research aims and substantive interests, readers may find certain methods and approaches more suitable than others. Indeed, it was our aim to give readers a wide-ranging selection of contributions, all of which engage with foreign policy and international politics, but often from very different angles and with strikingly different tools. Therefore, this handbook is also a contribution to unite methods and perspectives whose use varies across world regions because of different institutional and scholarly traditions and historically developed research agendas (for an overview see Brummer and Hudson 2015). We are convinced that such pluralism promises to further both a methodically sound analysis of foreign policy across various fields, topics, and regions, on the one hand, and disciplinary exchange and understanding, on the other. In doing so, it is a contribution to providing the “nuts and bolts” (Elster 1989) for a methodically informed analysis of foreign policy.

That said, we are aware that our volume is not comprehensive in the sense that every existing perspective and method is equally represented. While it was our aim to cover the diversity of FPA in the 34 chapters that make up this handbook – rather than privileging one conception of FPA over another – we are aware that any such compilation has to remain selective. Future efforts should aim to further enhance diversity along several dimensions – topical, methods-wise, regional, and gender-related.

From Theoretical Diversity to Methods

Reflecting its behavioralist heritage (Stuart 2008; Carlsnaes 2013), FPA maintains a strong comparative component (Kaarbo 2003; Hudson 2005; Beasley et al. 2013), but methodological approaches are far more diverse today and draw on academic disciplines as varied as ethnography, geography, history, linguistics and semiotics, (social) psychology, or feminism. FPA at present-day can be strongly individualist and “actor-specific” (Hudson 2005, 1), as in leadership trait analysis (Brummer, Chapter 15) and operational code analysis (Schafer and Walker, Chapter 16); it can be group-focused as in groupthink approaches (Barr and Mintz, Chapter 17), intersubjective as in discourse analysis (Ostermann and Sjöstedt, Chapter 7) or research on emotions (Koschut, Chapter 11); and it can be comparative in a small-*N* sense (Feng and He, Chapter 18), in medium to large-*N* settings (Mello, Chapter 24), as well as case and process-oriented (van Meegdenburg, Chapter 25). Approaches and methods relying on other sciences such as ethnography (Neumann, Chapter 3), geography (da Vinha, Chapter 6), and political psychology (Stein, Chapter 13; Chaban, Kenix, Belyukova, and Fox, Chapter 14) further complement and complete this picture of an analytically rich subfield of IR. All these approaches and methods contribute to understanding challenges to global governance and world politics from the bottom-up agency of national foreign policy actors and institutions, often starting with a specific case but also investigating domestic politics’ impact on world politics comparatively, across time and space.

Although some publications, such as the aforementioned *Oxford Encyclopedia of Foreign Policy Analysis* edited by Cameron Thies (2018), contain dedicated methods chapters, most textbooks do not place special emphasis on questions of method and methodology. Exceptions are Jean-Frédéric Morin and Jonathan Paquin's (2018) *Foreign Policy Analysis. A Toolbox*, the French language *La politique étrangère. Théories, méthodes et références* by Morin (2013), or the German-language volume *Methoden der sicherheitspolitischen Analyse* (Methods for Analyzing Security Policy), edited by Alexander Siedschlag (2014). Most of these books or collections, however, adopt a two-fold approach by debating substantial theoretical concepts – such as the role of culture, rationalism, or bureaucracies – and how to analyze them jointly. While these are valuable contributions that foster debate and application, we believe that a dedicated methods volume can make an important contribution in its own right.⁵ This is the approach we take in this handbook.

As editors of this handbook, it was our intent to reflect the field's diversity by proposing a wide, yet, in all honesty, still incomplete guide to methods of FPA. One challenge that may be particularly pronounced in FPA is the linkage between certain approaches (such as large-*N* research), their preferred methods (statistical analysis), and shared theoretical assumptions within certain research traditions (i.e., rationalism). Our emphasis in this handbook lies on *methods* but we adopt a broad conception that includes approaches that could rather be seen as *perspectives* than genuine methods in a narrow sense of the term. Hence, Part II of the handbook contains several contributions that evolve around certain perspectives on foreign policy and international politics (such as the chapters on *ideas and identity* by Stefano Guzzini and on *norms and norm contestation* by Phil Orchard and Antje Wiener). While one may object that these contributions stray from what a methods handbook should be expected to focus on – and some of our colleagues may also regard it as a mischaracterization if we labeled their contributions “methods chapters” – we believe it is vital to delineate a variety of foundational perspectives before diving deeper into specific methods of inquiry.

Outline of the Handbook

The handbook's chapters are divided into seven parts that loosely group methods by research traditions. To further the goals of both disciplinary discussion and practical orientation for prospective users of certain methods, where feasible and reasonable, the chapters follow the same structure. After introducing the respective method or approach in relation to foreign policy puzzles, the chapters engage in a literature review to familiarize readers with the empirical application and development of a method. The chapters proceed by discussing key terms and concepts that are central to a method's analytical endeavor while often presenting strategies and advice for implementation and broader questions of methodology. We encouraged our contributors to make the discussion of the method in question more palatable by either including a dedicated section that shows concrete empirical applications on real-world foreign policy puzzles or illustrating the method's key terms and proceedings with concrete analytical examples *en passant*. The chapters close by examining the assets and pitfalls in a method's application – the *dos and don'ts* –, giving practical advice, and reflecting on the past, present, and future use of an approach.

Following this introduction, Part II contains what we have referred to above as broader perspectives on foreign policy. To start with, in Chapter 2, Stefano Guzzini discusses one of the central debates of FPA when engaging with the role of *ideas and identity* in foreign policy and, *ex negativo*, rationalism. Among others, Guzzini uses great power confrontation, concepts of self and otherness, and ontological security to demonstrate the value of

constructivism for FPA. Continuing the bottom-up perspective of constructivists, Chapter 3 by Iver B. Neumann presents *ethnography* as an interactive approach to analyzing diplomacy, based on participatory observation. Neumann centrally discusses the perspective's focus on observing, doing, and talking, while also debating issues of field access, cultural competence, and situatedness that are key for conducting ethnographically inspired FPA. Chapter 4, by Phil Orchard and Antje Wiener, introduces one of the major research programs of IR during the past decades – research on *norms and norm contestation* – and lays out its relevance for FPA. Orchard and Wiener argue that the turn toward studies of norm contestation and norm conflicts provides a useful entry point for understanding agency in the domestic politics of foreign policy. Chapter 5 on *feminism* by Alexis Henshaw presents the methodologically pluralist tradition of feminist, gender, and intersectional analysis in IR and FPA. Henshaw covers quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches while examining central aspects like gendered power relations, meaning-making, patriarchy, and resulting gendered practices that impact on the conduct of foreign policy and international politics. The final contribution of Part II, Chapter 6, deals with another science that has been put into the service of FPA, *political geography*. Luis da Vinha discusses various traditions of political geography, including critical geopolitics. He demonstrates how concepts of space (like distance) and place (socially constructed locations) and leaders' resulting mental maps have important consequences for foreign policy-making.

Part III consists of five chapters that evolve around language and interpretive methods. Chapter 7 by Falk Ostermann and Roxanna Sjöstedt provides an introduction to *discourse analysis and discourse theories*. Ostermann and Sjöstedt discuss both key concepts that are central to all discursive approaches (like productive power) and a range of interpretive micro-methods, while they also present dedicated schools that provide more encompassing frameworks for the analysis of meaning-making in politics. In Chapter 8, Kai Oppermann and Alexander Spencer introduce *narrative analysis* to the study of foreign policy. Using congressional debates on the Iran nuclear deal as empirical example, Oppermann and Spencer demonstrate narratives' quality as fundamental form of human expression and how they structure discourse in a way that contextualizes and justifies foreign policy decision-making socially and culturally. Chapter 9 by Sabine Mokry is about *frame analysis*. Adopting a cognitive approach to frames that emphasizes their quality of structuring reality, Mokry specifies both quantitative and qualitative perspectives on how to make use of frames for analyzing the politics of foreign policy. She explicates the usefulness of the method on a study looking at the Chinese and U.S. communication of foreign policy intentions. The part closes with two chapters on issues that have recently seen increased interest: images and emotions. Chapter 10 by Bernhard Stahl and Julian Ignatowitsch introduces *visual analysis* as method for making sense of visual representations of foreign policy. The authors discuss the particular way in which pictures code political messages between universalism and cultural particularities, how they structure perception of foreign policy issues, and how they try to persuade. Their chapter analyzes various cover images of the German weekly political magazine *Der Spiegel* and its coverage of the Afghanistan deployments of the *Bundeswehr*. Finally, Chapter 11 by Simon Koschut presents *emotion discourse analysis* as an approach to shed light on the emotive side of foreign policy-making. He examines the methodological challenges when analyzing subjective emotions with an interest in group-based processes like foreign policy-making and turns toward a specific form of discourse analysis of social representations of emotions to make this work. Koschut illustrates this framework on the Russian invasion of Crimea and NATO's discursive reaction to it.

Part IV focuses on psychology, roles, and leaders. Chapter 12 by Marijke Breuning introduces *role theory* as one of the definitive approaches of FPA. Debating both the historical development of role-theoretical analysis and newer approaches, more structuralist and more agent-centered, individualist and interactive ones, the chapter delves into role patterns, national role conceptions, the importance of socialization, role contestation, and expectations in order to understand leaders' constructions and perceptions of foreign policy challenges. Breuning also discusses various methods to go about implementing a role-theoretical research agenda. Chapter 13 by Janice Gross Stein engages with the *political psychology of threat assessment*. From an intelligence studies perspective, Stein's contribution centrally considers how to assess actors' capabilities and the probabilities of certain foreign policy behaviors under conditions of uncertainty. Tapping into various psychological approaches like prospect theory or cognitive heuristics like representativeness and anchoring, and using the example of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction programs, she discusses how assessments made at the time of the threat, afterward, and by academics differed from each other and how assessment failures occurred. In Chapter 14, Natalia Chaban, Linda Jean Kenix, Svetlana Belyukova, and Christine Fox deal with *measuring perceptions*. Specifically, their approach focuses on combining low inference (observational) and high inference (interpretive) approaches to data analysis in the context of international political communication. They show how various methods like the Rasch Measurement Model or frame analysis can be employed to analyze international media communication about EU foreign policy. Chapter 15, by Klaus Brummer, introduces *leadership trait analysis* (LTA) as a systematic and software-driven, at-a-distance approach aimed at comprehending leaders' more stable psychologic traits and leadership styles that fundamentally inform their decision-making, substance, and the conduct of foreign policy. Brummer illustrates the usefulness of LTA focusing on women as foreign policy leaders and the importance of gender for leadership traits/styles, while also discussing new developments in LTA like the possibilities of non-English language analysis. The second contribution on leadership profiling is Chapter 16 on *operational code analysis* (OCA) by Mark Schafer and Stephen G. Walker. Focusing on the Verbs in Context System (VICS), Schafer and Walker demonstrate how instrumental and philosophical beliefs about cooperation and conflict can be studied comparatively and in a quantitative fashion to assess leaders' psychology. The authors' empirical cases shed light on how to compare two different leaders' operational codes, how to go about large-N statistical analysis, or how to integrate game theory into OCA. Finally, Chapter 17 by Kasey Barr and Alex Mintz focuses on *groupthink, polythink, and con-div* as patterns of group decision-making dynamics and their central problems of cohesion and divergence. Starting out from the long-established groupthink model that puts collective decision-making processes and its inter and intra-group dynamics into perspective, Barr and Mintz present various theoretical developments in the literature, and they illustrative each of them with an empirical foreign policy case: convergence-divergence with the killing of bin Laden; polythink with the Syrian war *red line* issue; and groupthink with the Iranian nuclear program negotiations.

Part V entails seven contributions that examine foreign policy from a comparative and/or quantitative angle. In Chapter 18, Huiyun Feng and Kai He lay out the tradition of *comparative foreign policy*. From a critical review of early efforts at developing FPA grand theories from a comparative angle, Feng and He continue by introducing, on the one hand, three traditions of comparative FPA – geographic area studies, middle-range theories drawing on a variety of academic disciplines, and actor-specific studies focusing on decision-making properly – and three methodical approaches to implement comparative FPA – comparative cases, comparative theory, and comparative method (also know as mixed methods) – on the

other hand. Chapter 19, by Gordon Friedrichs, introduces an approach to *quantitative content analysis* (QuantCA), focusing on role theory. Discussing parallels with and advantages of combining QuantCA with qualitative approaches and mixed-methods designs, Friedrichs develops QuantCA as a tool to measure national identity and role conceptions and to compare them cross-case and within-case. He illustrates the argument on a study using human coding of leaders' national identity messages. Chapter 20, by Sibel Oktay, introduces *statistical analysis* in FPA. Oktay presents statistical approaches as bedrock tool for finding out about generalizable patterns of foreign policy-making, and as an opportunity to work creatively with datasets to generate new insights into patterns of foreign policy. She brings out main descriptive usages of statistical analysis and introduces various analytical models while going in-depth with regression models of various kind. She illuminates the workings of statistical analysis with a study on the attitudes toward international organizations among the U.S. foreign policy elite. In Chapter 21, Danielle Lupton and Clayton Webb introduce *experimental methods* and their methodology. They emphasize the controlled environment and random variation procedures that make experiments a great way to study microfoundational aspects of foreign policy decision-making and public opinion. At the same time, Lupton and Webb extensively discuss methodological issues related to the conduct of experiments, such as internal/external validity or sampling, while explaining these issues with two empirical examples on leaders' reputation for resolve, on the one hand, and public attitudes toward terrorism on the other. Chapter 22, by Scott Wolford presents a concise introduction to *game theory* and its application in FPA. He advances the approach as prime way of modeling strategic interaction between foreign policy agents under certain informational and decisional conditions. Wolford familiarizes the reader with the game-theoretical theory of choice, concepts of equilibrium and solution, and various models used to analyze strategic interaction, such as the famous prisoner's dilemma, games of limited information, or the deterrence game. Chapter 23 by Katja Kleinberg introduces the study of *public opinion surveys*. She lays out how individual attitudes measured in surveys are central to politics, what is characteristic about public opinion on foreign policy, and how it affects foreign policy outcomes. Kleinberg then exposes the various methodological choices involved in designing the survey instrument (question wording, response options, etc.), the overall survey design (cross-sectional, panel surveys, experiments), and issues of population choice or sampling. Finally, Chapter 24, by Patrick A. Mello introduces the set-theoretic method of *qualitative comparative analysis* (QCA) and its empirical application in FPA. He discusses the strengths of QCA in addressing causal complexity in medium-N settings, often combined with explanatory conditions being located at multiple levels. Mello also illustrates QCA's flexibility in tailoring the method to the specific needs of a given research design. He illustrates the method with examples from a study on coalition defection during the Iraq War.

Part VI comprises five chapters on qualitative methods and historical approaches. In Chapter 25, Hilde van Meegdenburg presents an analyticist approach to *process tracing*. Her chapter lays out the regularity understanding of process tracing and discusses its fit for the analysis of foreign policies. Van Meegdenburg then develops an interpretive version of process tracing based on explanatory mechanisms as analytical, Weberian, ideal-typical constructs that she uses to explain the Danish decision not to employ private military/security contractors in peace operations. Chapter 26 by Delphine Deschaux-Dutard focuses on *interviews* as an important methodological tool to gather information on foreign policy decisionmaking processes and elite attitudes. She presents the up and downsides of various interview strategies and reviews their useability in the context of own experiences when researching sensitive military and defense issues with their culture of secrecy. In this

context, Deschaux-Dutard also addresses the insider/outsider dilemma when engaging in interviews with policymakers, the social-interactionist aspects of the method, and gender issues. In Chapter 27, Payam Ghalehdar introduces *historical analysis* as a specific perspective on FPA. He deliberates on the role of history as data source, on the one hand, and as explanatory concept on the other (i.e., as in analogies, institutionalism, or learning). Ghalehdar then presents various ways of using historical data in case-oriented or theory-oriented research settings, engages in a debate about the usefulness and appropriateness of primary and secondary data sources, while providing concrete guidelines for either use. Similarly, Chapter 28 by Michal Onderco focuses on (critical) *oral history* as a specific form of practiced historicism that is focused on bringing out individual experiences of foreign policy agents, such as ambassadors, to reconstruct the unfolding of political events in the lack of otherwise recorded information or issues of secrecy. Onderco demonstrates the use, assets, and challenges of the method on two levels: individual interviews with foreign policy agents, and a conference project between practitioners and academics held to understand the accomplishment of the indeterminate extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995. He also elaborates on practical and conceptual issues of this direct method of engagement with history and/or historical figures, reliability issues, and triangulation efforts. Finally, in Chapter 29, Anne Kerstin Friedrich introduces the basics of *archival research* and its use on foreign-policy related topics. Focusing on diplomatic archives and giving examples from several countries, Friedrich explains the particularities of different sorts of diplomatic documents and how they can be used for tracing decision-making processes in, for instance, government departments concerned with foreign policy. She also discusses how archival research can be combined with other methods such as content analysis and certain coding procedures to understand diplomatic practice.

The handbook is completed by five chapters on new technology, social media, and networks, which together constitute Part VII. Chapter 30, by Sebastian Cujai, presents an approach to *big data analysis* in foreign policy that takes advantage of the increase of availability of large amounts of electronic data as a remedy to the traditionally scarce informational environment in foreign policy processes. Cujai cuts through different characteristics of the big data phenomenon before turning toward a form of script-based network analysis that distills relationships out of large amounts of textual data. He exemplifies the method's workings with a salience analysis across many years (2004–2008) of the Russia–Georgia conflict. Chapter 31, by Andrea Schneiker, shifts emphasis to *social media* and specifically to Twitter as a platform that has arguably gained a reputation for discourse-forming exchanges on foreign policy. Schneiker discusses the challenge of analyzing the platform's enormous amounts of content and metadata with various text mining methods and whether social media exchanges can count as public opinion. She then provides guidance on how to make research design decisions on actors, data selection, and data access with a particular focus on sentiment analysis, which she illustrates with a variety of studies from the realm of security and conflict issues. Chapter 32 by Franz Eder complements our other chapters on textual analysis with a specific approach to *discourse network analysis*. The method combines a qualitative content analysis of agents' foreign policy preferences with a network analysis that is interested in change through time. Eder explains how discursive data are coded content-wise and further categorized to enable the construction of affiliation and congruence/conflict networks. He illustrates the method on UK House of Commons debates on Iraq war participation in 2003. Chapter 33 by Valerio Vignoli provides a concise introduction to *text as data*. He presents the development of automated text analysis methods and programs and gives an overview of the panoply of different approaches, such as qualitative, dictionary, (un)supervised classification

methods, or scaling while examining the methods' potentials and challenges for FPA. Finally, Chapter 34, by Clionadh Raleigh and Roudabeh Kishi, provides an introduction to *conflict event data* based on the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) project database. Raleigh and Kishi take stock of different machine-based and researcher-led datasets (ACLED being one of the latter) and present the construction of ACLED as real-time source on conflict data that can be used to investigate shifts in subnational conflicts, local conflict actors, or the effectiveness of conflict prevention policies. They illustrate their dataset's use in FPA with data from Syria and on conventional warfare. Raleigh and Kishi also present thoughts on current limitations of datasets and crucial aspects for their construction.

Notes

- 1 Data communicated by the ISA's FPA Section leadership. Annual reports on the section's activities, financial status, and membership can be accessed at: <https://www.isanet.org/ISA/Sections/FPA/Reports>
- 2 The Google Books Ngram Viewer can be accessed at: <https://books.google.com/ngrams>
- 3 This academic tradition also finds an expression in the pervasiveness of distinct IR programs that are separate from, albeit still related to more generic political science curricula.
- 4 We deem this distinction problematic to the extent that it has been used to disqualify certain methods on scientific grounds.
- 5 Notably, the open access edited volume by Andreas Kruck and Andrea Schneiker (2017) provides introductions to a broad range of methods and approaches. However, the substantive emphasis of that volume lies on non-state actors in international security and is thus (mostly) outside the realm of FPA.

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