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Introduction

Since 2014, around a dozen countries have announced they are pursuing a feminist foreign policy (FFP).[1] Such proclamations are significant in that the explicit use of the 'f-word' is not merely symbolic but typically leads to a politicization and ensuing political contestation of FFP goals, not least due to the transformative aspiration that is associated with FFP.[2] Indeed, while some countries have been staunch advocates of FFP, others, such as Iran or Hungary, have actively pushed back against it and the norms with which it is associated.[3] Moreover, some states that have been at the forefront of FFP have recently retracted, including Sweden, which first announced an FFP. Overall, the picture that emerges is one in which the pursuit of FFP and of feminist foreign policy goals more broadly has the potential to become another fault line in international politics.

Against this background, it is unsurprising that FFP as a concept and FFPs as practical policies have recently received considerable scholarly attention.[4] Conceptual work has, for example, examined FFP as a norm[5] or from an ethics of care perspective.[6] It has reconceptualized foreign policy as 'gendered multilevel games'[7] or looked at FFP from a feminist perspective.[8] This has

[1] Caroline Green, Marta Kozielska, and Karen E. Smith, *Is feminist foreign policy driving progress for women's representation in diplomacy?*, LSE IDEAS Strategic Update (London: LSE, 2023), p. 8.
[2] Karin Aggestam and Annika Bergman-Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy in the making: Ethics, politics and gender', *Ethics and International Affairs* 30: 3, 2016, pp. 323–34 at p. 323, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0892679416000241; Leena Vastapuu and Minna Lyytikäinen, *Gender equality in Finnish foreign policy from 2019 to 2022*, Independent Study Commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, November 2022, https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/Gender+equality+in+foreign+affairs_Vastapuu_Lyytikainen.pdf/4aef250d-4d89-41cd-d390-6059951d4aa9?t=1668426670061, p. 4.
[3] Klaus Brummer and Karen E. Smith, 'Gender and foreign policy leadership', in Karin Aggestam and Jacqui True, eds, *Feminist foreign policy analysis* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, forthcoming).
[4] See, for example, Columba Achilleos-Sarll, Jennifer Thomson, Toni Haastrup, Karoline Färber, Carol Cohn and Paul Kirby, 'The past, present and future(s) of feminist foreign policy', *International Studies Review* 25: 1, 2023, pp. 1–29, https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viad001; Karin Aggestam, Annika Bergman Rosamond and Annica Kronsell (2019) 'Theorising feminist foreign policy', *International Relations* 33: 1, 2019, pp. 23–39, https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117818811892; Karin Aggestam and Jacqui True, 'Political leadership and gendered multilevel games in foreign policy', *International Affairs* 97: 2, 2021, 385–404.
[5] Jennifer Thomson, 'Gender norms, global hierarchies and the evolution of feminist foreign policy', *European Journal of Politics and Gender* 5: 2, 2022, pp. 173–90, https://doi.org/10.1332/251510821X16354220233761; Karin Aggestam, Annika Bergman Rosamond and Elsa Hedling, 'Digital norm contestation and feminist foreign policy', *International Studies Perspectives* 25: 2, 2024, pp. 226–45, https://doi.org/10.1093/isp/ekad017.
[6] Fiona Robinson, 'Feminist foreign policy as ethical foreign policy? A care ethics perspective', *Journal of International Political Theory* 17: 1, 2021, pp. 20–37, https://doi.org/10.1177/1755088219828768.
[7] Karin Aggestam and Jacqui True, 'Gendering foreign policy: A comparative framework for analysis', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16: 2, 2020, pp. 143–62, https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/orz026.
[8] Columba Achilleos-Sarll, 'Reconceptualising foreign policy as gendered, sexualised and racialised: Towards a postcolonial feminist foreign policy (analysis)', *Journal of International Women's Studies* 19: 1, 2018, pp. 34–49, https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol19/iss1/4.

been complemented by more empirically-oriented works that explore in detail the FFPs of individual countries such as Sweden, Canada, and Germany, either through single-case studies[9] or from a comparative perspective.[10]

Thus, there clearly is no dearth in scholarship on FFP. However, what is striking is that most of the literature has thus far refrained from explicitly drawing on Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) scholarship. Yet bringing into conversation FFP and FPA can enhance our understanding as to why different types of states, or organizations such as the European Union, subscribe to (or reject) FFPs. It can also advance our comprehension as to how they pursue an FFP in practice, and contribute to a substantive deepening of FFP based on its conception of the state or its domestic drivers for example with regard to its goals and principles.

We propose to advance the next research agenda on FFP by bringing it into conversation with FPA. In the following discussion, we highlight three aspects in particular. The first concerns the limited engagement of the FFP literature with 'the state' in general and the implications that different conceptualizations of the state can have for FFP in particular. To this end, we draw upon previous analytical reconciliations of FPA and the historical sociological literature in

[9] See, for example, Aggestam and Bergman Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy'; Annika Bergman Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy and gender cosmopolitanism', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16: 2, 2020, pp. 217–35, https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/orz025; Annika Bergman Rosamond and Elsa Hedling (2022) The digital storytelling of feminist foreign policy: Sweden's state feminism in digital diplomacy', *European Journal of Politics and Gender* 5: 3, 2020, pp. 303–21, https://doi.org/10.1332/251510821X16523466058289; Adam Chapnick, 'The origins of Canada's feminist foreign policy', *International Journal* 74: 2, 2019, pp. 191–205, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702019850827; Toni Haastrup, 'Gendering South Africa's foreign policy: toward a feminist approach?', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16: 2, 2020, pp. 199–216, https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/orz030; Laura Parisi, 'Canada's new feminist international assistance policy: Business as usual?', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16: 2, 2020, pp. 163–80, https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/orz027; Heather Smith and Tari Ajadi, 'Canada's feminist foreign policy and human security compared', *International Journal* 75: 3, 2020, pp. 367–82, https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702020954547; Malena Rosén Sundström, 'Sweden's feminist foreign policy in national newspapers in EU member states (2014-2020): media logic or political logic?', *European Journal of Communication* 38: 2, 2023, pp. 166–80, https://doi.org/10.1177/02673231221115861; Malena Rosén Sundström and Ole Elgström, 'Praise or critique? Sweden's feminist foreign policy in the eyes of its fellow EU members', *European Politics and Society* 21: 4, 2020, pp. 418–33, https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2019.1661940; Malena Rosén Sundström, Ekatherina Zhukova and Ole Elgström, 'Spreading a norm-based policy: Sweden's feminist foreign policy in international media', *Contemporary Politics* 27: 4, 2021, pp. 439–60, https://doi.org/10.1080/13569775.2021.1902629; Jennifer Thomson, 'What's feminist about feminist foreign policy? Sweden's and Canada's foreign policy agendas', *International Studies Perspectives* 21: 4, 2020, pp. 424–37, https://doi.org/10.1093/isp/ekz032.

[10] For example Ekatherina Zhukova, Malena Rosén Sundström and Ole Elgström, 'Feminist foreign policies (FFPs) as strategic narratives: Norm translation in Sweden, Canada, France, and Mexico', *Review of International Studies* 48: 1, 2022, pp. 195–216, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210521000413; Katarzyna Jezierska, 'Incredibly loud and extremely silent: Feminist foreign policy on twitter', *Cooperation and Conflict* 57: 1, 2022, pp. 84–107, https://doi.org/10.1177/00108367211000793; Amnon Aran and Klaus Brummer, 'Feminist foreign policy in Israel and Germany? The women peace and security agenda, development policy and female representation', *European Journal of International Security* first view, https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2024.6.

International Relations (IR), which have usefully enhanced the conception of the state in FPA.[11] We anticipate that this could move the debate on the state in FFP forward. The second refers to the value added that opening the black box of the state entails, thereby systematically exploring the effects that both domestic political and leader-focused factors could exert on the pursuit or rejection of FFPs. The third suggests that shifting emphasis from the articulation to the implementation of FFPs would enhance our understanding of gaps that frequently arise between declarations and actual policy outcomes, as well as enable a systematic exploration of the extent to which FFPs are in practice transformational. The remainder of this paper examines those three avenues in greater detail.

Feminist foreign policy and the state

The literature on FFP is sceptical about the conception of the state in IR and of the prevailing state-centred institutional frameworks to further feminist political agendas. Feminist IR scholars view states as ingrained with patriarchal, hierarchical, and oppressive power structures. They 'extend masculine protection to "women and children", while also perpetrating social, political, and economic inequalities that make women insecure in the first place'.[12] Further, state leadership roles, especially in foreign policy, have been dominated by men, with women leaders often having to adjust to masculine norms rather than generate transformative change.

Amid this scepticism, one research response by FFP scholars has been to shift the lens from the state as the main unit of analysis to non-state actors (NSAs) and transnational forces below and above the state. Through this lens, FFP examines how and why NSAs and transnational forces produce foreign policy change and normative shifts.[13] The uneasiness of FFP with IR's concept of 'the state' prompted another research direction, on feminist foreign policy ethics. This literature is rooted in an ethical commitment to the care and nurturing of distant others who

[11] Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*: *Power, politics and ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); [11] Chris Alden and Amnon Aran, *Foreign policy analysis: New approaches*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 2016).
[12] Aggestam and True, 'Gendering foreign policy', p. 147.
[13] Jacqui True and Michael Mintrom, 'Transnational networks and policy diffusion: The case of gender mainstreaming', *International Studies Quarterly*, 45: 1, 2001, pp. 27–57, https://doi.org/10.1111/0020-8833.00181; Melanie Hughes, Mona Lena Krook and Pamela Paxton, 'Transnational women's activism and the global diffusion of gender quotas', *International Studies Quarterly* 59: 2, 2015, pp. 357–72, https://doi.org/10.1111/isqu.12190.

reside beyond the confines of one's own political community. Thus, Ruddick contends that maternal and caring relations can bring about peace. Mothering, she insists, is not a practice confined to women, even though maternal care is strongly associated with women's bodies.[14] Subsequent literature has sought to illuminate how care principles may be used in foreign policy to address global gender inequalities, violence and protection across borders.[15]

However, these responses leave FFP scholarship with no explicit conception of the state of its own, and thus, drawing on Alden and Aran,[16] faces three key tensions. First, epistemologically, students of FFP draw on several tacit assumptions about what the state actually is. Consequently, states are lumped together, without reflecting how different types of states have a bearing on FFP. FFPs, for example, have been proclaimed by states as diverse as Canada, France and Mexico, which have different levels of wealth and systems of governance and distinct historical processes preceding their foundation as modern states.[17] However, the FFP studies we examined in our survey of the literature do not incorporate these factors in their account of FFP. Instead, they conceptualize the state in terms of what Halliday has described as the national-territorial-totality conception of the state. Accordingly, 'the state comprises in conceptual terms what is denoted visually on a map, namely, the country as a whole and everything that is within it: territory, government, people, government, people society'.[18] This epistemological standpoint, which paradoxically coincides with a realist conception of the state, excludes the histories, political, economic, social structures that distinguish between states in the analysis of FFP.

Second, ontologically, the state ends up being considered as no more than an extension of the elements that middle-range theory FPA has focused on over the years: the role of individuals, bureaucratic politics, domestic determinants etc. Thus, if foreign policy is conceptualized merely as an extension of such elements, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for FFP scholarship to account for foreign policy as a distinct site of political action. Third, paying significant attention to the formulation and implementation of foreign policy entails recognising that the state enjoys a degree of autonomy from the society it rules and external actors.

[14] Sara Ruddik, *Maternal thinking: Towards a politics of peace* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 1989).
[15] Robinson, 'Feminist foreign policy'.
[16] Alden and Aran, *Foreign policy analysis: New approaches*.
[17] Parisi, 'Canada's new feminist international assistance policy'; Zhukova, Sundström and Elgström, 'Feminist foreign policies'.
[18] Fred Halliday, 'State and society in international relations: A second agenda', *Millennium* 16: 2, 1987, pp.215-229, at p. 217.

However, since the concept of state is not explicit in much FFP literature, this autonomy cannot be discussed in either conceptual or analytical terms.

Whilst recognizing the rich debate in IR on the conception of the state,[19] we have sought to resolve these tensions by reconciling two bodies of literature that hitherto have mostly proceeded in separation: the historical sociological (HS) literature in IR and FPA. We draw on previous works that have analytically reconciled HS and FPA to propose a conception of the state for FFP.[20] The HS literature in IR emerged in the 1980s in response to a stalemate between the aforementioned national-territorial conception realist conceptions of the state, pluralist notions of the state, which perceived states as being caught within a network of global forces and non-state actors,[21] and systemic formulations of the state, which saw state behaviour as derived from the exigencies imposed by socio-economic[22] or politico-military structures.[23] Halliday instead proposed a second agenda, which brought into IR the 'institutional conception' of the state.[24] After outlining its key features, and the implications it may have for FFP, the remainder of the section proposes two further notions of state: quasi-states and clustered states.

The institutional state and FFP

The 'institutional state' draws conceptually on the work of neo-Weberian sociologists[25] and IR scholars.[26] Unlike the national-territorial-totality conception of the state, the institutional state rests on the idea that the state is a separate institutional entity and an actual organisation, which is a separate entity among several factors influencing foreign policy. Thus, it does not analytically eclipse them, as the Realist concept of the state does.[27] Rather, the institutional conception of the state highlights the relative autonomy the state possesses, which is derived

[19] John M. Hobson, *The state and international relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
[20] Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*; Alden and Aran, *Foreign policy analysis*.
[21] Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and interdependence*, 3rd edition (New York: Longman, 2001).
[22] Mark Webber, 'Problems and Issues' in Mark Webber and Michael Smith, eds, *Foreign policy in a transformed world* (Essex: Prentice Hall, 2002), pp. 9-39.
[23] Colin Elman, 'Horses for courses: Why not neorealist theories of foreign policy?', *Security Studies*, 6: 1, 1996, pp. 7–53, https://doi.org/10.1080/09636419608429297.
[24] Halliday, 'State and society in international relations'.
[25] Theda Skocpol, *States and social revolutions: A comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Anthony Giddens, *The nation-state and violence* (London: Polity, 1985).
[26] Halliday, 'State and society in international relations'; Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations;* Michael, Mann, *The sources of social power: A history of power from the beginning to A.D 1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
[27] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of international politics* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979); Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among nations* (New York: Knopf, 1948).

from four sources: its significant degree of control over the means of violence; its unique position to engage in international security competition; its ability to extract finances through taxation; and its surveillance capacities.

Usefully, it then follows that, since foreign policy is a key state activity—possibly the embodiment of the state in external affairs—the autonomy the state possesses can also be analytically accounted for when analysing FFP. Skocpol demonstrated that as the state is conceived of as a set of institutions and an actual organisation, it may be seen as Janus-faced in that it has intrinsic anchorage within class-divided socioeconomic structures and the international system of states.[28] This provides FFP with a conception of the state that enables it to incorporate, as Enloe and others have done, transnational and domestic elements, such as the political economy and social conditions, as well as international factors. The analytical challenge for FFP, then, is to account for the interaction between the state, such factors and foreign policy.

The quasi-state

Not all states conform to the institutional depiction of the state, especially as regards the configuration and capacity of their institutions. Another type is the 'quasi-state', which refers to many states in the 'Global South', particularly former colonial territories in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and the Caribbean. Quasi-states possess 'juridical statehood: legal recognition as sovereign states from international organisations and major powers'.[29] However, in many cases, the institutions endowing territorial statehood, such as the coercive apparatus, political institutions, money-extracting mechanisms, and surveillance capacity, are fragmented and incomplete. Thus, while quasi-states may enjoy equal legal sovereignty, they lack the institutions able to constrain and outlast the individuals occupying their offices. A corollary of partial institutional statehood is that the states affected depend, to a greater extent than the institutional concept of state would concede, on the rules, norms and institutions underpinning what Hedley Bull described as the international society, and in this context, two such norms matter in particular.[30] The norm of juridical sovereignty means that the legal—if not real—sovereignty of quasi-states must be preserved. Although this occurs on the normative level but

[28] Skocpol, *States and social revolutions*.
[29] Christopher Clapham, 'Sovereignty and the third world state', *Political Studies* 47: 3, 1999, pp. 522–37 at p. 522, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00215.
[30] Hedley Bull, *The anarchical society: A study of order in world politics* (London: Macmillan, 1977).

not necessarily on the material level, as several violations of quasi-states' sovereignty demonstrate, juridical sovereignty is significant. Another norm is that of self-determination, which emerged as an attempt to equate post-colonial states with the inhabitants created by European colonialism. Thus, in situations where quasi-states' material sovereignty virtually imploded—e.g., during the civil wars in Lebanon, Afghanistan and Syria—juridical sovereignty and the normative consensus on the right of self-determination were the remaining elements of statehood that prevented these quasi-states from being extinguished.

The notion of the quasi-state is significant for FFP scholarship on two key levels. The first concerns the relationship between states and international society. Unlike IR approaches such as various strands of realism, which deem the relationship between foreign policy and the international system in competitive terms, the quasi state suggests that states and international society are not necessarily counterpoised. This chimes well with the more collaborative conception of foreign policy promoted by FFP in that it does not endorse a competitive, anarchical and interest-driven notion of the international system. Instead, the international system is perceived as supporting—rather than challenging—the survival of states. The second level concerns where agency lies and what this means for FFP. In the FFP literature we surveyed, virtually all states were conceptualized, if unwittingly, in terms of the national-territorial totality notion of the state. This conception misses the institutional fragmentation and capacity deficit quasi-states suffer from, creating a blind spot for FFP scholarship. Indeed, when it comes to quasi-states we would advocate putting a premium on examining, in parallel, *formal domestic* structures of foreign policy and *informal domestic* arrangements – meaning the normative and organisational arrangements which Risse-Kappen described as the 'state structure, society, and [the] link [between] the two together'.[31]

Clustered states

There are also 'clustered states'[32], which are characterised by having partially and voluntarily pooled their sovereignty at least in the external sphere, within a raft of internationally politically integrated institutions such as NATO and the European Union. Unlike institutional states,

[31] Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Bringing transnational relations back in* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 6.
[32]Amnon Aran, *Israeli foreign policy towards the PLO: The impact of globalisation* (Sussex: Sussex Academic Press, 2009); Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'The imperial peace; Democracy, Force and Globalization', *European Journal of International Relations*, 5: 4, 1999, pp. 5-36; Martin Shaw, 'The state of globalization': Towards a theory of state transformation? *Review of International Political Economy*, 4: 3, 1997, pp. 497-513.

clustered states do not aim to be 'discrete units', nor do they feature the fragmented and incomplete institutional capacity of the state.

The notion of the clustered state has important implications for the study of FFP. First, it implies a different type of state–society relations than those discussed above. It is precisely because sovereignty and control over the means of violence are voluntarily pooled by states that it is easier for social relations to operate across national borders. This phenomenon, which Hill describes as 'linkage politics',[33] is coupled with a distinct notion of the external environment, namely, agency exists at multiple sites and involves numerous players: societal actors, governments, and a plethora of global and international institutions. The domestic emphasis on linkage politics and the multilayered notion of the external environment chimes well with the FFP literature's emphasis on transnational society and international institutions, rather than the state, as being the main unit of analysis for examining foreign policy.

Tensions reconciled?

In proposing these three types of states, we argue that scholars of FFP can make clear the assumptions about the state they are using. In ontological terms, the state is identified as a separate actor, an actual organisation. Since foreign policy is a key activity of the state, then, by inference, we can identify, in conceptual and analytical terms, the source of foreign policy autonomy, which differs between the three types. This opens an exciting research agenda into examining how the state interacts with other foreign policy determinants as regards the formulation, implementation and endurance of FFP, as well as to what ends FFP is pursued. These questions apply to the three types of states we have proposed.[34] Some clustered states including Sweden, France, Luxemburg, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany and Slovenia, as well as two institutional states—Mexico and Chile —have adopted an FFP. Other institutional states have announced their intention to do so, including Liberia, Argentina, Colombia, and Mongolia, as has one quasi-state, Libya.

Reconciling the abovementioned tensions is helpful in another respect. To the extent that it considers FFP as foreign policy change, the literature on FFP has attributed change primarily

[33] Christopher Hill, *The changing politics of foreign policy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), p. 209.
[34] Green, Kozielska and Smith, *Is feminist foreign policy driving progress*.

to the diffusion of norms and socialisation by international society. For example, Zhukova, Rosén Sundström and Elgström examine how four states (Sweden, Canada, France and Mexico) have translated feminist norms into their narratives about FFP.[35] Thomson treats the adoption of an FFP as a norm, which signifies adherence to the international liberal order, though it is distinctively defined by different states.[36] And Aggestam and True provide a framework for comparing the gendering of foreign policy, understood as the spread of pro-gender equality norms.[37] However, differentiating between different types of states points to agency being perhaps located elsewhere. To start with, in each type of state, individual policy makers can play a role in engendering change. However, what form their agency takes may differ by virtue of the distinct institutional environment in which these individuals operate, which could prove a stimulating research agenda for FFP. Likewise, when it comes to institutional and clustered states, there is room to investigate the role of bureaucratic politics and bureaucratic entrepreneurs in generating foreign policy change in the context of FFP. Conversely, in quasi-states bureaucratic politics are unlikely to be a determining factor, as institutions are too fragmented.

Opening-up the Black Box

The second suggestion for the next wave of FFP scholarship is to open the 'black box' of the state. As outlined further below, the FFP literature currently acknowledges the role of individuals as drivers of FFP and offers suggestions on possible links between domestic political factors broadly conceived, such as national role conceptions or party ideology, and the pursuit of FFP. However, so far it has not explored systematically the role of leaders or domestic political factors. Most notably, FFP scholarship has refrained from applying the analytical constructs that FPA scholarship offers for exploring foreign policy.[38] Connecting the discussion to the aforementioned conceptions of statehood, those constructs seem particularly pertinent to analysing the policy of institutional states whose representatives, or leaders, and domestic institutions employ relative autonomy in influencing foreign policy. Having said that, leader-oriented perspectives should be more helpful in quasi-states with their limited and fragmented

[35] Zhukova, Sundström and Elgström, 'Feminist foreign policies'.
[36] Thomson, 'Gender norms, global hierarchies'.
[37] Aggestam and True, 'Gendering foreign policy'.
[38] For recent overviews, see Klaus Brummer and Kai Oppermann, *Foreign policy analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024); Juliet Kaarbo and Cameron G. Thies, eds, *The Oxford handbook of foreign policy analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024).

institutional apparatus. Lastly, pooled sovereignty and politically integrated institutions that characterize clustered states should be particularly amenable for institutional analysis, though the multi-level nature of such settings renders the impact of domestic institutions on foreign policy outcomes less direct.

Leaders

The FFP literature does acknowledge the influence that individual decision-makers have for the adoption, promotion, abandonment and rejection of FFP goals. This holds particularly true for Margot Wallström's role as the key instigator of FFP by Sweden.[39] Other studies have highlighted the importance of Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock in the German case[40] or that of Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard and, in particular, Undersecretary for multilateral affairs and human rights Martha Delgado Peralta, in the case of Mexico.[41] Conversely, Chapnick has suggested that Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, despite his identification as a feminist, might have played a more limited role for the country's adoption of FFP than commonly assumed.[42]

Yet to our knowledge no FFP study has thus far employed not any of FPA's tools for systematically profiling leaders to arrive at deeper insights on the personalities of those leaders who have promoted FFP. Leadership trait analysis (LTA) and operational code analysis (OCA) seem particularly promising in this regard. LTA explores personality traits of leaders, zooming in on seven traits: belief in the ability to control events; need for power; conceptual complexity; self-confidence; task focus; in-group bias; and distrust of others.[43] Out of those traits, it is possible to construct overarching leadership styles, such as active independent, evangelistic, or

[39] See, for example, Aggestam, Bergman Rosamond, and Kronsell, 'Theorising feminist foreign policy', p. 24; Aggestam and True, 'Gendering foreign policy', p. 157; Bergman Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy', p. 217.
[40] See, for example, Saskia Brechenmacher, Germany has a new feminist foreign policy. What does it mean in practice?, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 8 March 2023, https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/03/08/germany-has-new-feminist-foreign-policy.-what-does-it-mean-in-practice-pub-89224; Aran and Brummer, 'Feminist foreign policy in Israel and Germany'.
[41] Ann Deslandes, Checking in on Mexico's feminist foreign policy, *Foreign Policy*, 30 December 2020, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/12/30/mexico-feminist-foreign-policy-one-year-in/; Brummer and Smith, 'Gender and foreign policy leadership'.
[42] Chapnick, 'Origins of Canada's feminist foreign policy'.
[43] See Margaret G. Hermann, 'Assessing leadership style: Trait analysis', in Jerrold M. Post, ed., *The psychological assessment of political leaders: With profiles of Saddam Hussein and Bill Clinton* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2005), pp. 178–212.

incremental. OCA explores the political beliefs of leaders.[44] On the one hand, it analyses philosophical beliefs, which get at leaders' perception of the nature of politics and political conflict, such as whether the political environment in which they are operating is one of harmony or conflict. On the other hand, it explores instrumental beliefs, which focus on ends-means relationships in the context of political action, for example the selection of policy instruments and more general tactics and strategies.

Analytical constructs like LTA and OCA can be used to profile those leaders who have been considered instrumental for the adoption of FFP, which would permit identifying idiosyncratic characteristics of those leaders that may have predisposed them to pursuing such policy. For example, leaders with a higher conceptual complexity, which gets at leaders' ability to perceive contexts or people in a differentiated way, might have a greater awareness of gendered political structures and their shortcomings. This, together with the finding that leaders with a conceptual complexity are more likely to change direction in their country's foreign policy,[45] might be a key trigger as to why certain individuals seek to pursue and adopt FFP while others won't—even if they may hold the same attachment to feminist foreign policy goals in general.

Tapping into the literature on policy entrepreneurs could offer another promising hook for infusing theoretical insights into the study of leaders in FFP scholarship.[46] While primarily used in public policy scholarship,[47] the concept of policy entrepreneurs has recently seen various applications to the study of foreign policy, and foreign policy change in particular.[48] At its core, this literature examines both the characteristics of persons who become policy entrepreneurs, thus seek to alter or adjust existing policy, and the instruments and tactics they employ. Drawing on those insights would allow researchers to explore who the actors are that seek to translate

[44] See Mark Schafer and Stephen G. Walker, eds, *Beliefs and leadership in world politics: Methods and applications of operational code analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
[45] Yi Edward Yang, 'Leaders' conceptual complexity and foreign policy change: Comparing the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush foreign policies toward China', *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3: 4. 2010, pp. 415–46, https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poq015.
[46] Aggestam and True refer to the literature on 'norm entrepreneurs' as another and related possible analytical lens. See Aggestam and True, 'Gendering foreign policy', pp. 151–3.
[47] See John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*, updated 2nd edition (Boston, MA, et al.: Longman, 2011); Michael Mintrom, *Policy entrepreneurs and dynamic change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
[48] Ralph G. Carter and James M. Scott, *Choosing to lead. Understanding congressional foreign policy entrepreneurs* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2009); Jeffrey S. Lantis, *Foreign policy advocacy and entrepreneurship. How a new generation in Congress is shaping U.S. engagement with the world* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2019).

feminist principles into the formal adoption of FFP,[49] and whether there are instruments and tactics that have proven helpful in accomplishing this goal.

Of course, all of the above holds true in the case of those leaders who have agitated *against* the promotion of feminist foreign policy goals. FFP scholarship has already highlighted the 'gender backlash'[50] and 'remasculinization' of international politics more generally.[51] For leaders such as former US president Donald Trump or Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, it seems pertinent to learn whether certain patterns emerge in their personality profiles that heighten their propensity to agitate against pro-gender norms. Similarly, drawing on the literature on 'norm antipreneurs',[52] which refers to actors who seek to maintain the status quo by actively resisting (policy) change, it would be interesting to learn whether there are specific instruments and tactics that have proven to be particularly successful in this regard.

Domestic institutions

A similar picture emerges for the role of domestic institutions in and for the adoption of FFP. While FFP scholarship acknowledges the influence of domestic institutions broadly conceived, it has so far refrained from systematically analysing such influence through the lens of established analytical tools from FPA. For example, for the Swedish case, a link has been established between the country's 'state feminist tradition' and pursuit of 'gender cosmopolitanism' and the subsequent adoption of FFP.[53] Other studies have suggested how important a whole-of-government approach is for the promotion and pursuit of FFP[54] and, by extension, how problematic lacklustre or absent buy-in from other ministries or governmental agencies can be. Indeed, the latter has been mentioned as impediments for the pursuit of FFP

[49] Brummer and Smith, 'Gender and foreign policy leadership'.
[50] Jennifer Thomson and Sophie Whiting, 'Women, peace and security national action plans in anti-gender governments: The cases of Brazil and Poland', *European Journal of International Security* 7: 4, 2022, pp. 531–50, https://doi.org/10.1017/eis.2022.21.
[51] Anne Sisson Runyan and V. Spike Peterson, *Global gender issues in the new millennium*, 4th edition (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2014), pp. 25–30.
[52] Alan Bloomfield and Shirley V. Scott, eds, *Norm antipreneurs and the politics of resistance to global normative change* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).
[53] Bergman Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy'; Bergman Rosamond and Hedling, 'The digital storytelling of feminist foreign policy'.
[54] International Women's Development Agency, *From seeds to roots: Trajectories towards feminist foreign policy*, https://iwda.org.au/resource/from-seeds-to-roots-trajectories-towards-feminist-foreign-policy/, p. 19.

by Germany and Mexico.[55]Finally, studies have pointed to the importance of party politics and party ideology for the adoption, pursuit, and ultimately longevity of FFP. For example, for the German case it has been suggested that resistance on part of her conservative party prevented Chancellor Merkel from pursing feminist policy goals under the explicit label of FFP even if she had wanted to.[56] An FFP only becomes possible under a new coalition set-up including the Green Party. The recent decision of Sweden's newly-elected government to drop the FFP label similarly attests to the importance of parties and party ideology. Our proposed conceptions of the state outlined above would enable the analysis of domestic influences and variation depending on the type of state and the implications those different types have on state autonomy and state capacity, given that the state—conceptually and analytically—is conceived of operating alongside other domestic players.

Further, a more systematic analysis of FFP adoption could explore connections between the general propensities of states to pursue feminist foreign policy goals or adopt the FFP label and states' national role conceptions.[57] National role conceptions refer to 'policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of any functions their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems'.[58] While Holsti emphasizes leaders' perception of appropriate roles, more recent scholarship has brought to the fore the social dimension of roles.[59] Hence, analyses could explore the extent to which intersubjective societal perceptions of a state's appropriate international behaviour render the pursuit of FFP more likely. Conversely, it could be asked whether a fundamental mismatch between a state's national role conception and the goals associated with FFP not only renders the latter's pursuit unlikely but possibly also triggers a pushing back against such norms.

The aforementioned discussions on whole-of-government approaches and inter-ministerial buy-in emphasize the role of bureaucracies in the context of FFP. Two of FPA's analytical

[55] Aran and Brummer, 'Feminist foreign policy in Israel and Germany'; Daniela Philipson García, Dinorah Arceta and Ana Velasco, 'Mexico's feminist foreign policy: A brief evaluation, *Internacional Feminista*, March 2023, https://www.wo-men.nl/kb-bestanden/1681218249.pdf, pp. 13–4.
[56] Aran and Brummer, 'Feminist foreign policy in Israel and Germany'.
[57] Brummer and Smith, 'Gender and foreign policy leadership'.
[58] K. J. Holsti, 'National role conceptions in the study of foreign policy', *International Studies Quarterly* 14: 3, 1970, pp. 233–309 at pp. 245–46, https://doi.org/10.2307/3013584.
[59] Sebastian Harnisch, Cornelia Frank and Hanns W. Maull, eds, *Role theory in international relations: Approaches and analyses* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

constructs seem particularly suited to further explore this dimension. The organizational process model emphasizes the role of intra-ministerial routines and standard operating procedures in foreign policy decision-making.[60] Organizations are held to be status-quo oriented, and changing established procedures is considered to entail costs (effort, time, money, etc.). From this perspective, limited buy-in or outright rejection of feminist foreign policy goals could be a function of organizations shying away from incurring costs that major adaptations of their established procedures entailing FFP requirements might involve.

In turn, the bureaucratic politics approach focuses on inter-ministerial dynamics.[61] A key assumption is that actors' policy preferences are primarily determined by their position in government, as per the oft-quoted adage, 'where you stand depends on where you sit'.[62] Accordingly, ministerial representatives try to get the most for their respective ministries, for example in terms of competences or budget. A lack of substantial buy-in from other ministries could be grounded in such cost-benefit calculations on part of ministerial representatives who refrain from taking on feminist foreign policy goals, or pursue them only half-heartedly, if such goals are perceived as not benefitting or even against the interests of one's ministry. In this context, our earlier distinction between different types of state is helpful. The bureaucratic politics model certainly applies to institutional states, yet may not be relevant to quasi-states because of their institutional fragmentation and weak state capacity. As for clustered states, the bureaucratic politics model would need to be adjusted to account for the enmeshment of this type of state in multilateral bureaucratic politics and the pooling of sovereignty.

Party politics and party ideology offer another lever for theory-driven analyses of FFP.[63] Indeed, the cases of Sweden and Germany leave little doubt that those factors play a role in both the adoption and the rejection of FFP. Thus, future research could explore whether, and which, changes in political cleavages, and the ensuing greater ideological diversity beyond the left-right axis, render the pursuit of FFP more likely. Similarly, FFP scholars would be able to explore what domestic political ends are achieved by pursing or abandoning a feminist foreign policy. Coalition governments and coalition governance is another factor to consider, such as

[60] Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of decision: Explaining the Cuban missile crisis*, 2nd edition (New York: Longman, 1999), chapter 3.
[61] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of decision*, chapter 5.
[62] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of decision*, p. 307.
[63] Stephanie C. Hofmann and Benjamin Martill, 'The party scene: New directions for political party research in foreign policy analysis', *International Affairs* 97: 2, 2021, pp. 305–22, https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaa165.

the extent to which junior members of coalitions (measured by the number of seats in parliament) can 'high-jack' the government's agenda to promote FFP even against objections of senior coalition parties.[64] Lastly, FFP scholarship could extend its typical focus on prime ministers, foreign ministers, and governing parties to include the legislature as an institution as another possible driver of, or impediment for, FFP.[65]

The above tools may also be used to explore states 'in the second row', that is, those countries that pursue pro-gender goals not least when implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda, but without the express label of FFP. The 'f-word' indicates less of technocratic exercise (such as gender mainstreaming) and more of a political and politicized endeavour.[66] Thus, why do some states shy away from taking the 'final' step towards formally adopting a FFP? Also here, this may have to do with individual leaders' personality traits or political beliefs, or it may be connected to domestic factors such as role conceptions or party ideology.

Implementation

The academic literature on FFP for the most part has focused on the articulation of FFP goals and principles rather than on how they are pursued and implemented. As Thomson notes, existing research on FFP has hitherto largely been concerned with the policy content of FFP and the ethical implications it carries'.[67] Implementation of FFP has attracted relatively little interest.[68] Thomson has also concluded that FFP acts more as a 'signifier of liberal identity rather than a clear policy agenda'.[69] Activists and observers have, however, critiqued a clear 'gap between rhetorical and policy commitments and meaningful implementation',[70] such as the inconsistency between Sweden's feminist foreign policy and its continued involvement in

[64] Kai Oppermann and Klaus Brummer, 'Patterns of junior partner influence on the foreign policy of coalition governments', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 16: 4, 2014, pp. 555–71, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-856X.12025.
[65] Baris Kesgin and Juliet Kaarbo, 'When and how parliaments influence foreign policy: The case of Turkey's Iraq decision', *International Studies Perspectives* 11: 1, 2010, pp. 19–36, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1528-3585.2009.00390.x.
[66] Aggestam and Bergman Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy', p. 323.
[67] Thomson, 'Gender norms', p. 174.
[68] Jennifer Thomson, 'Feminist foreign policy studies in Europe', in Maria Stern and Ann E. Towns, eds, *Feminist IR in Europe* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), pp. 115–32 at p. 126.
[69] Thomson, 'Gender norms', p. 184.
[70] Brechenmacher, 'Germany has a new feminist foreign policy'.

arms sales.[71] Chehab also considers how four states that have declared an FFP responded to Russia's war on Ukraine, with the focus being on comparing their policy responses to ideal FFP-recommended actions including privileging humanitarian and foreign aid over military assistance. She argues that their responses to the war were not framed according to FFP principles.[72] Hudson and Eason note that 'bureaucratic shenanigans' impeded the US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton's pursuit of feminist foreign policy goals in Afghanistan in 2009-2013.[73] Foster and Markham also briefly consider the implementation of a range of FFPs.[74]Nonetheless, implementation remains underexamined in the literature to date on FFP.

Feminist foreign policy has been heralded as potentially transformative for gender equality around the world as well as for the country's foreign policy. German Foreign Minister Baerbock's preface in Germany's guidelines on its FFP states that 'We are pursuing feminist foreign policy because it is desperately necessary. Because men and women are still not equal worldwide'.[75] Spain's guidelines state that its approach is transformative, with the aim 'to bring about a structural change in working methods and institutional culture, so that a gender perspective is systematically mainstreamed in every action of the Foreign Service'.[76]

These announcements set up FFP as a case of foreign policy change, which the FFP literature does not probe extensively. To what extent, following Hermann and Gustavsson,[77] do FFPs change the scope, goals, means and strategy of a country's foreign policy, or countries that have abandoned an FFP.[78]) Has there been minor change ('adjustment change') in the effort put into

[71] See Aggestam and Bergman Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy'.
[72] Sara J. Chehab, 'Feminist foreign policy and the war in Ukraine: Hollow framework or rallying force?', *Journal of International Women's Studies* 25: 6, article 4, 2023, pp. 1-22 at p. 17.
[73] Valerie M. Hudson and Lauren Eason, 'The challenge of foreign policy in the WPS agenda', in Sara E. Davies and Jacqui True, eds, *The Oxford handbook of women, peace, and security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 779–91 at pp. 787–8.
[74] Stephanie Foster and Susan A. Markham, *Feminist foreign policy in theory and in practice: An introduction* (London: Routledge, 2024), chapter 3.
[75] German Federal Foreign Office, *Shaping feminist foreign policy: Federal foreign office guidelines*, 2023, https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/themen/ffp-guidelines/2585074, p. 3.
[76] Gobierno de España, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Unión Europea y Cooperación, *Spain's feminist foreign policy: Promoting gender equality in Spain's external action*, 2021, https://www.exteriores.gob.es/en/PoliticaExterior/Paginas/PoliticaExteriorFeminista.aspx, p. 7.
[77] Charles F. Hermann, 'Changing course: When governments choose to redirect foreign policy', *International Studies Quarterly* 34: 1, 1990, pp. 3-21, https://doi.org/10.2307/2600403; Jacob Gustavsson, 'How should we study foreign policy change?', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 34: 1, 1999, pp. 73-95, https://doi.org/10.1177/00108369921961780.
[78] Towns, Jerzieska and Bjarnegård argue that the gender equality content of Swedish foreign policy will not change much even though the government has abandoned the FFP label. Looking at implementation more closely will allow scholars to assess the extent to which this is the case in the implementation of Swedish gender equality goals in its foreign policy. Ann Towns, Katarzyna Jezierska and Elin Bjarnegård, 'Can a feminist

a policy? Have the goals remained the same but their implementation has changed? Or have the goals themselves changed? Has there been a fundamental change in the country's orientation towards the rest of the world?[79] Studying the implementation of FFPs in more depth helps to address these questions because it focuses on goals and the way they are pursued, the instruments that are used to implement the policy, and the extent to which the country's foreign policy machinery as a whole buys in to the policy. Indeed, the quality of change could not be assessed without considering how FFPs have been implemented in practice. Therefore, assessing the extent to which such far-reaching aims have been – and can be – implemented should be an important strand of the next wave of scholarship on FFP.

Hill characterises implementation as having two aspects: 'first the capacity to do what is intended, given the capabilities and instruments at hand, and second the slippage between political decision and administrative execution'.[80] As Smith and Clarke note, implementation 'shifts the focus from the *decision* to *behaviour* itself'.[81] Although much FPA literature has focused on decision-making, studying the implementation of foreign policies helps to explain and understand how states behave in international relations, as well as uncover the extent to which implementation (considerations of foreign policy instruments, techniques of wielding power etc.) is integral to the decision-making process itself.

The FPA literature can help progress future research on the implementation of FFPs, and especially works on four facets of foreign policy: bureaucratic politics and implementation; statecraft and foreign policy instruments; foreign policy, power and the international context; and the aforementioned literature on the state. As discussed above, the literature on bureaucratic politics highlights the roles played by bureaucracies during the process of foreign policy-making, but also points to the possibility for 'slippage' in implementation of policies.[82] Decisions, policies may not have the effects intended because bureaucracies or other administrative bodies are opposed to the particular policies and thus seek to block, delay or

foreign policy be undone? Reflections from Sweden', *International Affairs*, 100: 3, 2024, pp. 1263–73, https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiae079.

[79] Gustavsson, 'How should we study', p. 76

[80] Christopher Hill, *Foreign policy in the twenty-first century*, 2nd edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 137.

[81] Steve Smith and Michael Clarke, 'Foreign policy implementation and foreign policy behaviour', in Steve Smith and Michael Clarke, eds, *Foreign policy implementation* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp. 1-195 at p. 3.

[82] Hill, *Foreign policy in the twenty-first century*, p. 135; Smith and Clarke, 'Foreign policy implementation', p. 3.

otherwise impede their implementation, or because there is incoherence or inefficiency in the administrative machinery of the state that hinders policy implementation. The case of US policy and Afghanistan mentioned above is one example of such slippage.[83] Slippage seems quite likely where FFPs have been driven principally 'from above', by foreign ministers (especially those newly in post) and without significant 'buy-in' across government. As FFPs are often touted to be quite radical or transformative, then bureaucracies – inherently more conservative and status-quo oriented – are likely to object to change, or are simply too unwieldy and slow-moving to be able to implement different approaches or policies.[84] Further, where an FFP has not been developed in a strategy or guidelines, and there are few if any indications of how the policy will be put into practice, then assessment of progress in implementing the policy is impossible and indicates that the FFP remains largely rhetorical and lacks substance.

The possibility of slippage and bureaucratic obstruction does appear in some of the literature on FFP. Aggestam, Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell note that foreign policy is 'mediated through a variety of policy options and compromises', and note that these can be inconsistent with the pursuit of ethical policy goals.[85] In a think tank piece, Brechenmacher highlights domestic political obstacles to the implementation of German FFP, including from within bureaucracies such as the German Foreign Ministry.[86] Yet there is more scope to explore whether and how particular ministries (e.g. those responsible for development aid or defence) as well as actors within the foreign ministry have sought to impede (or enable) the implementation of FFP on the ground.

A second body of literature on implementation concerns foreign policy instruments and statecraft. Foreign policy instruments include economic instruments such as aid or sanctions, diplomacy, and the use or threat of military force.[87] Statecraft refers to how those instruments are used: as incentives or sanctions, to persuade or deter, and so on. A focus on policy instruments and statecraft would reveal how FFP is put into practice, including the extent of the resources (amount of aid, and so on) invested in it. It would also enable scholars to compare 'before' and 'after', to see how the adoption of FFP has altered what the state is actually doing

[84] See Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of decision*.
[85] Aggestam, Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell, 'Theorising feminist foreign policy', p. 24.
[86] Brechenmacher, 'Germany has a new feminist foreign policy'.
[87] David Baldwin, *Economic statecraft* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 8-9; Hill, *Foreign policy in the twenty-first century*, chapter 6; Karen E. Smith, *European Union foreign policy in a changing world*, 3rd edition (London: Polity, 2014), chapter 3.

externally. A specific focus on sectors such as trade and defence would extend our knowledge of the implementation of FFP. Guerrina, Haastrup and Wright call for more focus on trade,[88] and there have been some studies looking at the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on FFP aims and instruments.[89] Aid and the impact on specific relationships (Swedish-Saudi tensions) have often been a focus,[90] and recently attention has been paid to the communication of FFP via digital diplomacy, and its reception.[91] But the next generation of FFP scholarship could systematically explore how FFP is implemented across the board.

The literature on statecraft and policy instruments ties in with the broad literature on power in IR, and can also be used to shed light on the kind of power that states wield when they adopt and implement an FFP. Guerrina, Haastrup and Wright have suggested that 'feminist power'[92] is a progression from civilian and normative power as an approach to foreign policy.[93] Civilian powers rely primarily on economic and diplomatic instruments, and eschew the use of force; normative power implies the capacity to define what is normal in international relations, to shape the international context in which states interact. The concept of feminist power treats 'feminist concepts, norms and ambitions as a form of power that can be leveraged in international settings'.[94] Some states – or rather, norm entrepreneurs within them – may hold that adopting an FFP is necessary to exercise feminist power. It could be seen as a way to exercise 'soft power', as Nye defined it: the kind of power which co-opts rather than coerces people, that attracts rather than relies on coercion or inducement. [95] Having an FFP may make a state more attractive, and thus able to influence others – for example, by setting an example and encouraging other states to adopt FFP.

[88] Roberta Guerrina, Toni Haastrup and Katharine A. M Wright, 'Contesting feminist power Europe: Is feminist foreign policy possible for the EU?', *European Security* 32: 3, 2023, pp. 485–507, https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2023.2233080.
[89] See Chehab, 'Feminist foreign policy and the war in Ukraine'; Chiara Pierobon,' Shaping German feminist foreign policy in times of conflict in Ukraine', in Anja Mihr and Chiara Pierobon, eds, *Polarisation, shifting borders and liquid governance* (Cham: Springer, 2023), pp. 285–300.
[90] See, for example, Parisi, 'Canada's new feminist international assistance policy', Aggestam and Bergman Rosamond, 'Swedish feminist foreign policy'.
[91] See Jezierska, 'Incredibly loud and extremely silent'; Bergman Rosamond and Hedling, 'The digital storytelling of feminist foreign policy'; Sundström, Zhukova and Elgström, 'Spreading a norm-based policy'.
[92] Guerrina, Haastrup and Wright, 'Contesting feminist power Europe'.
[93] See Ian Manners, 'Normative power Europe: A contradiction in terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40: 2, 2022, pp. 235-258, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5965.00353; Hanns W. Maull,'Germany and Japan: The new civilian powers', *Foreign Affairs* 69: 5, 1990, pp. 91–106.
[94] Guerrina, Haastrup and Wright, 'Contesting feminist power Europe', p. 493.
[95] Joseph S. Nye, Jr, *Soft power: The means to success in world politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), p. 5.

A fourth body of literature concerns the potential links between types of states—institutional, quasi, clustered—and FFP. Institutional states rely primarily on the foreign policy tools that accompanied the rise of the modern state. These include modern diplomacy, embodied by the institution of ambassador; exertion of military force by modern armies; economic instruments to consolidate inter-state relations or impose sanctions; balancing power and its dynamics via systems of alliances. The question that arises is whether FFP results in a different usage of these foreign policy tools, or does it actually furnish institutional states with rhetoric that masks longstanding patriarchal practices.

Unlike institutional states, the external environments of clustered states involve multiple levels of agency, which raises interesting questions about how FFP accounts for the foreign policy tools clustered states may deploy. Clustered states are more enmeshed in international and global structures, which means that they combine conventional use of modern foreign policy tools with a strong disposition towards multilateralism. Whether this proclivity reinforces the pursuit of an FFP is a fruitful research agenda, given the leadership role of clustered states in adopting FFP, e.g. Sweden and Germany. With respect to quasi-states, the partial or even non-existent institutional state apparatuses do not endow them with the material capabilities to shape their foreign policy environments. The foreign policy tools available to quasi-states often derive from the links forged by the regime with international society, frequently the guarantor of their existence, as well as their ability to mobilize networks of support from within global civil society. This means that their ability to pursue let alone implement an FFP depends on the degree to which this foreign policy approach is accepted and promoted by the key institutions of international society. Coalition making with international institutions, cooperation with NGOs and with states leading FFP, would be the key forms of implementation quasi-states could use when devising and implementing an FFP. The case of Libya mentioned earlier may prove an interesting example, though no concrete measures have been announced as to what its FFP might entail.[96]

Conclusion

Feminist foreign policy has already attracted considerable scholarly attention and there is a burgeoning literature on it, which has contributed to our understanding of the adoption, pursuit

[96] Green, Kozielska and Smith, *Is feminist foreign policy driving progress*.

and renunciation of FFP. We suggest that the next agenda of scholarship on FFP would benefit from deploying a conception of the state deriving from the analytical reconciliation of FPA and HS, as well as engaging with FPA insights on leaders, domestic institutions and implementation. This can help unearth the causal mechanisms at play when FFP is adopted, pursued and implemented, or abandoned, allowing scholars to appraise also the extent to which FFPs are indeed transformational and resilient. Scholarship along those lines could also deepen the concept of FFP in terms of goals and principles.

We suggest that FFP scholars consider how the type of state (institutional, quasi, clustered) that has adopted (or renounced) an FFP influences its decision and capacity to implement the policy. FFP scholars can also open up the black box of the state, and use the FPA literature to explore in greater depth how and why FFPs come into existence, endure, or are renounced. Opening up the black box of the state can also shed more light on why some states chose to use the 'f-word' but others don't, despite sharing an adherence to pro-gender equality goals, and why a different set of states chooses to explicitly counter FFPs. Finally, a focus on the implementation of FFPs draws attention to the extent to which a state's foreign policy behaviour has been changed by FFP adoption (or renunciation), and how FFPs influence the way in which states exercise power in international relations. In an era in which gender has become a flashpoint for contestation between international actors, the next agenda of scholarship on FFP could contribute to a greater understanding of the drivers of decision making, conflict and cooperation in international relations.