

*25 Winter 2005/2006*

# Perspectives

*The  
Central European  
Review of  
International  
Affairs*

Perspectives



2005/2006

The Troublesome Concept  
of Sovereignty

25 Winter

New Wars — Old Wars:  
the Case of Guatemala

Czech Dissidents' Discourse  
on Neoconservatism

The Polish-Czechoslovak  
Conflict over Teschen Silesia

A War of Words: Language  
and Conflict in the Middle East



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*25 Winter 2005/2006*  
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***Perspectives***  
**The Central European Review of International Affairs**

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*Perspectives* is a refereed Journal published twice a year by the Institute of International Relations, Prague, Czech Republic. At the present time, it is established as one of the leading journals in Central and Eastern Europe, dealing with a range of issues from international relations theory to contemporary international politics, and regional and global issues that affect international relations. *Perspectives* invites papers and enquiries from interested scholars.

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[Continued on p. 3 cover]

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# Editorial

In his introductory remarks to the first issue of *Perspectives*, issued in 1993, Otto Pick, the first Chairman of the Editorial Board, eloquently highlighted the main reasons for launching the journal. Among these reasons, the need for an academically relevant publication written by Central Europeans about Central Europe was the most outstanding one. Looking back at the two dozen issues of the journal published so far, we cannot but conclude that this plea was fulfilled – *Perspectives* has succeeded in presenting a wide variety of views from both academics and political leaders, whose contributions have covered virtually all aspects of political relations between Central European countries.

Yet in the course of years, the focus of *Perspectives* has been changing – not so much geographically, but rather concerning the type of articles published. In this sense, the journal has not only provided commentary on topical developments in international politics in Central and Eastern Europe, but reflected the evolution of relevant academic disciplines in post-communist societies. Originally, the vast majority of contributions to the journal were translations from the two Czech-language journals published at the Institute of International Relations, and *Perspectives* thus constituted a platform instrumental in promulgating these internationally. Similarly, the average article's length did not usually exceed six or eight pages, thus being just a brief, albeit concise, introduction to the subject rather than a full-length article exploring new academic territories of international politics.

However, the growing emancipation of the disciplines on which the journal drew, and greater confidence of authors began to bear fruit some five years after the inception of *Perspectives*. The first articles with a theoretical edge gradually started to appear in the second half of the 1990s – to name just a few notable examples: Jiří Šedivý's exploration of theoretical aspects of Czech foreign policy; Ondřej Čísař's analysis of the shifts in ideational structures about international institutions; and Pavel Barša's essay on the limits of the nation state. This increasing theoretical awareness has been accompanied by formalisation and greater rigour in the reviewing process. A strict peer review by at least two anonymous referees is now required for all published articles, and contributions are consequently divided, in accordance with generally accepted scholarly standards, into research articles, discussions and consultations. Efforts in this direction have been rewarded by the rising reputation of the journal internationally. The two most welcoming developments have been first, the considerable expansion of the range of authors to include scholars from beyond the Czech Republic and the region; and second, the growing number of databases which index and abstract articles appearing in *Perspectives*, including EBSCO, ProQuest and ABI/INFORM Global.

All of these trends being sound and healthy, the switch to two co-editors (Petr Kratochvíl and Petr Jehlička) is not meant to divert the above-described evolution, but to accelerate the process by inviting more articles dedicated to

theoretical explorations of the key challenges for Europe, and Central Europe in particular. To illustrate this point, in the issues to come we would like to address such topics as neutrality and its compatibility with European integration, and theoretical approaches to the EU neighbourhood. The heightened emphasis on theory will be accompanied by a more active PR strategy, aiming both at more publicity for the journal in the region and Europe and at the expansion of the ranks of contributors both from the region and further afield.

Although the changes the journal will experience in the next decade or so are likely to be somewhat less radical than those of the past 13 years, they will nevertheless be critical for fulfilling our ultimate goal of making *Perspectives* the leading forum of scholarly exchange on Central European international politics. While we as editors-in-chief are dedicated to this goal, it will largely be up to you – contributors and readers – to fulfil this ambition.

*Petr Kratochvíl and Petr Jehlička*  
*Editors-in-Chief*



# The Troublesome Concept of Sovereignty – the Czech debate on European Unity<sup>1</sup>

MATS BRAUN

**Abstract:** How the European Union is conceptualised in the national and public political debates restricts the European policy options available to that state. It is therefore of interest to see which conceptions of the EU dominate in a country, and to understand how these can be identified and interpreted. This paper outlines a framework for discourse analysis and then applies it to the Czech public discourse on the European Union. I describe how the debate can be analysed according to three different ideal types of legitimation, based on 1) an instrumental rationalisation, 2) a “we feeling”, 3) a “good argument”. I argue that any single actor will likely use arguments drawing upon all three levels, and I conclude that the Eurosceptics (Euro-realists) associated with the Civic Democratic Party came to see EU membership as a “marriage of convenience”, a necessary evil, because their arguments went in two incompatible directions. According to the third ideal type, they had to favour membership as good for the national interest, in economic terms. Simultaneously, this conflicted with the other two levels due to their belief that the EU is a threat to national sovereignty, and their conception of the nation state as the only legitimate arena for democratic decision-making. Advocates of membership, such as Prime Minister Špidla, had a more inclusive conception of the EU, enabling the argument that the EU strengthens nation states in globalising times.

**Key words:** discourse analysis, legitimacy, European integration, the Czech Republic

## INTRODUCTION

In this article I approach the question of how to identify and interpret contesting conceptions of the European Union in political and public discourses. I claim that an actor is likely to use arguments based on differing underlying constructions of a discourse. Thus scholars engaged in discourse analysis should not merely try to identify a certain political actor’s conception of Europe; but also what the underlying constructions are and to what extent these mutually coincide or conflict. Such an approach explains why parts of the Czech Civic Democratic Party faced a dilemma in the run up to the referendum on membership. On the one hand, membership had to be advocated as in the national interest in economic terms, but on the other their conception of the EU conflicted with their understanding of the sovereign nation state.

To approach the underlying constructions of the Czech political discourse on Europe I suggest the use of three ideal types of legitimation, modifications of the three types outlined by Eriksen and Fossum (2004). The ideal types are chosen because they represent three different types of governance in Europe. The first refers to a problem-solving regime, the second to a value-based community with a collective self understanding,<sup>2</sup> and the third to a rights-based

union deriving its legitimacy from norms approved in a free and open debate.<sup>3</sup> Thus by analysing the discourse according to these ideal types we will not merely categorise the different conceptions of Europe in the debate, but will gain a deeper understanding of what kinds of European governance will likely find legitimacy in the Czech discourse. However, the ideal types need modification since they are, in their original form, too narrow to allow the interpretation of all arguments used to justify the EU.

If we understand discourse in accordance with Ole Wèver and the Copenhagen School<sup>4</sup> as "...a system that regulates the formation of statements",<sup>5</sup> then we also find a clear argument for why it is relevant to study discourse. In a discourse not all statements are possible, or at least if less-likely statements are uttered, the chances of them being taken seriously are low.<sup>6</sup> It follows that the discourse also has implications for policy formulation. Since political actors must justify their decisions, not all possible decisions are likely given a certain time and context. This is not to say that the actors cannot change the structure of a discourse, merely that it in some instances that less likely.<sup>7</sup> So the kind of European governance that can be legitimated in the Czech discourse is likely to influence Czech Europe-related policymaking.

So far I have said that what is to be analysed is the Czech discourse on the European Union, and that the discourse will likely be structured around different legitimating criteria. Here the European Union should be understood as a contested concept in the Czech political discourse: a contested concept in the sense of what Thomas Diez refers to as discursive nodal points (DNP; 1998, 1999 and 2001). According to Diez, each different conception of the discursive nodal point is made possible by different meta-narratives.<sup>8</sup> In other words, there are contesting views on how the EU as a concept should be understood. These can be analysed through the suggested ideal types of legitimation. These ideal types present the link between different conceptions of the discursive nodal point and the meta-narratives constituting the different conceptions. As this article primarily examines how the Czech discourse on European integration is structured in accordance with the ideal types of legitimation, less attention is paid to the constitutive meta-narratives, the deeper layers of discourse.

Furthermore, the aim of the article is primarily to explore the possibilities of discourse analysis, not to produce a comprehensive description of the Czech debate on EU membership.

The article first outlines and discusses the theoretical framework, after which the topic of the Czech Republic and European integration is briefly introduced. Finally, the framework is applied to the public discourse on the European Union in the Czech Republic.

### **OUTLINING THE FRAMEWORK**

The framework used in this article is based on the understanding of discourse as discussed and developed by the Copenhagen School. However, it differs from the Copenhagen School on the issue of how to analytically approach the discourse. I first describe the Copenhagen School's approach to analysing discourses on Europe, indicating some problems with it. Secondly, I explain the concept of discursive nodal points, and how it can be used with-

out departing from the underlying understanding of discourse as used by the Copenhagen School. In the following part I elaborate on how the ideal types of legitimation need to be modified to fit the analytical purpose of this paper.

Hansen, Wæver et al. (2002) take as their point of departure how the reluctance towards the EU in the Nordic countries can be explained by specific aspects of the national discourses on Europe. These in turn are argued to consist of three layers: 1) the basic conceptual arrangement of state and nation, 2) the relation of the state/nation vis-à-vis Europe, 3) the concrete policy on Europe.<sup>9</sup> The risk of such a scheme is that possible main themes of the discourse other than the nation-state might be ruled out. These could include the economy or competitiveness,<sup>10</sup> or democracy, which, even if it is naturally closely linked to the nation/state nexus, should not necessarily be taken from this perspective.

Furthermore, while starting with the roots of the “national” discourse on Europe, the framework tends to produce a rather uniform description of that discourse. In other words, the approach is more concerned with discursive structures than discursive practices, and therefore it is less likely to recognise the diversity of a discourse,<sup>11</sup> e.g. where competing articulations of a certain concept are active inside a single national discourse.

In addition, this perspective presupposes that the discourse is national at all levels. The reading of the discourse therefore often starts with an historical exposition going back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (or even further). Even if we agree with the view that the discourse consists of different layers, or meta-narratives, there is no reason to argue that these must necessarily be limited either to a national setting or to the basic concepts of state and nation.

Let me take a concrete example to illustrate my point. Czech political scientist Petr Drulák (2005) uses an approach based on the discourse analysis of the Copenhagen School while analysing perceptions of Europe in the Czech political discourse. In dealing with the construction of the state/nation advocated by Czech President and former Prime Minister Václav Klaus, he argues that:

*Klaus’ construction is innovative in the sense that his framework of neo-classical economics makes him perceive the state/nation primarily as a regime where only market relations between economic agents matter. This construction of the state/nation then implied the construction of Europe as a regime as well...<sup>12</sup>*

This illustrates that the approach is limited by its restriction to the national discourse. By seeking explanations in the Czech discourse on the nation/state, this approach can only deliver answers to the question of what preconditions in the Czech discourse on the nation-state enabled Klaus to make this articulation of the state/nation and of Europe as a “regime”. It seems clear from this quotation that this change of the discourse (*innovation*) enters the Czech discourse from an international neo-classic economic discourse. Thus Klaus’ role here is not that of an “innovator” but of an “introducer”. He can be seen as an important actor trying to introduce this understanding of European governance into the Czech discourse, but surely not the inventor of this view of the state. The discourse about the state based on neo-classical economic theory might also be a factor uniting the Czech Euro-realist conception of the EU with Eurosceptic conceptions in other member states.

Diez's concept of discursive nodal points enables us to approach the discourse on Europe from another direction than the three-layered model discussed above. According to the concept, like in the Copenhagen model the discourse consists of different layers. Each conception of the DNP is made possible by different combinations of the underlying discourse, or meta-narratives to use the term preferred by Diez.<sup>13</sup>

Since the European Union constitutes a contested concept, various views on both what the European Union is and what it ought to be are present in the debate. These in turn derive from the underlying meta-narratives.<sup>14</sup> From this perspective, if we again consider Drulák's point above, it would be possible to argue that Klaus's conception of the discursive nodal point (state/nation or European governance) has one of its meta-narratives in the neo-classical economic discourse on the state. Thus it is not an innovation but rather a logical projection of the neo-classical economic discourse on the state onto Europe.<sup>15</sup>

The underlying discourses, meta-narratives, are structured according to different legitimising criteria. Diez uses four ideal types of polity ideas to distinguish between different conceptions of European Governance, which were originally developed to compare European political parties' views on Europe.<sup>16</sup> These ideal types, e.g. intergovernmental cooperation, the federal state, the economic community and network, are too explicit for this paper's purpose, since an actor will likely use arguments based on various forms of rationalisation, which in turn refer to different criteria of legitimation. They are, however, based on wider categories of legitimacy; the former two ideal types (intergovernmental cooperation and the federal state) are based on identity legitimacy, the third (the economic community) on output and the fourth (the economic network) on participation.<sup>17</sup> Hence it is not such a radical step to bring the suggested ideal types of legitimation into the framework. The suggested ideal types have the advantages, as mentioned above, of referring to different types of governance in Europe, and moreover to different concepts of democracy.<sup>18</sup>

I will now discuss and modify the three ideal types of legitimation, and subsequently describe which texts have been used for the analysis. Following this, I will briefly introduce the issues surrounding the Czech Republic and European integration, after which I present the analysis of the Czech debate on European unity, structured in accordance with the three ideal types.

### **THREE IDEAL TYPES OF LEGITIMATION**

The three ideal types correspond to the main theoretical divide in contemporary European studies, between rationalists and various forms of constructivist. The former emphasise an instrumental rationalisation primarily based on material interests, and the latter at least does not exclude the role of identity and norms.<sup>19</sup> According to the first ideal type, the EU is seen as a problem-solving entity that serves to promote the material interests of member states. The second type views the EU as a value-based community legitimised through a collective self-understanding of special European values. Thirdly the EU can be seen as a rights-based union where a set of legally entrenched fundamental rights evokes popular support for the Union.<sup>20</sup>

The three ideal types of legitimation draw upon three different types of rationalisation. The first is based on an instrumental rationalisation (maximising material interests), the second is based on a contextual rationalisation, and the third on a communicative rationalisation.<sup>21</sup> These ideal types need some modification if they are to be broad enough to allow interpretations of arguments advocating and rejecting the EU, and moreover if they are to be clearly defined in relation to each other. Furthermore, they should still be clearly linked to the three forms of European governance: a problem-solving regime, a community based on a collective self-understanding, and as a rights based union.

The first type has been modified following Petr Drulák's (2005) suggestion of to include not only economic interests but also geopolitical ones.<sup>22</sup> Disregarding whether the state is concerned either with maximising its economic or its geopolitical interests, in any case the state's narrowly defined self-interest is the driving force.<sup>23</sup> The first model thus includes arguments legitimising the EU as optimising the national interest. It consists of two subcategories; the first includes exclusively economic arguments and legitimises the EU according to the economic gains provided to a member state – this can in turn take various forms, from increased foreign investment to redistribution between parts of the Union. The second subcategory covers geopolitical interests, and includes both national security concerns and the effect on a state's negotiation power.

The second ideal type of legitimation refers to identity-based arguments and follows a contextual rationalisation.<sup>24</sup> This model includes arguments based on geographically based “we feelings”: European, national and their mutual relationship. These arguments basically approach this question: Is the EU advocated, pictured or rejected in terms of a cultural community?

The third ideal type of legitimation is in its original form the procedural reference to norms established through deliberate democratic decision-making.<sup>25</sup> This is problematic, since this paper analyses political argumentation on the EU and conceptions of the EU in the political discourse. Here we can decide either only to include arguments drawing upon the normative view that the EU should be based on such deliberate decision-making, or include arguments based on norms thought of as having been accepted in this way. Yet what appears as an “uncontroversial norm”<sup>26</sup> by one actor can be considered part of an ideological programme by another. It follows that this ideal type needs to be re-defined. In my definition, the third ideal type refers to arguments based on what an actor defines as “good society”. In accordance with this type of rationalisation, the EU can be advocated on the basis of the norms it promotes, but likewise rejected for the same reason.

These ideal types should not be taken as a tool for categorising the various actors, since the actors in the discourse operate on various levels of the discourse. Instead, what is interesting is how the actors operate on the various levels represented by the three ideal types of legitimation.

### **MEDIA, UTTERANCES AND ACTORS**

I suggest the political debate in media as the starting point for analysing the political discourse on Europe. I have two arguments for doing so. Firstly, the contesting meanings of the DNP are likely to appear at one stage or another in the mass media, in the form of statements by politicians and other per-

sonalities, commentaries, editorials, etc. Thus I accept that more actors influencing the political discourse than politicians alone; the dominating actors of the discourse might as well be journalists, writers, scientists, etc. Secondly, the mass media is crucial to the political discourse on any given topic since this is the structure by which politicians necessarily have to advocate their decisions and opinions.

It should be stressed that even if we accept a wider definition of political discourse, this is not the same as studying what ordinary people really think of the European Union. The focus here is on the question of what conceptions of the EU are present in the public debate and the meta-narratives influencing them. This has two consequences. Firstly, any analysed utterance is treated as an object in itself, independent of its author. It follows that in the analysis the question of what an actor actually thinks is not asked, which also allows for the possibility that an actor contributes statements to the discourse that are not coherent or even contradictory. Of course, it could be argued that an utterance is made for strategic purposes, hiding the true motives of an action. Yet the actor must still find a way of justifying a decision acceptable in the discourse.<sup>27</sup> So the actual argument is important. Secondly, the attitude of the wider population is not being studied. Clearly not all people in a society possess the capability to enter media debates.

Still, to say that the first object of the study will be the media is not very helpful, given the extensive material that has at one point or another been produced on the topic, or rather topics. There are many issues related to the European Union, and often commentaries or other statements only deal with a certain aspect of the union, or even more so of integration. The analysis is based on a study of articles from four major Czech dailies: *Hospodářské noviny*, *Lidové noviny*, *Mladá fronta Dnes* and *Právo*, between 2003 and 2005. I do not claim to have analysed all articles published on the topic – that would have been impractical. Yet I am unlikely to have missed a any dominant position in the discourse.<sup>28</sup> I have tried to ensure this by adding to the study of articles during the longer (two-year) period a shorter period, the month preceding the referendum, which allowed for a more extensive analysis of the articles published at that time. Moreover, a check was made to ensure that the views of all major political subjects were included in the analysis.

### **THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION**

Membership of the European Community/European Union, has been a priority for Czechoslovak/Czech foreign policy since the end of the communist regime in 1989.<sup>29</sup> The Czech opposition Civic Forum (OF) even called for a rapid incorporation into Europe in its first draft programme on foreign policy in 1989.<sup>30</sup> Since the elections of 1992, all Czech governments have proclaimed the goal of entering the EU. All major political parties, except for the Communist Party (KSČM), have supported this line.<sup>31</sup>

This does not mean that there has always been a consensus on European issues among the dominant political players. Despite the fact that Václav Klaus, as prime minister and leader of the rightist Civic Democratic Party, handed in the Czech application for a membership in 1996, seven years later as president he refused to state how he would vote in the referendum.<sup>32</sup>



If we look at the positions the political parties took in the run-up to the referendum, the Communist Party was the only party in the Czech parliament that recommended its voters not to vote for membership, although there was internal criticism of this decision.<sup>33</sup> The Civic Democratic Party, on the other hand favored membership even if some leading representatives publicly rejected it (i.e. vice chairman Ivan Langer and MP Martin Říman).<sup>34</sup> Generally a divide can be discerned between the pro-EU view of the coalition of social democrats, liberals and Christian democrats governing since 2002, and the more skeptical approach of the Civic Democratic Party. The Civic Democrats claim to pursue a Euro-realistic policy, arguing the necessity of defending Czech national interests in relation to the EU and rejecting the notion of federalism.<sup>35</sup>

### *Instrumental Rationalisations*

In this section arguments referring to economic and geopolitical output are discussed. I demonstrate that arguments referring to economic output in the narrow sense were especially crucial for representatives of the Civic Democratic Party. The importance of economic arguments is illustrated by the fact that some people associated with the party rejected membership because the economic advantages could be achieved without entering the Union. Moreover, the governing coalition itself emphasised the maximisation of national interests, even stressing the importance of geopolitical output in the form of security, influence and stability, and not merely economic output.

The journalist Marek Švehla<sup>36</sup> used the term “čerpací stanice” (*refuelling station*) as a metaphor to describe the dominating theme of the Czech debate on EU membership. This metaphor referred to the discussion on how much the different regions and municipalities in the country had “pumped”<sup>37</sup> in benefits from the European Union. This was a frequent topic in news reports in the run-up to the referendum, and was also reflected in, for example, comments made by local politicians in the media. This quotation from the Mayor of Brno is an illustrative example: “If the Czech Republic becomes a member of the European Union, it will of course have a great impact on the city of Brno. We are expecting an improved rating of the city, increased interest on behalf of investors, increased possibilities of attracting international institutions; we get the possibility of gaining from EU funds.”<sup>38</sup>

The same economic logic brings the Chairman of the Civic Democratic (ODS) Party, Mirek Topolánek, to argue that there is no alternative to membership.<sup>39</sup> The economic costs of non-membership are said to be significant or, as the Civic Democrats’ shadow minister of foreign affairs Jan Zahradil put it, “[a] non-entry to the EU would dramatically worsen the conditions for our trade exchange.”<sup>40</sup> When Topolánek, in a publication tellingly titled “Therefore I am not a Euro federalist”<sup>41</sup> developed his thoughts on what kind of European cooperation he would prefer, he accordingly does this in terms of trade and national benefits. He writes: “I would like a Europe ... of trading and collaborating national states, that cooperates only in the areas where it is more favourable and efficient than single-handed action.”<sup>42</sup>

If the EU is seen only in terms of the Czech Republic’s economic output, then there is no reason for membership if the sum of the cost/benefit analysis

is negative; such voices were heard in the debate. Petr Mach, executive director of the Centre for Economics and Politics, a think tank closely related to ODS and President Klaus, argued that: "After reading the Accession Agreement I do not hesitate to argue that accession to the EU would be a disaster, at least from the perspective of the state budget."<sup>43</sup> However, difficult to count the economic returns of membership. At the most basic level, this comes down to a narrowly defined question of how much money the Czech state will pay to the EU budget, and how much it will receive. Before the referendum there were doubts about the capability of Czech subjects to claim all the economic resources available from the various European funds. This allowed one economist to argue: "We know how much we will pay but we do not know how much, exactly, we will get back."<sup>44</sup>

That quote illustrates the most narrowly defined cost and benefit argument possible, yet it should be noted that the output argument can be extended to include not only a whole range of other economic parameters but also geopolitical considerations, without deserting the instrumental rationality. A quotation of the then Czech Prime Minister, Vladimír Špidla, clearly illustrates this geopolitical argument, referring to the shortcomings of nation states in a globalised world. Nation states, he argues, are no longer capable of defending their national interests on their own, he continues: "Today, there simply does not exist any European state that would be capable of conducting global politics on its own, for instance in relations with China or Japan. Therefore the European states have grouped together."<sup>45</sup> Elsewhere, Špidla has also used the security argument to favour membership by arguing that the EU is a peace project that will never allow another Munich agreement.<sup>46</sup>

The European Union is thus not seen as a state in the making, as also indicated by Špidla, but rather as an instrument necessary for promoting the national interests of its members. Others, as we shall see, come to the opposite conclusion and argue that the EU is a state in making and thus a possible threat to Czech sovereignty. Thus the root of the differences in opinion seem to be contested conceptions of what the European Union is, as much as contested views on what it ought to be.

So far the arguments discussed have followed instrumental rationalisations from a perspective so bound to the Westphalian concept of nation states that any questioning of its central unit, the nation state, has been impossible. To approach the question of why sovereignty is so crucial we must leave the instrumental rationalisations (the first ideal type of legitimation) and turn to the second type, contextual rationalisations.

### *Contextual Rationalisations*

In this section it is first suggested that the critics of the EU in the Civic Democratic Party reject deeper European integration partly because this would be incompatible with what they consider the "natural" political unit. Then I argue that even if some voices in the debate suggest that Europe constitutes a natural geographic unit, rarely would anyone suggest Europe as a replacement for or a way of overcoming nation states.

Leading critics of the EU (or "euro-realists", to use the term they favour) in the Civic Democratic Party have on several occasions compared EU mem-



bership to a marriage of convenience, as opposite to one of love. This particular quotation is from the party's vice chairman, Jan Zahradil, but President Klaus has used similar formulations: "[W]e recommend voters to vote in favour but ... we believe that this is a marriage of convenience and not of love."<sup>47</sup> The marriage of convenience corresponds with the aforementioned material benefits of membership, but as to what a marriage of love would be, Zahradil and Klaus have not said.

Danish scholar Peter Bugge (2003) has argued that Václav Klaus's negative view on European unification is closely related to his view of the nation and the challenge of being European without losing one's nationality. Among other things Klaus has warned of the risk to Czech nationality "...dissolving in European-ness like a lump of sugar in a cup of coffee."<sup>48</sup> Clearly, it is not possible to approach questions concerning national identity and its argued compatibility or non-compatibility with a European identity in terms of cost and benefit. If we look at criticism at this level, we see that the EU is portrayed as an artefact, something at odds with an essentialist Westphalian world-view where nations are seen as unquestionable entities. This is totally in line with Ernest Gellner's classical definition of nationalism as "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent".<sup>49</sup>

Klaus does not use the term nationalism in accordance with Gellner's definition, but distinguishes between a natural, "positive" feeling of national identity (necessary for any liberal democracy) and nationalism, understood as something not only extreme but also artificial. Klaus rejects the need for any kind of nationalism, independent of whether it is "national" or European, but stresses the importance of a national feeling of loyalty towards one's own nation as the basis for the political state.<sup>50</sup> The definition of nationalism in itself might seem irrelevant but illustrates how "natural" this idea about the congruency between nation and the political unit is in Klaus' argumentation. This quotation makes the point clear:

*We do not need any nationalism. We need a political system of liberal democracy that necessarily demands a citizenship principle based on the natural loyalty of people towards their own nation and with an elementary feeling of national identity.*<sup>51</sup>

From this perspective it is understandable that Klaus has repeatedly rejected the possibilities of democracy at the supranational level. Klaus's concern for democracy is linked with his belief that the nation state can be the only arena for a functioning democracy: "I do not believe it is possible to realise a democratic system at the supra-state level."<sup>52</sup> In another article, Klaus describes "traditional democratic mechanisms"<sup>53</sup> as being inseparable from existing national states. This can be taken as an utterance of Westphalian logic, where the actor is bound to a contextual logic of argumentation and therefore fails to see any other possible options.<sup>54</sup>

The opposite of this natural unit is thus what is above referred to as a "marriage of love". Civic Democratic Party Vice-Chairman Ivan Langer took the position that the economic gains related to a membership of the EU could be achieved without membership, thereby rejected not only a "marriage of love" but also a "marriage of convenience". Langer argues that the Czech Republic

already enjoys the benefits of close economic cooperation with the EU and in case of non-membership that would remain the same: “Merely, we would not participate in the inventions of European president, European minister of foreign affairs, European charter...”<sup>55</sup> The view of the EU as an unnatural unit is not an exclusive possession of the Civic Democratic Party but is also part of a wider debate in the media. For example, the idea of a European presidency that could help Europeans identify with the EU is rejected by writer Jan Jandourek on because a European people with which he could symbolise “...has yet to be born”.<sup>56</sup>

Hardly anyone denies the importance of nations or nation states. More often the controversy stems from disagreements over the possibility of combining the nation and national identity with a European structure for cooperation.<sup>57</sup> As already mentioned, the EU has in this debate often been advocated as a necessity for promoting the national interest in a globalised world. The same pattern can be seen regarding the debate on the Constitutional treaty. Critics like Klaus see the Constitutional treaty as a threat to national sovereignty and national democracies: a “...decisive step from a Europe of states to a Europe of one European state”.<sup>58</sup> Advocates of the Constitutional treaty tend in turn to argue that the constitutional treaty strengthens and clarifies the role of nation states in the EU.<sup>59</sup>

However, it is possible to find examples where the role of the nation state has been challenged, at least partly. Václav Havel has publicly advocated a view of the EU as a supranational and democratic entity, for example in his 2002 speech to the Italian Senate in Rome: “Europe now has not only a chance to demonstrate to the world how many diverse nations can successfully join together in one large supranational and democratic entity...” Notably, Havel has not only argued that the EU can be joined by nations, but moreover that Europe “...has always been and still is in essence a single and indivisible political entity, though immensely diverse, multifaceted and intricately structured.”<sup>60</sup> This reflects a view that the political unit does not have to be congruent with the nation. However, it would be wrong to say that Havel disregards the role of the nation or even the nation state, since the EU that he favours is “a democratic union of states consisting of equal citizens and nations”.<sup>61</sup>

From this we can conclude that the European Union is not seen as a way of overcoming the nation state even by Havel. Contextually based legitimation thus seems bound to the nation state. For EU advocates the Union is a way of reinforcing the nation state, while for its critics it is a way of undermining the state.

### *Communicative Rationalisations*

In this section we see that while some actors consider the EU a promoter of norms protecting citizens’ rights, others reject these norms as part of an ideological project.

In the “return to Europe” or “back to Europe” argument that predominated in the beginning of the 1990s, and earlier in dissidents’ writings under communism,<sup>62</sup> Europe should probably be taken as a symbol for that what Soviet totalitarianism was not. Jaques Rupnik (2003) argues that Milan Kundera’s essay “The Stolen West or the Tragedy of Central Europe” sparked a debate

about Europe as something more than merely a common market: "...[I]t was a civilisation, a culture, a set of values that were most forcefully defended precisely where they were most directly threatened by Soviet/Eastern totalitarianism."<sup>63</sup>

In line with such argumentation, the EU can be seen as a shield against un-democratic forces. Czech foreign minister Cyril Svoboda has, for example, argued that Mussolini, Hitler and the Bolsheviks all came to power democratically, which in his view would not have been possible in the EU because the states are so closely interconnected.<sup>64</sup> Joining the EU can thus be seen as protection against non-democratic domestic forces. Likewise the EU is seen as a preventative measure against corruption among the national elite. Editor of the weekly *Respekt* newspaper Martin Švehla wrote: "...this country only gains from a loss of sovereignty. Czechs, like all small post-totalitarian states, suffer from a lack of an elite that would be able to faithfully and reasonably administrate the state..."<sup>65</sup>

Furthermore, the EU is often pictured as bringing law and order, and, as Havel indicated in a speech shortly before the referendum on membership, should put an end to "economic dupery".<sup>66</sup> Other arguments made have included a strengthening in respect for the individual and better laws protecting against gender and ethnic discrimination, improving consumer rights, etc. Yet not everyone would agree to the norms the EU promotes. A quotation from Topolánek serves as an example.

*I am not interested in accepting that someone in Strasbourg would decide about how many percentages of women, members of national minorities, gays and lesbians shall be employed in this or that institution or sit in the parliament.*<sup>67</sup>

This criticism can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly that Topolánek does not agree with the norms promoted, and secondly that the EU is not accepted as the right level of decision making. The latter criticism has already been discussed at some length under the heading Contextual Rationalisations. Regarding the former, clearly what advocates consider neutral norms for the protection of the individual are by the EU's critics interpreted as parts of an ideological project.

Klaus argues that Europeanism is one of several new ideologies that has replaced socialism and that shares with it a "...restriction of human freedom and [it] offers ambitious social engineering" (Klaus, 2005b).<sup>68</sup> Chairman of the Civic Democratic Party Mirek Topolánek argues similarly that the EU is not the true standard-bearer of "Europeaness" because it is too bureaucratic and restricts the freedom of its citizens and member states in a way that contradicts the idea of Europe. According to this view Europe is not restricted to a specific geographical territory so it is pointless to ask where Europe starts and where it ends "because Europe has its value-roots and historical transmission everywhere where there is freedom. Europe is present in the USA, in New Zealand, in Japan. ... In a certain sense of the word it would be possible to argue that Europe today is more at home in these countries than in our continent."<sup>69</sup> Czech political scientist Miloslav Bednář makes the argument even clearer: "The EU again publicly rejects the very essence of Europeaness, that is democratic freedom."<sup>70</sup>

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This indicates that both advocates of the EU and its critics use the concept of Europe as anti-totalitarian. However, while advocates view the EU as the guardian of certain individual norms, its critics argue that it limits the freedom of member states and so they reject the promoted norms as ideological.

### CONCLUSION

Both of the scholars considered founding fathers of European integration theory, Ernst B. Haas and Karl W. Deutsch, included identity-related concepts in their concepts of integration.<sup>71</sup> So to argue that identity matters regarding European integration is nothing new. This article shows that Czech Euro-realists faced a conflict between the perceived economic gains of membership in instrumental terms and the perceived losses of sovereignty according to the contextual rationalisation. As most of the so-called Euro-realists in the end advocated membership, even if their enthusiasm was tepid, indicates the importance of economic output for legitimising the EU. Some Euro-realists' heavy criticisms of the Constitutional treaty also fit into this pattern; because the Czech Republic is already a full member of the Union, the economic national interest is no longer at stake.

Advocates of the EU had no similar conflict of incompatible interests. A common approach, as for instance held by Prime Minister Špidla, was that the EU could be favoured for economic and geopolitical interests, and since the EU strengthens the member states in a globalised world, no discussion of a loss of sovereignty was needed. Thus advocates of the EU did not have to enter into a discussion on national identity, and even if they did, and the EU was advocated for reasons based on identity and norms, it never came down to a conflict between the three ideal types of legitimation. Their conception of the contested concept (the European Union) did not conflict with the underlying meta-narratives on the nation, national sovereignty and democracy. A conflict could be avoided since the EU is interpreted not as overcoming the nation state, but reinforcing it. So both EU membership and the Constitutional treaty had to be interpreted as favourable to the Czech national interest. In other words, the EU is only likely to maintain its legitimacy as long as future functioning of the EU can be argued to be beneficial for the Czech Republic in economic or geopolitical terms.

Still, even if the European Union is seen by most as a problem-solving regime, there is an opening for an interpretation of it as a rights-based Union. The conflict between what is considered good for "ordinary citizens" and good for the national elite indicates a gap that can not be articulated with references to the national interest. It remains to be seen whether the EU can provide such forms of individual security that would entitle it widespread support based on the rights it pursues. The problem such an articulation of the EU has to overcome is the accusation of promoting just another ideological project.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank two anonymous reviewers and the editors of *Perspectives* for their extremely helpful and constructive comments on the draft.

<sup>2</sup> Eriksen, E. O. and Fossum, J. E. (2004), "Europe in Search of Legitimacy: Strategies of Legitimation Assessed". *International Political Science Review* 25 (4), pp. 436–438.

- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 445–446. These ideal types are discussed in greater detail and operationalised under the heading *Ideal Types*.
- <sup>4</sup> Most coherently presented by Wæver, O. (2002), “Identity, communities and foreign policy: discourse analysis as foreign policy theory”. In: Hansen, L. and Wæver, O. (eds.), *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic States*. London: Routledge.
- <sup>5</sup> Wæver, O. (2004), “Discursive Approaches”. In: Diez, T. and Wiener, A. (eds.), *European Integration Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 199.
- <sup>6</sup> Compare Foucault, M. (2003), *Die Ordnung des Diskurses*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Wissenschaft, pp. 11ff.
- <sup>7</sup> Compare Wæver (2002), p. 27.
- <sup>8</sup> Diez, T. (2001), “Europe as a Discursive Battleground: Discourse Analysis and European Integration Studies”. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 36 (1), p. 16.
- <sup>9</sup> Wæver (2002), pp. 33ff.
- <sup>10</sup> Compare Diez (2001), p. 14.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 150.
- <sup>12</sup> Drulák, P. (2005), “Probably a Regime, Perhaps a Union: European Integration in the Czech and Slovak Political Discourse”. In: Sjørnsen, H. (ed.), *Enlargement in perspective*. Arena Report, No. 2/05, Centre for European Studies University of Oslo, p. 229.
- <sup>13</sup> Diez (2001), pp. 19ff.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 16.
- <sup>15</sup> Compare Drulák (2005), p. 229.
- <sup>16</sup> See Jachtenfuchs, M., Diez, T. and Jung, S. (1998), “Which Europe? Conflicting Models of Legitimate European Political Order”. *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 4 (4).
- <sup>17</sup> Jachtenfuchs, et. al. (1998), pp. 417f; see also Diez, T. (1998), “The Economic Community Reading of Europe: Its Discursive Nodal Points and Ambiguities towards Westphalia”. *COPRI Working Paper 6/98*, Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, pp. 3f.
- <sup>18</sup> Drulák (2005), p. 214; Eriksen and Fossum (2004), p. 436.
- <sup>19</sup> Checkel, J. T. (2004), “Social constructivism in global and European politics”. *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 30 (2), p. 231; Risse, T. (2004), “Social Constructivism and European Integration”. In: Diez, T. and Wiener, A., *European Integration Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 162.
- <sup>20</sup> Eriksen and Fossum (2004), pp. 436–438. For discussions on the ideal types see also, Sjørnsen, H. (2005), “Introduction – Enlargement in Perspective” and Dulák, P. (2005), “Probably a Regime, Perhaps a Union: European Integration in the Czech and Slovak Political Discourse”. In: Sjørnsen, H. (ed.), *Enlargement in Perspective*.
- <sup>21</sup> Eriksen and Fossum (2004), p. 438.
- <sup>22</sup> Drulák (2005), p. 215.
- <sup>23</sup> The first ideal-type is comparable to the liberal-intergovernmentalist perspective on European integration. Moravcsik (1999) argues that the decisions for and against deeper European integration can be explained based according to “...underlying economic interests with geopolitical ideas playing a distinctly secondary role.” Moravcsik A. (1999), “Is something rotten in the state of Denmark? Constructivism and European Integration”. *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 6 (4), p. 674.
- <sup>24</sup> Compare Erikssen and Fossum (2004), p. 438.
- <sup>25</sup> Eriksen and Fossum (2004), pp. 445–447; Sjørnsen (2005), p. 5. The communicative logic of the third model shares similarities with the “truth seeking” argumentation discussed by Risse, T. (2000), “Let’s Argue!: Communicative Action in World Politics”. *International Organization*, Vol. 54 (1), p. 4. Both cases are based on the writings of Jürgen Habermas.
- <sup>26</sup> Eriksen and Fossum (2004), p. 447.
- <sup>27</sup> Compare Schimmelfennig, F. (2001), “The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union”. *International Organization* 55 (1), pp. 63–65.
- <sup>28</sup> Compare Wæver (2002), p. 44.
- <sup>29</sup> Dürr, M; Marek, D. and Šaradín, P. (2004), “Europeizace české politické scény – politické strany a referendum o přistoupení k Evropské unii”. *Mezinárodní vztahy* 39 (1), p. 31.
- <sup>30</sup> Občanské fórum (1989), “Programové zásady Občanského fóra”.
- <sup>31</sup> Dürr et al. (2004), p. 31.
- <sup>32</sup> Klaus quoted on the Czech section of the BBC World Service, 9 June 2003 ([www.bbc.co.uk/czech/interview/030609\\_klaus.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/czech/interview/030609_klaus.shtml)).
- <sup>33</sup> See Handl, V. (2004), “Evropeizace KSČM mezi ortodoxií a eurokomunismem”. Policy Paper, p. 6. Prague: Institute of International Relations; Dürr et al. (2004), p. 35.



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- <sup>34</sup> Dürr et al. (2004), p. 35.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., (2004), p. 32; see also; ODS (2002) "ODS volí E".
- <sup>36</sup> *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 29 May 2003.
- <sup>37</sup> In Czech "čerpat" – relating to the analogy of a petrol station.
- <sup>38</sup> Duchoň, Petr quoted in *Mladá fronta Dnes* 12 June 2003 – all translations are my own unless otherwise stated.
- <sup>39</sup> See for instance the quotation in *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 7 June 2003.
- <sup>40</sup> Zahradil, J. (2003), "Proč nejsem eurofederalistou. Pohled stínového ministra zahraničí ODS". Praha: CEVRO, p. 17.
- <sup>41</sup> "Proč nejsem eurofederalistou."
- <sup>42</sup> Topolánek, M. (2003), "Proč nejsem eurofederalistou? Pohled předsedy ODS". Praha: CEVRO, p. 10.
- <sup>43</sup> Mach, Petr (2003), "Krutá pravda o evropských dotacích". *Právo*, 21 May 2003.
- <sup>44</sup> Němec, Martin (2003), "... vstup do unie nám uškodí". *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 6 June 2003.
- <sup>45</sup> *Právo*, 14 June 2003.
- <sup>46</sup> See Špidla, Vladimír (2003), "Sázka na Evropu je správná". *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 12 June 2003.
- <sup>47</sup> Zahradil, Jan vice-chairman of ODS, quoted in *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 9 June 2003, but the same analogy has been used by Czech President Klaus, for example in an interview with the Czech section of the BBC World Service, 9 June 2003 ([www.bbc.co.uk/czech/interview/030609\\_klaus.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/czech/interview/030609_klaus.shtml)).
- <sup>48</sup> Klaus, V. (1997), *Renaissance: The Rebirth of Liberty in the Heart of Europe*. Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, p. 106; see also Bugge, P. (2003), "Czech perceptions of the EU membership: Havel vs. Klaus". In: Rupnik, J. and Zielonka, J. (eds.), *The Road to the European Union. Volume 1 – The Czech and Slovak Republics*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 189.
- <sup>49</sup> Gellner, E. (1983), *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, p. 1. Gellner's definition is also an interesting example of how natural these units have come to be viewed, since even if the definition seems straightforward it leads in a circle, because of the question of what makes a national unit? This has been pointed out by Hylland Eriksen, T. (1993), *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, London: Pluto Press, p. 99.
- <sup>50</sup> From Gellner's perspective this is a contradiction, since the very belief in this natural tie between nation and political entity actually constitutes nationalism.
- <sup>51</sup> Klaus, V. (2005), "Využijme 'období reflexe' pro vymezení jiné Evropské unie". *Lidové noviny*, 16 June 2005.
- <sup>52</sup> *Lidové noviny*, 11 June 2003.
- <sup>53</sup> *Lidové noviny*, 16 July 2005.
- <sup>54</sup> This could also be interpreted in Wæver's terms regarding the nexus between state and nation. In that case we would have to ask if the ties between state and nation may be especially intertwined in the Czech case. Looking back, we see that the founding president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, viewed Czechoslovakia as a multinational union based on democracy (Drulák /2005/, p. 225). To paraphrase Drulák: "...the configuration of the state / nation as a union within Europe understood as a union is well internalised, despite the broad variety of historical twists and turns" (ibid., p. 237). While this union is rights-based it allows the separation of the political entity and the nation. This indicates that national sovereignty is not only part of the national discourse on the state and on Europe, but just as much part of a universal discourse on the status of the nation state as the "natural form of political organisation" (compare Holsti (2004), *Taming the Sovereigns – Institutional Change in International Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 54).
- <sup>55</sup> Ivan Langer quoted in *Lidové noviny*, 31 May 2003.
- <sup>56</sup> *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 7 June 2003.
- <sup>57</sup> Compare Bugge (2003), p. 192.
- <sup>58</sup> Klaus, V. (2005), "Předmluva Václava Klause k publikaci CEPu 'Řekneme své ano nebo ne evropské ústavě'", [www.klaus.cz](http://www.klaus.cz).
- <sup>59</sup> See for instance Zaorálek, L., "Národní státy posílí" (*Mladá fronta Dnes*). Zaorálek's argumentation clearly follows the logic discussed under the first heading here: the constitution would strengthen the European cooperation necessary due to globalisation.
- <sup>60</sup> Speech given on 15 of May 1996 in Aachen, [www.vaclavhavel.cz](http://www.vaclavhavel.cz); see also Bugge (2003), p. 185.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>62</sup> Compare Vachudova, M.A. (2005), *Europe Undivided – Democracy, Leverage & Integration After Communism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 83. In its first draft on foreign policies from November 1989, the Civic Forum (OF) calls for a rapid incorporation into Europe (Programové zásady Občanského fóra 1989).

- <sup>63</sup> Rupnik, J. (2003), "Joining Europe together or separately? The implications of the Czecho-Slovak divorce for EU enlargement". In: Rupnik, J. and Zielonka, J. (eds.), *The Road to the European Union. Volume 1 – The Czech and Slovak Republics*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 26.
- <sup>64</sup> Quotation in *Lidové noviny*, 19 May 2003.
- <sup>65</sup> *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 29 May 2003. Klaus however reversed this argumentation and warned against a European political elite that would gain from a move towards supranational decision-making thus increasing their personal power and weakening the influence of the ordinary citizen. See Klaus, *Lidové noviny*, 16 July 2005.
- <sup>66</sup> See quotation in *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 11 June 2003.
- <sup>67</sup> Topolánek (2003), p. 11.
- <sup>68</sup> Klaus, V. (2005b), "Intelektuálové a socialismus".
- <sup>69</sup> Topolánek, M. (2005), "Vraťme Evropě sílu svobody". *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 30 July 2005.
- <sup>70</sup> "Ponechte unii jejímu osudu". *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 12 June 2003.
- <sup>71</sup> Risse (2005), "Neofunctionalism, European identity and the puzzles of European integration". *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 12 (2), p. 293.

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# The Guatemalan Civil War: The Bipolarisation of an Internal Conflict

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**Abstract:** To approach this topic I first explain the so-called “New Wars” concept, which describes how contemporary conflicts differ significantly from modern interstate “Old Wars”. Subsequently, I use this concept to analyse the civil war in Guatemala in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. I conclude that without external influence this conflict would have had the character of a “New War”. However, international environment of the Cold War shaped the Guatemala’s internal war in one significant measure – the actors were effectively “bipolarised”.

**Keywords:** New Wars, Cold War, proxy wars, failed state, Guatemala, bipolarised internal warfare

The end of the Cold War created a vacuum in the attention of western political scientists and publics. The search for a new paradigm, a new dominant topic began. Besides “globalisation”, themes such as civil wars, local conflicts, regional humanitarian crises, etc., became highly topical. Of course, this was largely due to the emerging crises in various parts of the world, above all the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Rwandan genocide.

Some scholars reacted by stressing the qualitative change in the character of organised political violence – they declared the birth of “New Wars”, with the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina (or the former Yugoslavia at a whole) as a prime example. This new kind of war differs from traditional modern interstate “Old Wars” in several important ways. Mainstream political thinking incorporated these observations into a thesis on fundamental change in the security environment, incorporating “new types” of threats, etc. (e.g. Solana, 2003).

In this article I first explain the concept of “New Wars”. After that I apply the concept to the Guatemalan civil war in the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. I conclude that while this conflict originally had the typical aspects of a “New War”, it was transformed by the Cold War environment into specific form, which I call “bipolarised” internal warfare.

## THE “NEW WARS” THESIS

The following explanation of the “New Wars” (“NWs”) thesis is largely based on Mary Kaldor’s book, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Kaldor, 1999), but also draws upon other texts.<sup>1</sup> Rather than explain the concept fully, I focus on the parts relevant to the analysis of Guatemalan conflict. For this reason I paid more attention to the political topic of state failure than to the economical processes of globalisation. First,

I describe the classical, conventional conflicts of the modern era, or “Old Wars” (“OWs”). Consequently I explain the main characteristics of NWs, and how they differ from the former. In both cases, I focus on four main points: (1) the character of the state and how it relates to war, (2) the actors in the war, (3) the methods they use, and, finally, (4) their goals.

### **“Old Wars”**

According to the theory, OWs are closely connected with modernity: the age of science, technology, industrialisation, and, above all, centralised national states as the dominant form of social organisation. This organisation, in Weberian terms, is marked by the monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a defined territory. Kaldor argues that the purpose of the state “was to defend territory against others, and it was this job that gave the state its legitimacy” (2005a: p. 2). The era of the nation state and, more generally, modernity itself, is the era of clear distinctions between private and public, non-state and state. Among the characteristics of the modern state can be found citizenship, connected with the friend-enemy distinction, taxation, a centralised and rationalised administration, public services, the national economy and currency, and – most importantly for our case – a regular, disciplined, hierarchical army. The army’s purpose is to defend the state territory against external enemies – other states. This leaves another modernity-related and modern-state-related dichotomy: the distinction between internal (ordered, peaceful) and external (anarchic, violent) (Kaldor, 2001).

This leads us to the important military dimension of modern state-making. Wulf summarises Weber’s notion of the state as “the elimination of private armies, the internal pacification, the emergence of a state system with organised and centralised war-making activities in a given territory, and the rise of state-controlled regular professional armies” (Wulf, 2004). In modern wars, these armies were the main and, ideally, the only actors. They were closely connected with the state both institutionally and informally. “Old” wars were interstate wars fought between the armies of antagonised states. The dominant motives for wars were states’ rational interests, often expressed in territorial terms. Mary Kaldor (2001) then speaks of “Clausewitzian” wars. There were some common-sense assumptions about what were legitimate acts of war and what were not, and from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards these were codified. The most important conviction was the belief that civilians should not be attacked by armies. In other words, the distinction between civilian (non-combatant) and military (combatant) had to be respected (for modernity and “old” wars, see Kaldor, 1999: p. 13–30). Some analysts also view modern war as a state-building phenomenon, i.e. an activity from which a centralised modern state emerges (Tilly, 1985).

In summary, “old” wars took place between modern states; their actors were state-controlled hierarchical uniformed armies, the main methods were military operations against the armies of enemy states (i.e., battles), and the goal was to defeat the enemy and hence create the right political environment to promote the national interest.

***Failed State***

The Cold War in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was the last phase of modernity (Kaldor, 2001). Its end meant the de facto end of modern inter-state wars. These were replaced by the “new” wars, which were no longer waged between states, but were internal, except for some spill-over tendencies affecting neighbouring regions. This shift is associated with two more general processes: the drastic erosion of the state, which we are witnessing in non-European and non-western areas in particular, and economic “globalisation”.

In speaking about the weakening role of the state, we are again using Weberian terms – this is simply the weakening of the monopoly of legitimate violence within a state’s territory. However the state is formally recognised, its most important character is its ability to provide security for its citizens and control a given territory. Since an eroded state (there are other quite similar terms like failed/ing state, quasi-state, shadow-state, collapsed state, etc.) can no longer provide security for its citizens, the national state-related dichotomies such as inner (order) and outer (anarchy), or public/private, are disappearing alongside the state power. In fact, the whole concept of citizenship is losing its power.

To use an associated and useful term, we can speak about a “neopatrimonial state” (Vinci, 2003; Bøås, 2005). This is “a state by and for a small elite, to the exclusion of most” (Bøås, 2005: p. 88), where the ruling clique uses the “informal manipulation of state power to reward loyalty and punish disobedience and independence” (Ibid: p. 78). The dominant policy of the “neopatrimonial state” is the “exercise of power through fear rather than reconciliation... a combination of coercion and patron-client relationships” (Ibid: p. 84). Although such states does have modern bureaucratic structures, are internationally recognised, and have other formal aspects of a modern state, their system is based on informal personal relationships and private “shadow” connections (Vinci, 2003).

The atmosphere of a declining state, which is unable to preserve internal order, is an atmosphere of insecurity (Wulf, 2004). A vacuum emerges, and is sooner or later (usually sooner) replaced by a wide set of non-state or outright anti-state private actors, which all offer the people security while acting independent to or directly against the weakened state. But the state’s structures are still important: state institutions are active actors (whether stronger or weaker), but at the same time the state is an object, a goal of the private actors that are trying to usurp its power.

This process can also be described in material (economic) terms – the loss of the state’s authority and rise in general insecurity leads to corruption and a growing shadow-economy, so investment and production decline, as do tax revenues and, consequently, public spending, which further damages the state’s authority and capability to act. This can be seen as a reversion of modernisation (i.e. state-building, centralisation, unification, etc.), from which the modern national states emerged (Kaldor, 2001).

A second general process important for NWs is economic globalisation. Since the end of the Cold War this has become highly topical, being called a neo-liberal drive for maximum market liberalisation, the free flow of goods

and services, growing intensity and speeds of communication, IT, etc. The impact of the forced liberalisations, deregulations and privatisations of the national economies on the authority of the failing state is quite clear. Globalisation hastens the decline of the modern nation state, mainly by relativising its territorial sovereignty – the ability of the state to effectively exercise its power within its own territory (Leander, 2001). However, the following case-study is not centred on this subject.

NWs should be seen from a perspective of these two highly inter-connected processes. These wars differ from the “old” ones above all by the fact that they are no longer held between states, but are more internal (again there are other terms: intra-state, local, regional, civil, low-intensity conflict, etc.). Another important aspect is that while modern OWs were state-building, NWs are state-eroding: above all they further diminish the state’s monopoly of force (Leander, 2002).

### *The Diversity of Actors*

So the state is no longer the only actor in war. Often it is not even the main actor. Instead, as a part of the state-eroding process, the loss of the state’s capacity to exercise organised violence leaves a vacuum, and consequently, naturally, competitors emerge. These varied and diverse non-state and anti-state actors usually differ, at least partially, from classic nation state-related and “old” hierarchical armies in uniforms. The diversity of actors is accompanied by the diversity of military forces, and therefore by the diversity of types of warfare.

Usually, NW thesis texts give examples of these actors to show the heterogeneity of this spectrum, one such example stands out: “they include: paramilitary groups organised around a charismatic leader, warlords who control particular areas, terrorist cells, fanatic volunteers (...), organised criminal groups, units of regular forces or other security services, as well as mercenaries and private companies” (Kaldor, 2001). These sets of actors are sometimes referred to as “armed networks” (Kaldor, 2001). The OW-like vertically-organised hierarchical uniformed armies were replaced by these horizontal and decentralised matrices of different armed units (Kaldor, 1999: p. 91–96).

### *War Against Civilians*

A significant element of the NWs is that they break further taken-for-granted assumptions and enforce the general atmosphere of insecurity. Some even say that NWs are Hobbesian, “a new barbarism, (...) or neo-medievalism” (Wulf, 2004). While the decline of the state itself brought an end to such certainties as citizenship and internal order, the NWs, as very closely connected to the process of state-failure, meant the decline of the distinction between war and peace, civil and military, non-combatant and combatant. Atrocities are typical features of NWs as central and deliberate strategies, not side-effects.

This is a shift in the method of waging war. In classical, conventional OWs, states captured territory by military means: armies won battles. However, this was significantly revised after WWII (still during the modern “old” times), with the eruption of the various anticolonial and/or communist guerrilla

movements. Their strategies were different – guerrillas were, due to their military weakness, anxious to avoid major battles with their enemies. Instead, they preferred to capture territory through political gains, i.e. popular consent, “winning ‘hearts and minds’” (Kaldor, 1999: p. 97). This led to the shift in approach on the other side with the invention of counterinsurgency strategies. These were directed against the perceived main resource of the guerrillas – the people. The aim was to destabilise and frighten society, to control the population through threats and the use of terror against civilians (Kaldor, 1999: p. 97). Both guerrilla and counterinsurgency strategies were, as Mary Kaldor points out, “harbingers of the new forms of warfare” (Kaldor, 1999: p. 30).

Actors in NWs are, in a guerrilla-fashion (and, simultaneously, mercenary-fashion) trying to avoid battles. They try to control land not through military methods, but rather through control of the population. But their methods are those of counter-insurgency, rather than those of popular guerrilla movements: they usually deliberately create and foster the climate of insecurity and hate (Kaldor, 1999: p. 97–99). This is because, and this leads us to a very important aspect, the NW is a form of political mobilisation: the participating actors use fear and terror to control the population and impose order on society, and to enforce loyalty. In “old” times, modern national states used popular mobilisation, nationalism, and the loyalty of the people to support OWs and eventually to reach political goals. This “exploiting [of] national will” was pioneered by Napoleon (Coker, 2001: p. 7), a famous general of the OWs. On the contrary, the actors of the NWs use war (i.e. terror against the population) to create consent and loyalty through fear and hate (Wlaschütz, 2004: p. 16). For this reason battles are rare, there are no fronts, and most of the violence is directed against civilians. In fact, NWs can even be described as not wars between warring parties, but as wars of various militant groups against the civil population. Among the methods used are massacres, ethnic cleansing, humiliation, torture, rape, etc. All are deliberately and systematically used to create an atmosphere of fear and hate (Kaldor, 2001).

In this sense, a NW “could be viewed as a war of exclusivist nationalists against a secular multicultural pluralistic society” (Kaldor, 1999: p. 44). In another of her texts, Kaldor mentions “new sectarian identities (religious, ethnic or tribal) that undermine the sense of a shared political community”. New Wars “recreate the sense of political community along new divisive lines through the manufacture of fear and hate. They establish new friend-enemy distinctions” (Kaldor, 2005a: p. 3).

Kaldor’s suggestion is that war is waged against civil society and its ideas of tolerance, pluralism, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism etc., because actors are dependent on the exact opposites: particularist exclusive (national, ethnic or religious) identities with their atmospheres of intolerance and insecurity. This brings us to another topic: a significant part of the actors of the NWs build their legitimacy on what Mary Kaldor calls “identity politics”. With this concept leaders justify and explain the loyalty and mobilisation of the population in national, ethnic, racial, or religious terms. Identity politics are backward-looking and authoritative, based on nostalgia and historical traumas. Their nature is exclusive and particularist, therefore they strongly tend towards hostility and violence. They are the opposites of the modern ideologies

that emerged from the Enlightenment and were, at least in theory, secular, progressive, emancipatory, and universal (Kaldor, 1999: p. 76–89).

***“War Economy” Logic: Violence as a Goal, Not as a Means***

Another important phenomenon ascribed to NWs is the so-called “war economy”. The state-eroding process enforced by NWs, and often also by globalisation, brings the collapse of the formal economy and taxation, and the consequent search for alternative resources. Actors – including the failed state – are usually dependent on private sources and/or external donors. Failed states are the arena of warlordism, plunder, exploitation of raw resources, and various illegal activities. Most importantly, this informal “shadow economy” is usually sustained by and dependent on the general atmosphere of insecurity. Another dichotomy removed by NWs is the distinction between war and private violence and organised crime (Kaldor, 1999: p. 101–102).

This war-economy relates not only to economic affairs, but also to political power as well, represented by the ability to control society. In the following case study, I use the term “war-economy” in this sense. Actors very usually depend on the continuing violence because in a peaceful, secure atmosphere they would have much less (if any) support from the people.

As a result, actors cannot be expected to voluntarily undertake serious steps to end the conflict; on the contrary, they are likely to sustain the violence as long as possible because it provides the atmosphere of insecurity and fear which they depend on. The exclusivist, hostile “identity politics” and the use of violence against civilians are both used to preserve the war and the atmosphere of hate. So identity-based actors often target moderate members of their own identity-group: these moderate peaceful voices offer alternatives to the nationalist frenzy. War is not a means to an end, war (the continuation of violence) is the end itself. In this sense, we can even speak about “cultures of violence” (Kaldor, 2001), which emerge where NWs have lasted a long time.

Another relevant topic is the so-called “greed or grievance” dispute. This is simply a scholarly argument about the motivation of actors in anarchical internal wars. Are they driven by pragmatic economic interests? Is the conflict about material control of resources? Or is the violence motivated by a sense of inequality and injustice among the population? While in the past the conflicts were usually described in terms of grievances, in recent years greed has become the dominant interpretation (Wulf, 2004). In this article I simply presuppose that the motives of the NW actors are more-or-less a mixture of greed and grievance. Many further studies relate to this dispute (Berdal and Malone, 2000; Collier, 1999; Collier and Hoeffler, 2001; Keen, 1998).

**PROBLEMS WITH THE THESIS**

Some aspects of this discourse, above all the premise of the novel aspect of the analysed conflicts, have been criticised by some scholars. For example, Edward Newman stated in 2004 that the alleged shift between “old” and “new” wars is exaggerated. He argued that all the characteristics ascribed to NWs were not new: they had been present in many of the conflicts of the past hundred years, at least to some extent (Newman, 2004: p. 179). In particular, atrocities against civilians were committed in all wars in 20<sup>th</sup> century, and



even earlier (Ibid: p. 181). Bethany Lacina (2004) reached a similar conclusion, arguing that the assumed “change in the nature of war” is more academic than real. In fact, during the Cold War, civil intra-state conflicts with the characteristics of NWs did exist, but got little attention and, even when they did, were analysed only through the modernist Cold War prism. Such conflicts were often considered quite uninteresting or unimportant. After the end of the bipolar conflict, and especially after the Western public was shocked by violent atrocities in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, the theme of civil wars moved from “side show to centre stage” (Lacina, 2004). Simply put, although the thesis about “qualitative change” in the patterns of war might be rooted in some real change, the greater attention paid to civil wars after the Cold War has a very significant role in this field.

After all, the “New Wars” thesis is not the only current war-related theory being criticised in this way. Some contributions to the special symposium on a quite analogous concept, “Fourth Generation Warfare” (Hammes, Thomas X. et al., 2005), similarly had their novelty challenged by some participants of the symposium.

Mary Kaldor herself even admitted (probably in response to this criticism) that these arguments are, at least partially, relevant: “Of course, these wars are not entirely ‘new’. They have much in common with wars in the pre-modern period in Europe, and with wars outside Europe throughout the period. It is even possible to identify some elements of what I have called ‘new wars’ in ‘old wars’. I emphasise the distinction because it helps our understanding of what is happening today...” (Kaldor, 2005a: p. 3). Or, in the words of Martin Shaw (2000): “Clearly some will object that new wars are not so new; but even if most features are anticipated in earlier periods, Kaldor is right because the combination in new wars is highly distinctive.”

This explanation, as I understand it, is based on the conviction that the New War theory is not just an accumulation of situations, processes, and factors, it is how they are all linked together, to collectively make a specific and unique environment. That is the very core of the theory. Of course, history is replete with accounts of failed states, large numbers of actors engaged in combat, atrocities, war-making as an entrepreneurial activity, and associations between war and international economical flows. But the root of the theory is not just that such particular things occur; even that these things happen at the same time and place should not be a prime concern. What is really significant, interesting, and – according to Kaldor – new about many post-Cold War conflicts is how these aspects are highly inter-connected and inseparable. Together they create special type of conflict, like the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Critics’ reminders that atrocities took place during the Second World War simply miss the point.

But, even if one takes this explanative point of view, NWs are still not really new. One important example is the decades of anarchy, lawlessness, warlordism, ethnic cleansing, violence, atrocities, and plunder following the collapse of Chinese central rule in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although the economic ties of “globalisation” were not as intense as they are now, the reality remains that these events had the general character of a new war, as described by Kaldor and others. So in spite of the defence of the new wars the-

sis above, the novelty of these conflicts, and therefore the very term “New Wars”, remains problematic.

As stated, my aim is not to describe the thesis comprehensively, only to borrow four sub-concepts from the theory – the four characteristics of NWs. These are: a failed state environment, a high number of participants, deliberate violence (terror) against civilians as a primary method, and the particular inner logic of the conflict. Aside from these four themes, I am also interested in how these aspects are linked, and how their interconnectedness create a specific type of warfare. Needless to say, I have inevitably interpreted and understand them in my own specific way, that may differ Kaldor’s original point. Simply put, I have taken my own concept of the thesis as a basis for the following case study. As I have no better term to cover these four specific and interconnected aspects of warfare, I have kept the “new wars” and “old wars” terms in spite of their flaws. In the context of this article, they should be taken as inevitably simplistic labels, merely symbolising two distinct ideal-types of warfare, and are neither to be taken literally, nor to be analysed or agonised over in any further depth.

#### **THE GUATEMALAN CIVIL WAR**

The civil war in Guatemala took place with inconstant intensity from the 1960s until the beginning of the 1990s. In 1994, the Oslo Accord brought both sides of the conflict, government and rebels, to talks ultimately ending the decades-long war. At the same time, both parties agreed on the establishment of the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) to explain and clarify the roots and course of the conflict. The work of the commission was significantly supported and contributed to by many of Guatemala’s civil society, private sector and media organisations, and members of the international community including above all the UN and its various bodies, as well as the EU, the international media and NGOs, and the governments of the USA, Canada and several European states. The CEH’s final report is called *Guatemala: Memory of Silence*. I have used this study as the main source for my analysis.<sup>2</sup>

#### ***Failed State***

Probably the most important feature of a new war is the “failed state”. Was this the case with Guatemala? The CEH’s final report explains that Guatemala’s economic, cultural, and social spheres were characterised in the long term by “exclusion, antagonism and conflict – a reflection of its colonial history”. The declaration of independence in 1821 was in fact “the creation of an authoritarian State which excluded the majority of the population, was racist..., and served to protect the economic interests of the privileged minority. The evidence for this... lies in the fact that the violence was fundamentally directed by the State against the excluded, the poor and above all, the Mayan people...” (Commission for Historical Clarification: 3<sup>rd</sup> column). Guatemala’s anti-democratic nature “has its roots in an economic structure which is marked by the concentration of productive wealth in the hands of a minority... The State gradually evolved as an instrument for the protection of this structure, guaranteeing the continuation of exclusion and injustice”



(Ibid: 4). “Due to its exclusionary nature, the State was incapable of achieving social consensus around a national project able to unite the whole population. Concomitantly, it abandoned its role as mediator between divergent social and economic interests, thus creating a gulf which made direct confrontation between them more likely” (Ibid: 6). Traditionally, the state’s taxation capabilities were weak (Ibid: 75). The official judicial system “became functionally inoperative with respect to its role of protecting the individual from the State, and lost all credibility as guarantor of an effective legal system” (ibid: 56). The state regularly violated its own rules and constitution (Ibid: 104).

Obviously, we are not dealing with a state in a classical (Weberian) view of a monopoly of legitimate violence, citizenship, rationalised administration, public services, and the inner peace/outer anarchy distinction. Significant parts of the population treated the state’s force as arbitrary and illegitimate, considered the state a danger to their lives (as opposed to external enemies), and preferred other identities (mostly ethnic) to citizenship. The state was not willing to act as a forum for discussion between antagonised parties, to mediate the conflicts, or to defend weak actors from stronger ones. Instead, the state’s institutions served as an “instrument” of one part of the society against the rest. Hence the system can be best described as above: Guatemala was a typical “neopatrimonial state”.

On the eruption of open internal conflict in 1962, the state became undoubtedly “failed”. “Neopatrimonial” characteristics such as authoritarianism and corruption, the existence of unofficial power-structures, the arbitrariness of state violence, the atmosphere of insecurity among citizens, etc., were accompanied by the state’s inability to ensure internal order, to exercise the control over the whole territory.

In addition, we can presuppose the effect of transnational economic interdependence on the failure of Guatemala’s state. For example, the CIA’s covert operation which overthrew the Guatemalan regime in 1954 had a well-known economic background, with the United Fruit Company being the main protagonist (Oliver, 2004). Guatemala, along with rest of the export-oriented Central American states, was always under influence of trade-partners, external donors, and international financial institutions, with their structural-adjustment policies.<sup>3</sup>

The most important state-actor was undoubtedly the army. During the civil war, it further reinforced its traditionally-strong political powers and began to strengthen its control over the state and society, which in the first half of 1980s became virtually absolute (Commission for Historical Clarification: 36<sup>th</sup> column). Its policy towards the civil sector was one of drastic militarisation, with serious antidemocratic effects: “Militarisation was one of the factors that provided the incentive for and fed the armed confrontation as it profoundly limited the possibilities for exercising rights as citizens” (Ibid: 37).

Yet the army cannot be treated as a united homogenous force, because it consisted of several actors. The strongest was military intelligence, which dominated and controlled the other parts of the army. By using its official authority as well as informal, covert, and mostly illegal means, intelligence achieved “total domination” over the state: “it was able to manage other

structures of the Army and to manipulate the different interests and entities of the Guatemalan State and civil society” (Ibid: 38 and 39). Military intelligence, with significant support from the dominant political and economic forces, replaced the legal judicial system with “an intricate repressive apparatus”, which served as “the State’s main form of social control” (Ibid: 9). The army often committed informal, covert and illegal actions, for example, by building the clandestine prisons not only in army or police facilities, but on private grounds as well. The army managed to unify various state institutions and mechanisms to serve its goals, so that the whole state was in fact involved in the conflict (Ibid: 22).

So the state, with the exemption of the period from 1944 to 1954, never actually had the Weberian legitimacy of power (legal international acknowledgement is not relevant in this case), as it was a neopatrimonial state. With the outbreak of the civil war, this situation only deteriorated, especially with the loss of internal security. The following sentence describes atmosphere well: “For more than 34 years, Guatemalans lived under the shadow of fear, death and disappearance as daily threats in the lives of ordinary citizens” (Commission for Historical Clarification: Prologue). In addition, civil war meant the loss of the state’s control over its territory. It ceased to resemble a state in both abstract (legitimacy) and concrete (ability to control the territory and create order) terms. During the civil conflict, the state fully transformed into a “failed state”, or, more adequately, a “quasi-state” – more than a classical Weberian nation state, it was an authoritarian junta-ruled mafia-style organisation.<sup>4</sup>

### *The Plurality of Actors*

One of the characteristics of NWs is the diversity of the actors participating. Guatemala, by nature, tends to fulfil this condition: the study describes the country as “a multiethnic, pluricultural and multilingual nation” (Commission for Historical Clarification: Prologue) and provides a map of the linguistic communities of Guatemala, illustrating this diversity (Ibid: Map of Linguistic Communities of Guatemala). In the case of the state, we have already mentioned that it was no unitary actor. It should be viewed not as a centralised coherent organisation, but as a developing embodiment of (unequal) relations and cooperation between military intelligence, the army, other state-related actors, and civilians and private actors supporting or obeying the state.

The conflict intensified this diversity, bringing in a variety of actors. These included army officers and troops, specialists, military commissioners, the police and other state security forces (Ibid: 43<sup>rd</sup> column), and the special counter-insurgency forces known as the *Kabilies* (Ibid: 42). Very often, the state delegated the responsibility for its military actions to loyal civilians (Ibid: 80). This is not only true for the unofficial death-squads (Ibid: 90), but for private individuals as well. Usually, these were large landowners, whose violent actions against civilians were in accordance with the anti-trade union policy of the state institutions, as well as with their own economic interests. There was “close co-operation between powerful business people and security forces” (Ibid: 144–146).

The other side of the conflict was equally diverse. The study covers ethnic, political and other differences in the movement, and various tendencies including “democratic or otherwise, pacifist or guerrilla, legal or illegal, communist or non-communist” (Ibid: 25). The study argues that “a full explanation of the Guatemalan confrontation cannot be reduced to the sole logic of two armed parties... The responsibility and participation [in the conflict] of economically powerful groups, political parties, universities and churches, as well as other sectors of civil society, has been demonstrated” (Ibid: 22).

On top of this, there were important external factors. The USA, within the framework of its “anti-communism”, supported the self-described “anti-communist” regimes in Central America, including Guatemala. The Guatemalan insurgents, who generally adopted Marxist ideology, were significantly supported by the Cuban Communists. I see the external support of the USA for the state as only enforcing its failure. Noam Chomsky (Chomsky, 2001) has used the term “*fiefdom*” to describe Honduras, another Central American recipient of military support from US during the Cold War. While exaggerated, this still gives us a useful image for the impact of external support on the sovereignty of the recipient.

#### ***The Blurred Distinction between Combatants and Non-Combatants***

During the civil war the traditional dichotomy between combatants and non-combatants did not exist. “Faced with several options to combat the insurgency”, the study declares, “the State chose the one that caused the greatest loss of human life among non-combatant civilians” (Commission for Historical Clarification: 121<sup>st</sup> column). The state incorporated “a concept of the internal enemy that went beyond guerrilla sympathisers, combatants or militants to include civilians from specific ethnic groups” (Ibid: 110). State violence was directed against all groups not showing loyalty. While the victims were of all ethnic and social types, the vast majority were Mayans, corresponding with the traditional authoritarianism and racism of the state. It’s attitude towards the population was an example of the exclusivist and particularistic “identity politics”, described by Kaldor (1999: p. 76–89).

During the most intense and violent phase of the conflict, between 1981 and 1983, the Mayan population was seen as a collective enemy (Commission for Historical Clarification: 31<sup>st</sup> column). The army launched attacks against the whole ethnic community without heeding the rates of support given to the insurgency by the various Mayan groups. The army committed wide range of human rights violations: direct and deliberate violence against women and children, systematic and massive use of torture, rape, forced displacement, etc. The violence was directed against the community as a whole, against its symbols, its identity, and its heritage, i.e. against the Mayan culture itself (Ibid: 32).

The state’s indifference towards the non-combatant status of the civilian (Mayan) population was expressed in two ways. The first was deliberate violence: atrocities. The second was the forcing of civilians to participate in army operations in special paramilitary units called *Civil Patrols (PAC)*, founded in 1981. Civilian members of these groups were forced at a gunpoint

to commit atrocities against other civilians (Ibid: 50). Again, this was an attempt to cause social disintegration. During its operations between 1981 and 1983, the Army committed acts of genocide (Ibid: 108–126).

On the insurgents' side, the situation was similar. The insurgents did not recognise non-combatant status, so their violence was directed not only against the army, but also, even especially, against civilians with economic power or marked as allies of the state. The Guerrillas committed atrocities and massacres equally violent and cruel as those committed by the army. They also forced civilians to join guerrilla units. These activities were most intense in 1981–1982 (Ibid: 45 and 127–143). Unlike some of the classical guerrillas, with their attempts to win “hearts and minds”, the Guatemalan militants paradoxically adapted typical counterinsurgency practices, sowing “hate and fear”. This method exactly fits the bill of a “new” war.

***Civil War as a Source of Political Power:  
“Militarisation” and “Armed Propaganda”***

The state actually didn't fight the insurgency – it fought the Mayan community. And, in a broader sense, it fought society as a whole society at the same time. In fact, the militarisation of society (enforcement by the conception that military power was the last resort of the political leadership, the only possible policy) went hand-in-hand with the de-militarisation of violence (war was primarily waged against non-military, civilian targets and often by non-military, civilian means), and both methods were used to attain one goal. The army maintained “a strategy to provoke terror in the population. This strategy became the core element of the Army's operations...” (Ibid: 44). The extreme cruelty of the army-actors was “used intentionally to produce and maintain a climate of terror in the population” (Ibid: 46). “The objective was to intimidate and silence society as a whole, in order to destroy the will for transformation, both in the short and long term” (Ibid: 48). All of this was a part of the effort to secure the army's control over the country and weaken all factors that could threaten its rule (non-army state institutions, civil society, non-state organisations, etc.). The NW-atmosphere of terror and fear was the source for militarisation, and militarisation was the source for power of the army/military intelligence. Additionally, the existence of civil war was a reason for Washington to support the army. So both the army's political power inside the country and donations to the army from outside sources were essentially dependent on the continuation of the conflict.

Hence the army deliberately exaggerated the threat of the guerrillas (Ibid: 25), although in fact the insurgents never posed a serious threat to the state (Ibid: 24). Although the state's military power compared to that of the insurgency was enormous, the army never managed to totally defeat the guerrillas. It never even tried to do so. Evidently victory was not in the army's interest. I see this as a prime example of the “war-economy” logic explained above: the army was dependent on the process of the war and on the climate produced by the war, so its goal was not to win and defeat the enemy, but instead to wage war as long as possible. This militarisation was quite effective in Guatemala, so the organised violence against civilians was justified as the only

tool of state policy. So “for years people have lived with the certainty that it is the Army that retains effective power in Guatemala” (Ibid: 37).

Moving on to the other side of the conflict, the study says that “the political work of the guerrilla organisations within the different sectors of society was increasingly directed towards strengthening their military capacity, to the detriment of the type of political activity characteristic of democratic sectors. Likewise, attempts by other political forces to take advantage of the limited opportunities for legal participation were radically dismissed by some sectors of the insurgency as ‘reformist’ or ‘dissident’, whilst people who sought to remain distant from the confrontation were treated with profound mistrust and even as potential enemies. These attitudes contributed to political intolerance and polarisation” (Ibid: 20). Although the study does not say this as clearly as it does for the army, this was quite similar to the militarisation efforts of the state’s actions. For example, the study speaks about the guerrillas’ “tactic of ‘armed propaganda’ and the temporary occupation of towns to gain support or demonstrate their strength” (Ibid: 34). Both cruelty towards the civilians and hostile attitudes towards any peaceful means of resistance were used by the guerrillas to preserve their control over the insurgent society, to present themselves and their approach as the only possible way for the survival of the community. The guerrillas’ activities were geared towards gaining political power much more than they were towards defeating the enemy.

The “war-economy” logic, i.e. incentives for conflicting parties taking to continue the violence, was thus present for both sides of the conflict. Both sides were much more engaged in terror and violence against civilians than in attempts to defeat the adversary. The army, in spite of its supreme power, never managed this, and didn’t even try to defeat the militants. The militarisation of society was not an “old”-fashioned means to destroy the insurgency. Instead it was an end, a “new”-style goal. In speaking about the opposite party, the militants never managed to protect their civilian supporters, and rarely even tried to do so. Their occasional presence in the insurgent cities was pure propaganda, an “armed PR”, not an attempt to protect civilians. In fact, after the retreat of the guerrillas, the indigenous communities were left totally defenceless and in many cases were then attacked by the army (Ibid: 34). So, as in the case of army and its “militarisation”, an “armed propaganda” tactic of the guerrillas was not a mean to fight the army, but it was a goal itself. Although adversaries, both the army and the guerrillas shared this common objective, to ensure the continuation of the violence through discouraging and marginalising rational, moderate, pacifist voices. Only by doing so could they ensure their own political power and control over the population.

### ***The Origins and Character of the Conflict***

The environment created by the oppression and suffering of underprivileged social and ethnic groups seems most likely to have fostered the insurgency against the authoritarian state. Of course, this view could be contested from the opposite pole of the “greed or grievance” dichotomy. We can say that the cause of the insurgency was the “greed”, and that the feelings of “grievance” and injustice among poor agricultural population were only exploited by local elites to serve their political and economical interests. But

this does not change the fact that the origin of the Guatemalan civil war is mainly new war-like. Both greed-motivation and grievance-motivation are related to the NWs, in contrast to the “old”-motivations like national interests, spheres of influence, balance of power, geopolitics, etc.

To summarise the outcome of the case study, the Guatemalan state was from its very foundation a “neopatrimonial” state. It was unable, and/or unwilling, to neutrally mediate the conflicts and to provide internal security for its citizens.<sup>5</sup> A significant proportion of citizens viewed the state’s violence as arbitrary, immoral, and therefore illegitimate. In other words, there was no civil society, no “functioning social contract”. Moreover, with the outbreak of the conflict, the state lost control over a significant part of its territory. Both sides of the conflict were diverse; there was a variety of relevant actors. And both sides’ strategies and goals were truly that of the NWs.

### *The Effect of the Cold War*

The Guatemalan civil war does not fit into the traditional mainstream categories of the Cold War. The bipolar superpower-competition is commonly believed to have had a stabilising effect: the international situation was clear, the most parts of the world were divided between the two blocs, and the main global power antagonism suppressed local ethnic, religious, national, and other conflicts. After the end of the Cold War, all of these silenced conflicts erupted – the bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia is a prime example. In terms of old/new wars, the Cold War extended the era of old wars and suppressed the emerging new ones.

In the case of Guatemala, the conflict erupted into open confrontation in the 1960s, during the Cold War. The civil war had, as the study show, deep and longstanding roots, economic, social, and ethnic, which have nothing to do with the prevailing Washington-Moscow hostility. While the course of the conflict was doubtless affected by support from external donors, the deeper long-term motives were independent of its Cold War background. And because the Cold War atmosphere failed to suppress them, civil war erupted.

In the beginning of the 1980s, détente was replaced by what is sometimes called “the Second Cold War”. The new US administration embarked upon a strong engagement in Central America; the region became a main stage of the Cold War, together with Afghanistan. Local pro-US regimes began to gain more support and assistance from the superpower donor in their declared war against “Communism”. “Communism” was represented regionally by “soviet satellites” Cuba and Nicaragua, as well as guerrillas in other states, including Guatemala.

In Guatemala, the increase in US support increased the “new” aspects of the conflict in terms of strategies and methods of violence. During this time the civil-military distinction was blurred more than ever before, both parties committed the most violent acts of the conflict, and the army’s actions gained a genocidal character. So the Cold War’s impact pushed the Guatemalan conflict, at least in these areas, closer towards a NW. After the end of the Cold War, when everywhere else the various antagonisms that had been silenced by the Cold War were erupting into the new wars (in Yugoslavia, the Caucasus, Rwanda, etc.), the Guatemalan “new war in old times” calmed down and ended.



***Bipolarised Internal Warfare***

We cannot simply state that the Second Cold War (paradoxically) reinforced the NW aspects of the Guatemalan conflict. The increase in external support did not push the whole conflict into becoming NW-like, but only one of its aspects – the methods used. Both sides became more violent, cruel and atrocious; the distinction between combatants and non-combatants was further reduced (civilians were forced to participate in the violence at a greater rate). But this was the only change in the whole spectrum of qualities of the conflict. The Second Cold War could have had an impact on the number of actors participating, but did not; the situation remained unchanged.

Not only is the number of actors involved in the conflict important, but also the structure within which they act. In the Guatemalan case, the structure was organised in a bipolar way; actors were either with the state, or the insurgents. The army/military intelligence, by using terror and militarisation, gained strong control over actors previously on the side of the state, and the guerrillas were in a quite equal situation, using equal means (terror and “armed propaganda”). In fact, in the case of actors, the NW quality of the conflict could be seriously doubted. There was a variety of actors, but most of them were not autonomous: they all were more or less controlled by or related to two centres. This is more similar to the modern state-controlled hierarchical armies.

This situation clearly shows the impact of Cold War-related external support. Actually, with a little imagination and simplification, we can see Guatemala during the Cold War as a miniature model of Cold War inter-state relations. The international Cold War system seemed projected onto Guatemala’s internal conditions. A variety of actors (other states on the international level and internal actors within Guatemala) were associated with two poles so that the situation, which would under “natural” conditions have been anarchical, was simplified, bipolarised. Two more-or-less homogenous blocs (West vs. East / the state vs. insurgent communities) emerged according to two centres of gravity (Washington and Moscow / military intelligence and guerrilla leaders).

Without the two external support flows, described by the study as “important” (Commission for Historical Clarification: 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> columns), the situation would have been different. The state would have been limited to its own internal resources. Tax revenues, as mentioned, were traditionally low, and during civil war they would likely have been even lower. So the state would have had to use private resources from controlled territories to wage war against the insurgents. That would have naturally led to disputes with other associated actors, like large landowners, private companies, etc., over the land’s resources. The “greed” element would have become strongly relevant. Due to the probable friction, these actors would have lost their loyalty to the state. Greed-motivated third parties, neither insurgents nor state actors, would have emerged. At the same time, competition for resources would have become much more risky, providing lower returns than the stable and regular external donations. Hence the state would have become even more failed, i.e., even less able to control (through terror and/or providing security) its (remaining) citizens and supporters actors. They would then have shifted loyalty

to other actors – either the guerrillas or third parties. A similar process of disintegration would likely have happened for the insurgents, if left without external support.

So the Cold War-related donations and military support prevented the conflict from turning into typical New War. It enabled military intelligence to preserve its firm control over other state-related actors, hence the whole state-party, or rather state-bloc, could remain quite coherent, hierarchical, and obedient. It did not prevent the state from being quasi-state, it did not prevent Guatemala from disintegrating into various actors' playground, but it did enable military intelligence to become the strongest actor, and eventually to rule over other (weaker) state-actors and hold the whole state-bloc together. External support enabled the army/military intelligence to control society. It could provide civilians and actors security in exchange for loyalty, and was able to effectively use violence to control potentially disobedient actors and civilians. The same can be said for the insurgents.

The Cold War simplified the conflict, not by giving it pure OW characteristics, but by strengthening two of the NW actors, which consequently effected the bipolarisation of the internal situation and the emergence of two blocs. The Second Cold War increased support from the US, enabling the army to assault civilians more effectively, hence creating an atmosphere of war, insecurity and hate, which in result secured both the army's external donations and its internal control over society. In short, external support strengthened the ability of the NW-type actors (thinking by NW logic) to perform NW operations to reach NW goals.

The Guatemalan civil war was significantly bipolarised, but it was far from being an ideal-type, particularly due to the disparity between the strength of the two main actors; the guerrilla's capabilities were quite marginal. To draw a more telling picture, imagine the ideal type of a NW, as described above. But add one important external factor: once an overseas power had the geopolitical and/or economic interests in the country to provide support to a sympathetic actor (eventually labelled a satellite or proxy), resources streamed into the pockets of that actor. Being the recipient has its advantages; the recipient does not have to compete for local resources, and so can have quite peaceful relations with neighbouring and/or sympathetic actors. The recipient can then not only defend itself, but even offer security and protection to others-citizens of the failed state and other (weaker, poorer) actors. Of course, the recipient is willing to provide security and support only in exchange for loyalty and support, with which it can develop its power and build its own bloc, a hierarchical system of weaker, dependent actors. Supposing that there are two competing external powers, two different streams of resources would flow into the country, forming two "recipients", and two hostile "blocs". The result is a "bipolarised" internal war.<sup>6</sup>

Presupposing that donors think in OW terms (Kaldor, 2005a: p. 4), the bloc led by a recipient looks like an OW-style army: it is hierarchically organised and firmly controlled from above. The "bloc" would then be seen as a loyal and ideologically sympathetic "proxy", and would be expected to act in an OW fashion – i.e. to use military force as effectively as possible in order to defeat the enemy. But the recipients are above all NW-type actors; they do not

necessarily think in their donors' terms, they do not necessarily hold the donors' beliefs (although they may pretend to do so), and they definitely do not seek the donors' goal (the defeat of the enemy). On the contrary, they want the war to last as long as possible, to secure both the continuation of the external donation and control over their parts of society, territory, and resources. To reach this NW goal, they adopt NW methods, creating fear through terror against civilians.

The war waged by the recipients was therefore not the type of war the donors actually thought it was. It was a NW, fuelled by and more-or-less shaped by the external donations, but with the actors' motives and inner logic unchanged. External support only changed the structure of the actors, but the remaining aspects – the character of the state, the methods, and the goals – remained those of a NW. The conflict had the same logic as it would have had if it remained isolated: that of a NW-style war-economy. This logic is independent of what the donors thought and expected. The external OW-style donation was nothing more than oil poured on a NW fire.

As stated above, the bipolarisation of the Guatemalan conflict was quite unequal – one of the two flows of support was much stronger, which consequently gave one actor dominance. This raises another question: what if there is only one strong external flow of support? If the recipient is a state-related actor, probably (and usually) the army, it would use its supreme power to build a coherent state-bloc of actors, enforce loyalty among the population, and suppress anti-state actors. Yet if the recipient were of non-state origin, it would simply take over the state's institutions, achieving the same end-result. So what might be viewed from abroad as a stable modern (yet authoritative) state, is in fact an anarchical environment mix of a failed state and a variety of actors, in which one actor is so dominant that it can easily suppress disloyal actors. In other words, while the state is failed in many aspects (legitimacy of violence, citizenship, taxation, administration, etc.), the state-related recipient (not the state itself) is able, by neopatrimonial methods, to execute control over other institutions, actors, and civilians – to rule over the territory of the state itself. But the war-economy logic would still be relevant, providing the dominant actor with the incentives to create and prolong an atmosphere of war, with all its fears and insecurities. While the centralised modern nation state is based and dependent upon effective internal security and stability and an atmosphere of possible external threat, the power of the recipient to control society and territory is dependent on an atmosphere of internal insecurity and possible instability, and the flow of allied external support.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the Guatemalan civil war was like a NW: it occurred within the context of diminished state power, there was variety of actors involved, the violence was mostly directed against civilians, and many of the participants acted according to war-economy logic: they profited from the war, so their goal was not to win it, but to prolong it. These aspects were not arbitrary, but specially interconnected. However, what is unique about this particular case is that thanks to the selective external support, two of the actors gained ascendancy over the others, and hence effectively controlled them. Therefore

only two of all the actors, thanks to their supreme power, could act with real autonomy. The remaining participants were significantly weaker and therefore were inevitably semi-dependent or utterly dependent on one of the two dominant players. The conflict was “bipolarised”. This specific structure within which the actors conflicted gave the conflict an “old” war quality: the two largely hierarchical blocs that significantly resembled OW armies. This alteration from NW to OW was due to the external support within the framework of the Cold War. Yet unlike classical (OW) armies, which are managed within a modern centralised nation state and its bureaucracy, these “blocs” were instead characterised by informal bonds, “neopatrimonial” connections, personal relations, corruption, threats, and terror.

Examining this external support, we see that they were made by “old” actors, i.e. national states driven to this activity by conventional OW-thinking, more-or-less rational analyses in terms of national interests and security. The external donors viewed the conflict in OW terms – this is not only the case with Guatemala, but with the Cold War altogether (Kaldor, 2005a: p. 3–10). To attain their (geo)political goals, they wanted their proxies to win the conflict as soon as possible. But the recipients’ motives ran according to NW logic. They struggled to make the war last as long as possible to ensure the continuance of the external support. Of course, there may have been some NW thinking even among the external donors. Some might argue that both Washington and Havana had an interest in prolonging the wars in Central America to create an “enemy-at-the-gate” atmosphere in order to gain popular support. There is probably some truth in this, especially in the case of the Second Cold War of the 1980s.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Berdal, 2003; Bøås, 2005; Jackson, 1990; Kaldor and Vashee, 1997; Kaldor, 2005a; Leander, 2001 and 2002; Münkler, 2003; Rotberg, 2004; Murshed, 2003; Shaw, 2000; Vinci, 2003; Wlaschütz, 2004; Wulf, 2004; Zartman, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> The version of the study published online lacks pagination. However, the text is structured into numbered columns. Quotes from this text refer to the number of the associated column.

<sup>3</sup> This is part of a broad and very topical discourse, often associated with the debate between neoliberal economists and organisations such as the WTO, IMF and World Bank on one side, and the diverse grassroots “antiglobal” movement, humanitarian organisations such as Oxfam International, and some “celebrity-activists” such as Naomi Klein and Noam Chomsky. The “global injustice” topic entered the broad public discourse partly after the Zapatista uprising in southern Mexico in 1994, but especially after urban riots in Seattle managed to stop the WTO meeting. More recently, such topics were refreshed by the G8 meeting in Edinburgh and the associated series of “Live8” concerts from June 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Although it is therefore inaccurate to use the word “state” in referring to the Guatemalan state apparatus, I have continued to do so for want of a suitable, and simple, alternative. Some might point out that other institutions related to the Guatemalan state, namely the army, were also seriously distorted, and hence such caveats need be expressed here as well. However, I will continue to use such terms as army, bureaucracy, etc., similarly to avoid overcomplicating the text.

<sup>5</sup> Paradoxically, the human insecurity inside Guatemala was in contrast to the state’s political security against external threats, which was ensured by Guatemala’s strong external patron, diplomatic acknowledgement, and international rules. This is complete reversal of the modern dichotomy of internal security and external threat.

<sup>6</sup> Of course, there may be more than just two “donors”.

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# Neoconservatives Among Us? A Study of Former Dissidents' Discourse\*

JENI SCHALLER

**Abstract:** Neoconservative political thought has been characterized as “distinctly American”, but could there be fertile ground for its basic tenets in post-communist Europe? This paper takes an initial look at the acceptance of the ideas of American neo-conservative foreign policy among Czech elites who were dissidents under the communist regime. Open-ended, semi-structured interviews with eight former dissidents were conducted and then analyzed against a background of some fundamental features of neo-conservative foreign policy. Discourse analysis is the primary method of examination of the texts. Although a coherent discourse among Czech former dissidents cannot be said to exist, certain aspects reminiscent of American neoconservative thought were found.

**Key words:** neoconservatism, Czech dissidents, foreign policy, discourse analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

Neoconservatism, as a strain of political thought in the United States, has been represented as “distinctly American” and Irving Kristol, often considered the “godfather” of neoconservatism, emphatically states “[t]here is nothing like neoconservatism in Europe” (Kristol 2003: 33). Analyst Jeffrey Gedmin writes that the “environment for neoconservatism as such is an inhospitable one” in Europe, especially Germany (Gedmin 2004: 291). The states of Central Europe, in contrast to many of the established continental EU members, represent a rather more pro-American stance. With groups of former dissidents whose political leanings are in part informed by the American anti-communist, pro-democracy policies of the 1970s and 1980s, could there be a more hospitable environment for neoconservative ideas in a Central European state such as the Czech Republic?

The Czech dissident community was not as extensive or well-organised as that in Poland or even Hungary, largely due to the post-1968 “normalisation” in Czechoslovakia. While their counterparts in Poland and Hungary enjoyed some limited bargaining power vis-à-vis the regime throughout the 1980s, Czech dissidents remained a very loose group of individuals with various ideological viewpoints, brought together by their opposition to communist totalitarian rule. Despite their difficult conditions, “a small but forceful opposition

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with echoes of support in society and abroad" was maintained and finally gained widespread public support in autumn 1989 (Vachudova 2005: 28). After the collapse of the communist regime in late 1989, the new government consisted mainly of former dissidents and some who had not been active dissenters, but had not been active party members either. In comparison with Slovakia, many more Czech dissidents with no previous political or even professional experience were willing to assume not only legislative, but also executive posts (Učeň 1999: 85). Václav Havel provides the most striking example, but quite a few other politically inexperienced former dissidents took important positions, especially within the first few post-1989 governments. Without exaggerating the influence of former dissidents in the post-communist era, I assume that their presence in the government, cabinet, and extra-governmental research does have an (at least limited) impact on policies, as well as public opinion. The goal of this paper is not, however, to measure or attempt to characterise the influence of former dissidents on Czech politics, but rather to examine and describe a narrow slice of the ideological spectrum.

My objective is to analyse the discourse of Czech former dissidents on US foreign policy to determine whether there is a pattern of political thought among the Czech political and intellectual elite sympathetic to or supportive of American neoconservatism.<sup>1</sup> The analysis looks specifically at the texts of interviews with former dissidents – who partially comprise the foreign policy elite – to determine whether these texts comprise a discourse supportive of American neoconservatism. Discourse analysis can help to identify the sources, key concepts, and relations between the concepts used by the Czech elite to describe and explain American foreign policy.

Several important works have been published that generally discuss the dissident movements in Central and Eastern Europe, including Czechoslovakia (Falk 2003; Holý 1996; Rupnik 1998), but none directly address the views of the Czech dissident movement on foreign policy, perhaps because the democratic opposition in Central Europe was primarily concerned with the transformation of their domestic systems to embrace democracy. Falk warns against trying to outline the specific views of Charter 77: "Beyond human rights, it is difficult to pin down a definitive 'charter position' on anything, and to do so misses the point entirely" (Falk 2003: 253). However, once the democratic transformation was realised, and the former democratic opposition assumed the leadership role, specific policies had to be formed. In the literature dealing with the transformation from democratic opposition to the new rulers, no study has examined the role of American neoconservatism on Czech foreign policy. This project, therefore, aims to be a first step in exploring the possible implications of neoconservatism for the Czech Republic, and hopes to spark a debate about the resonance of this "distinctly American" mode of thought in the post-Communist world.

## II. THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

This project aims to provide a microanalysis of a small section of the Czech elite's constructions of American foreign policy and neoconservatism. The analysis will look at key concepts in Czech former dissidents' discourse on American foreign policy, establishing whether those concepts form a dis-

course revealing implicit or explicit support of American neoconservatism. The methodology will follow Milliken (1999), who stresses that to establish the existence of a discourse; one must identify the “key aspects of significative practices”, the ways in which objects within the discourse are given meaning (Milliken 1999: 231).

Discourse analysis (DA) primarily aims to identify and describe the discourses used in public texts, which is to say that the intention is to stay at the level of discourse, and not venture into what actors “actually” think or perceive (Waever n.d.: 5). Furthermore, as critical social theory, it is not taken for granted that actors somehow provide objectively “true” representations of their beliefs, or even that there could be such a representation. Rather, actors must represent and recontextualise their own and others’ social actions, with the effect that the actions exist only in representations and recontextualisations (Fairclough 2001). Meaning in discourse does not arise independently from material objects, but rather is built on the relationships between objects within a sign system, and the structure of these relationships will most often occur in binary oppositions (Derrida 1981). In Milliken’s analysis, discourses “are background capabilities that are used socially, at least by a small group of officials if not more broadly in a society or among different elites and societies” (1999: 233). These background capabilities provide the means by which (in international relations) the world is organised and understood, and ultimately make possible certain policy actions, while rendering others impossible.

In foreign policy DA studies (one of three major types of DA presented by Milliken), the concern is with “explaining how a discourse articulated by elites produces policy practices (individual or joint)” (1999: 240). This study can be considered to fall under this domain, but the specific group of elites represents a very narrow section of the political spectrum. If a specific foreign policy discourse among current political elites with a personal history of dissent in fact exists, it would act as a background capacity<sup>2</sup> for understanding Czech foreign policy in relation to America. As a study involving a substantial number of intellectual and academic elites, aspects of international relations theory DA studies may also apply. This type of DA “extend[s] analyses of theoretical representations via arguments that knowledge produced in the academy is fused with that of policy-makers to make up a ‘dominant intellectual/policy perspective’” (1999: 236–237).

Milliken extends the explanatory power of foreign policy DA to “analyzing how an elite’s ‘regime of truth’ made possible certain courses of action by a state”, noting that the goal of DA should be to explain how discourses produce “policy practices” (1999: 236–237). The aim of this study is much narrower and will only explore the first step in the process – whether a coherent discourse on American foreign policy and neoconservatism can be identified among Czech former dissidents. Much more extensive research should be done to determine whether and to what extent such a discourse affects the formation of Czech foreign policy practices.

### ***Methodology***

Interviews of current academic or political elites with personal histories of dissent were collected. The sample of elites was drawn from current and for-

mer government officials (MPs, senators, foreign ministry officials), representatives of think-tanks, university professors and other “intellectuals-at-large” with a history of dissent against the Communist regime. I define dissent as participation in a dissident movement, such as Charter 77, *samizdat* publications, or other dissident activities. Furthermore, I included one individual who lived in exile during part of the communist regime.

The eight interviewees, while mostly not directly active in foreign policy making, have been involved in the process and continue to hold positions which may influence policy making. Most of the interviewees are intellectuals rather holders of governmental office, however in recent years several have held positions such as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador. Although they are now mostly in non-governmental positions, the importance of their opinions, contributions to media outlets and general intellectual discussions in the Czech Republic should not be underestimated. Some of the individuals are regular contributors to academic journals, the mass media and governmental and academic conferences, all of which serve as vectors spreading their opinion to other areas of Czech society. Others are involved with think tanks and organisations regularly producing policy briefs and recommendations, and serve as experts and sources of information for the Czech government. Furthermore, as experts in politics and international relations, their opinions and analyses may play a role in informing and convincing policy makers. With this in mind, a coherent discourse among these individuals could have considerable potential to affect the foreign policy actions of the state.

#### *Interview structure*

I used a combination of structured and semi-structured interview questions, following the findings of Aberbach and Rockman (2004), who argue that open-ended questions are more useful where there is little prior research on the subject at hand. Furthermore, open-ended questions are often more valid because “they provide a greater opportunity for respondents to organise their answers within their own frameworks” and because they allow elite respondents to answer freely rather than “being put in the straightjacket of close-ended questions” (2004: 2). The questions were structured around the features of neoconservative foreign policy as discussed in section VI, in the hopes of obtaining as much coverage of the target areas of foreign policy as possible. The eight interviews were transcribed in part and analyzed for specific linguistic and syntactical constructions consistent among respondents. The small sample size and the in-depth nature of the interviews call for close analysis of the texts and any consistencies among them to determine if the assumed discourse does exist.

### **III. NEOCONSERVATISM AND CZECH DISSIDENTS**

Neoconservatism has become a rising political force in the United States, breaking from traditional conservatism to press for activism and morality in international relations. The origins of neoconservative thought will be discussed later (section IV), but it is useful to note that its potential influence on American politics was being recorded as early as the late 1970s and early 1980s, although it focused on domestic rather than foreign policy (Steinfels

1979, Joseph 1982). One of the major distinguishing aspects of the neoconservative vision of international relations is the belief that universal democracy (combined with US benevolent hegemony) will create a peaceful world. Furthermore, the debate over the influence of American neoconservatives is increasingly controversial and multi-faceted in the US and Europe. The Czech Republic, like other post-communist European states, has had a fairly consistent pro-American foreign policy. While other states in Europe have become hostile towards US policy since the 2003 invasion of Iraq the states of Central Europe (termed “new Europe” by Donald Rumsfeld) joined the American “coalition of the willing” in Iraq, contributing much-needed international legitimacy. The Bush administration has praised these states as sharing America’s values and remembering the hardships of totalitarian regimes.

The former Czech dissidents seem to represent the most pro-American sector of the Czech political elite. Under communism, some dissidents developed an affinity for the United States as a symbol of democracy, as the US held the main symbolic role in opposition to the Soviet Union. The US supported this image through outlets such as the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. One interviewee noted that since 1965 he had followed the American press courtesy of the US embassy in Prague, which welcomed Czech citizens to its reading room and provided information not otherwise available. With US tacit support for indigenous democrats, the dissident elite made out of America a model for democracy and for how their countries could emerge as (or return as) democratic states. In addition, the perceived importance of the Reagan administration’s foreign policy in ending the Cold War may add to the admiration of an interventionist, pro-democracy foreign policy. The expectations of this study stem from an assumption that the experience of the Czech dissidents under a totalitarian system would inform a pro-democracy and anti-totalitarian stance similar to that of American neoconservatives.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, the dissident community was partially built on the ideas represented by Czechoslovakia’s pre-war democracy, founded by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk – ideas later forbidden by the regime and idealised by the democratic opposition (Holý 1996: 48–49). NATO representative Karel Kovanda (himself a former dissident) has characterised the Czech affinity for American idealism thus: “[w]e detect a strand of idealism in US foreign policy which appeals to us: for better or worse, President Masaryk’s country – our own – was founded on the strength of Wilsonian idealism, back in 1918. It is an idealism dedicated to freedom and democracy” (Kovanda 2003). Wilsonian idealism, the (sometimes naive) desire for democracy around the world, based on the belief that democracy is a universal value, is often considered a foundation for American neoconservatism (which however, tends to push for a harder application of this policy). As we shall see in the next section, the terms Kovanda uses are very similar to those used by American neoconservatives in describing their own foreign policy vision.

Because of their experience as the democratic opposition under totalitarian rule, the dissident elite would be expected to sympathise with individuals in a similar position in other regimes. This is clearly evident in the former dissidents’ vocal support for the indigenous Cuban and North Korean democrats, which has even led to conflicts at the EU level. A speech by former Ambassador

to the US, Alexandr Vondra, illustrates how personal experiences lead to sympathy with North Korean citizens:

We do have some common experiences with my country, which had its own bitter totalitarian experiences where we struggled to bring it down. Many of my fellow citizens paid for the depravity of the communist dictatorship with exile, imprisonment and some with their life. I have had my own experiences with freedom fighting and I was fortunate enough to spend only two months in a communist prison. I mention this disturbing fact because I think it illustrates a political experience comparable with that of present-day North Korea. (Vondra 2003)

Such strong empathy with the oppressed democratic opposition in totalitarian regimes leads to indicate that the former Czech dissidents would be strongly against all such regimes and would actively support political or even military action – a position strongly favoured by US neoconservatives, but by few other sectors of the population in the US or Europe. Although the neo-conservative and Czech dissident experiences are vastly different, their reasons for supporting action against such regimes do not differ so greatly – both look to the spread of democracy as a guarantee of human rights and security around the world.

We might expect to find an underlying support for action against totalitarian regimes, possibly with America as the leading power, stemming from an understanding that the hard-line actions of President Reagan were crucial in the disintegration of the Soviet bloc. This is demonstrated in Václav Havel's appeal to the US Congress for leadership in helping "the Soviet Union on its irreversible, but immensely complicated, road to democracy" (Havel, 1990). The neoconservative movement has its roots in the vehement opposition to the Soviet Union and the US policy of *détente*. Disillusioned by Washington's "soft" approach to the Soviet Union, early neoconservatives (most of them leftists) were "mugged by reality" in Irving Kristol's phrasing, and turned to support a hard-line approach to the Soviet Union. In a similar way many of the early Czech dissident community originally supported socialism, but grew jaded with its implementation.<sup>4</sup> Later generations (including most of those interviewed for this study) were certainly anti-Soviet, and generally supported a more hard-line stance by the US and Western Europe in the Cold War. As one interviewee told me: "If you understand the logic of the totalitarian system, it can be overcome, but not from within. You need international support and the assistance of a strong authority from the outside. (...) Without Ronald Reagan and his explicit rhetorics, nothing would change in Russia." It can be easily (although perhaps not always accurately), argued that this particular foreign policy of the neoconservatives would have been heavily supported by those who fought against the communist regime.

A final link between Czech dissidence and neoconservatism is the emphasis on the return of morality to politics. Morality and the fight against evil is a common strain in the writings of Havel, especially since the fall of communism and the establishment of democracy in Central Europe. "For peace cannot be attained without a readiness to defend it against the forces of evil" (Havel 1999). Furthermore, the role of a strong military behind the democracy has come into focus, especially in light of NATO's Central European ex-



pansion. “An army will always remain an unequivocal expression of the shared will to live in freedom, to defend freedom and to engage in joint efforts in order to ensure freedom for others as well” (Havel n.d.). This emphasis on the need to defend freedom (after fighting for it for so long) echoes neoconservative calls for greater military strength. The combination of anti-Soviet history and a deep-seeded belief in the importance of democracy in securing human rights help raise an expectation of similar discourses between American neoconservatives and Czech former dissidents.

#### **IV. FEATURES OF NEOCONSERVATIVE FOREIGN POLICY**

Identifying the key areas of neoconservative policy and theory can be problematic because of the wide range of opinions held by neoconservatives and the large amount of misleading or misunderstood information published on neoconservative policy beliefs.<sup>5</sup> *Weekly Standard*<sup>6</sup> editor David Brooks warns: “If you ever read a sentence that starts with ‘Neocons believe’, there is a 99.44 per cent chance everything else in that sentence will be untrue” (Brooks 2004: 42). Nevertheless, there are certain qualities around which a fairly coherent neoconservative worldview, specifically concerning foreign policy, is structured. I identify three guiding pillars of neoconservative foreign policy: American hegemony, hard Wilsonianism, and moralistic visions of good and evil in the world. As we shall see, these three main features are intricately connected and form a distinct and coherent mandate for US foreign policy.

##### ***American Benevolent Hegemony***

After the end of the Cold War, America was often hailed as the only remaining “superpower”. For neoconservatives, this is America’s rightful place; it is the only country with the ability and desire to build and reinforce a stable, peaceful (read: democratic) world. This belief centres around a strong conviction in American exceptionalism, which Zachary Selden identifies as an almost unquestioned core idea of American foreign policy. Exceptionalism is manifest in the view of the American notion of liberal democracy as a universal concept. As a bastion of stable democracy, America has both the right and the duty to build a peaceful world society. Furthermore, the influence of the US in the world is seen as undeniably positive. Joshua Muravchik, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI),<sup>7</sup> identifies as one of two basic “truths” of America’s foreign policy that “America is a great force for good in the world” (1991: 222). Irwin Stelzer, a former AEI director, writes: “Neocons believe that a militarily powerful America must play what can be reasonably described as an imperial role if there is to be a new, peaceful world order” (2004: 11).<sup>8</sup> Neoconservatives envision a new world order, in which peace and democracy prevail, and America retains its power in what Charles Krauthammer has called a “unipolar era” (Kristol and Kagan 2000: 58).

Neoconservatives see dire consequences for America and the world if the superpower does not live up to these expectations:

Even if the threat from China were to disappear tomorrow, that would not relieve us of the need for a strong and active role in the world. Nor would it absolve us of the responsibilities that fate has placed on our shoulders. Given

the dangers we know currently exist, and given the certainty that unknown perils await us over the horizon, there can be no respite from this burden (Kristol and Kagan 2000: 71).

This statement, typical of neoconservative writings, blends traditional conservative pessimism, which sees no end to the possibility of evil in the world with an underlying sense of responsibility for confronting and even overcoming this evil. America is portrayed as “burdened” with the responsibility for confronting and removing these “dangers”. Neoconservatives have thus moved beyond realism to a more progressive view, in which evil can be overcome, a feature that will be explored in greater detail below.

### **“Hard Wilsonianism”**

Although neoconservative writers claim Wilson as an important ideological predecessor, there is a significant difference in the neoconservative application of Wilsonian idealism. Democracy is still the goal, but the means have taken a more aggressive turn. This is often referred to as “hard” Wilsonianism: making democracy possible by deposing dictatorial regimes that threaten American security and the world order – using military force if all else fails, following regime change with nation-building, and relying on various ad-hoc coalitions rather than on the United Nations’ support (Stelzer 2004: 9). The traditional liberal tools of diplomacy, institutions, and multilateralism are, in the more hawkish writings, portrayed as weak and inefficient means of achieving democratisation. However, neoconservative authors are divided as to how aggressive this policy should be, and to what extent unilateralism is better than multilateralism.<sup>9</sup>

The neoconservative vision of a democratic world involves far more than supporting indigenous efforts to democratise; the policy is the “export of democracy”. Joshua Muravchik’s book, *Exporting Democracy* (published by the AEI), gives three reasons for America to take democracy export as the main engine of its foreign policy. First is ‘empathy with our fellow humans,’ giving others the possibility to pursue freedom in the American fashion. Lest the policy be derided as pure altruism, the second reason points to the increasing friendliness of a democratic world to American interests – “what is good for democracy is good for America” (Muravchik 1991: 222). The last reason is essentially a restatement of the democratic peace theory: a world consisting of democracies is most likely to be a peaceful world. There is clearly an understanding that the ideas and values of the US should serve as the basis for government in the rest of the world, precisely because shared or common values will both increase security and render political and ideological conflict unlikely.

Neoconservative idealism is infused with an extremely value-driven policy and a very inclusive understanding of national interests extending far beyond the minimal realist understanding. National interests extend beyond economic wellbeing and protection from immediate threats to include securing freedom and democracy around the world. In seeing liberal democracy and the free market as the most important factors in promoting peace around the world, neoconservative policy draws upon democratic peace theory. This rejection of the traditional conservative pessimistic view of a world doomed to

perish is another fundamental break with realism.<sup>10</sup> Unlike traditional conservative realism, neoconservatism postulates that a world without conflict could be possible, if all players agreed to US-dominance and Western-style democracy. The conclusion is that national interest is no longer confined to the geographical sphere. Great powers (like the United States) must also consider their interest in ideological terms.

The spread of (Western-style) liberal democracy remains the goal of hard Wilsonianism, as Irving Kristol has argued, “not only out of sheer humanitarianism but also because the spread of liberal democracy improves U.S. security, while crimes against humanity inevitably make the world a more dangerous place” (2003: 49). In Kristol’s argument, the alternative to liberal democracy is crime against humanity. No other system is viable. Liberal democracy, accompanied by the free market, is taken for granted as the best form of government universally, and American foreign policy should strive to support democracy around the world.

### *Moralistic Visions of Good and Evil*

To examine the final pillar of neoconservative foreign policy, moralistic visions of good and evil, a brief discussion of the movement’s political development is useful. What is now called neoconservatism has its theoretical roots in a group of individuals who in the 1930s and 40s were part of the anti-Stalinist left. Their philosophical idealism comes from an association with pre-war political leftism, which rejected cynical realist approaches to foreign policy. During the 1960s, as the New Left movement gained publicity and strength, the reactionary movement also built up steam, albeit more quietly. Within the context of the Cold War, the first generation neoconservatives<sup>11</sup> turned away from the prevailing liberal views to a hard-line stance on Communism and interventionism, emphasising the need for strong anticommunism and support for freedom around the world. In a domestic context, the group bemoaned a “lack of moral fibre” evident in the civil rights and antiwar movements, leading them to accept conservative social and moral values. Thus in contemporary neoconservative theory we can identify policy values from both sides. From its liberal underpinnings, neoconservatism takes a broad view of the national interest and America’s responsibility in the world, while from conservatism it takes a respect for tradition and moral values that also inform its foreign policy.

The underlying sense of distinct moral values is also found in neoconservative foreign policy. According to this understanding of the world, there are good and evil forces, and the distinction between them is quite clear. Edward Rhodes, in his critical appraisal of George W. Bush’s NATO policy, identifies the “changing faces of evil” in the administration’s rhetoric. The “new faces” of evil – terrorism and tyranny – are merely extensions of the same evil that has been the target of American foreign policy all along (previously in the form of Nazism and communism). “Thus while the faces, names, and forms change, the underlying *nature* of evil and the appropriate reaction to it are constant: it is the denial of individual freedom, carried out by intimidation and terror, against which the Atlantic partners have fought and must continue to fight” (Rhodes 2004: 135). In the neoconservative view of international re-

lations, evil is ever-present and ever-changing, but the forces for good are always gradually advancing against it.<sup>12</sup> The “end of the Cold War represented a real and irreversible victory” in the struggle against evil, although the war on evil (in the form of terrorism and tyranny) has not been won decisively (Rhodes 2004: 135).

Thus the mandate of “good” forces is to rid the world of “evil” ones. The belief that evil *can* be overcome is an important departure from traditional conservative and realist thought. These evil, tyrannical regimes cannot be expected “to play by the existing— which is to say American – rules of the game”. Therefore the answer lies in a policy of regime change including outright military means, covert support for dissidents, economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation (Kristol and Kagan: 2000: 70).

Although neoconservative thought also presents a vivid and fairly coherent policy program for domestic concerns, the focus here will remain on foreign policy. Certainly other areas of concern have not been discussed in depth, including the extension of military and defence capabilities. However, these concerns can be traced back to three fundamental values: American dominance, the universal appeal of democracy and the division of the world into good and evil. The next section will take these three features of neoconservative foreign policy as a starting point for the analysis of the interview texts. An additional section on the respondents’ conceptions of neoconservatism itself will also be included.

## V. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW TEXTS

### *American Dominance*

In neoconservative discourse, the ideal international power structure for the United States and the world is a benevolent hegemony of the United States, especially with regard to military structures. Although the desirability of American dominance is often disputed, the fact that it remains the strongest military power and that the world power structure can no longer be considered bipolar presents a level on which competing strains of IR theory converge. US dominance, therefore, is taken as a background feature of the current international relations discourse. I expect a Czech dissident discourse that recognises the status of America as hegemon and supports this position. Every dissident respondent answered that the US is the dominant power in the world, most presented a positive appraisal of US foreign policy in general, and there were varying degrees of support for US hegemony (including disagreement).

All respondents answered that America is the dominant power in the international system. Although this question was presented as a structured multiple-choice question, several respondents gave this answer even before hearing all the choices. In the discourse of these former Czech dissidents, as well as in the greater IR discourse, the perception of the US as most powerful is presented as a widely agreed “fact” or “reality”, rather than an interpretation of the global power structure.<sup>13</sup> The “reality” of American dominance therefore acts as a background capacity most likely not limited to the dissident elites, and which may extend to most sectors of the Czech political spectrum.

The neoconservative discourse sees American leadership as necessary for “the maintenance of a decent and hospitable international order” (Kristol and Kagan 2000: 64). In contrast, the former dissidents interviewed all stressed the importance of increased cooperation, multilateralism, and moderation in US ambitions and power. Europe was most consistently named as a power that could or should play a larger role vis-à-vis the US. Thus there is no clear sign that any of the respondents view the proper response to increasing American power as deference or gratitude on the part of the rest of the world, the response neoconservative writers seem to expect. Embodying what several pointed out as the European affinity for cooperation, respondents highlighted multilateralism as an alternative to the perceived overly ambitious US “go-it-alone” policy.

An interesting feature of the responses is that concepts of Europe and America are consistently portrayed as opposites, with very distinct characteristics that are both complementary and the source of conflict. Whereas Europe is constructed as cynical, old, experienced (with war) and even disillusioned, America represents optimism, the new, and is seen as willing to make clear distinctions between right and wrong. According to one respondent, “We have all been educated in Central Europe and you know this is the region where you had so many wars in the past that it [taught] the people to be a little bit sceptical and relativistic.” This opposition of Europe and America (particularly as female and male) has also been described by neoconservative theorist Robert Kagan (2000), and this idea was referenced directly by one respondent. Despite these differences, Europe and America are both portrayed as democratic and sharing the same values, hence the perceived need for more cooperation between the two.

Only one respondent characterised the role of the US as negative, so the call for multilateralism does not originate in anti-American feelings. The majority of respondents, although they pointed out various US policies with which they disagree, still maintained that the overall influence of the US in the world is positive. These relatively numerous positive evaluations of the America’s influence in the world indicates a point of departure from general Czech public opinion. In a poll conducted around the same time as these interviews, over 40% of Czech respondents indicated that America represents a threat to the world.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, none of the respondents of this study even hinted opinion that the US could represent such a danger. These former dissidents, although from various political positions, tend to evaluate US foreign policy more positively than the general Czech population. The convergence of opinion on the influence of the US and its position in the world are the strongest indicators of support position of neoconservatism. As such, the idea of America as a hegemonic force for good in the world could provide evidence of a background capacity for the policy practices of this particular discourse. However, the weakness of the other factors, as we shall see, most likely rules out the chance of establishing a coherent dissident elite discourse, let alone one supporting neoconservatism.

### ***Democracy Export***

One of the most distinguishing features of neoconservative foreign policy is its unabashed commitment to democracy-building around the world.

Democracy promotion may be a stated goal of other strains of foreign policy, but the distinguishing point of neoconservatism rests in the means through which neoconservatism is willing to pursue democracy – even by force – and the view that democracy-building constitutes security policy, which benefits the national interests of those pursuing the strategy as well. This point is also the basis for the original assumption that the former democratic opposition of the Czech Republic would support a hard-line democracy building approach that has been criticised by other sectors. These “indigenous democrats” have personal experience with totalitarianism and are therefore likely to sympathise with the cause of the democratic opposition elsewhere in the world.

To approve of universal democracy export, one must believe that democracy is fundamentally achievable in any country in the world. The policy advocated by neoconservatives sees a short- to medium-term timeframe for change, with prompting from established democracies. The quintessential contemporary example of this has become Iraq, supported by the precedents of the (re)constructions of democratic, market-oriented systems in Germany and Japan after WWII. Neoconservatives have pushed for a more active democracy-building policy and deeper commitment, especially militarily, to stabilise democracy (Boot 2004, Kristol and Kagan 2000).

In the interviewee responses three general opinions can be identified on the question of establishing democracy anywhere in the world. Two respondents believe democracy cannot be universally achieved around the world, three indicated a level of scepticism or uncertainty, and three stated that it is indeed possible in any country, albeit difficult. In this section I shall look at the constructions of democracy, and the reasons democracy export is or is not possible according to each of the three lines of opinion. I will then examine whether elements of a discourse are evident despite the contrasting opinions.

The two respondents who stated that democracy is not a universal phenomenon are both active Catholic advocates. This may serve to inform their understanding of democracy, although neither directly claimed a religious or moral reason supporting their beliefs. One respondent insisted on the phrase “liberal democracy”, defining it as based on the rule of law and private property, cooperation among citizens, and the existence of a middle class. This system developed out of the “continental or Anglo-American way of enlightenment. [It is] the product of a very special philosophy”, thus implying that systems not originating from this specific enlightenment philosophy are not capable of supporting democracy. The other respondent did not define democracy, but rather stated “I don’t think there is anything specifically universal about democracy being the best model for each and every human society.”

Both respondents, however, did acknowledge that there are ways in which democracy could be implemented in other countries. The imagery used by each in explaining the “growth” of democracy involved elements of nature: “very slow *organic* growth”, “*seeds* for that kind of a political *climate*”, “cannot *implant*... a *mature* liberal democracy”. In stressing the organic nature of democratic growth, the respondents construct democracy as something natural for a certain system and unnatural for others. One respondent specifically identified these others as “non-European”. Holý (1994) has found similar evidence of metaphors of natural and artificial systems in the Czech media and



public discourse about the creation of the Czech Republic, where the democratic Czech state is considered natural vis-à-vis the artificial Czechoslovak state.

Three respondents supported the claim that democracy is universally applicable. Each of these voiced support for democracy-building as foreign policy (implicitly for the United States, but possibly for any democratic state). Using the theory of democratic peace, two respondents noted that spreading democracy is in essence a security policy. From this perspective, all three further supported the use of military force to establish democracy in place of a non-democratic regime. Specific examples of states were used to back up the claims that democracy is possible on a universal basis. The most commonly cited examples were post-war Germany and Japan – both of which are key components of Muravchik's argument for democracy export as a foreign policy. These three former dissidents, in their approach to exporting democracy, come closest to the neoconservative view of American foreign policy. In the construction of democracy-building as security policy, several former dissidents adopted the discourse of neoconservatism.

The sceptical (or middle) viewpoint tended to divide democracy implementation into theory and reality, noting that things are much more difficult and complex in practice. These respondents, as well as those who supported democracy export, expressed doubts about the quality and endurance of democracy where the people do not understand or desire democracy.

Despite the division over the possibilities for democracy, a few common features can be distinguished in the responses. Nearly all respondents noted that there are several key concepts in the discussions of democracy: the "right local conditions", and the "long process" of democracy. What constitutes the right local conditions was not always clearly delineated, but included civil society, open debates about democracy, and the determined interest of the country in question (its citizens or government). Similar to the "organic" concept of democracy, "local conditions" require that the country desires democratic change, and that the basic tenets of democratic rule are understood and agreed upon.

The respondents almost uniformly draw on personal or "Czech" experiences in discussing democracy and its achievement around the world. This is often tied to the concept of the local conditions, as if the Czechs should understand the need for local support for democracy because they experienced a state in which their conditions favoured democracy amid the falling communist rule. The success of democracy-building in the Czech Republic is seen as a direct result of the strong desire for democracy. This experience is then applied to other cases, as one respondent told me: "every Czech will agree with this [need for local acceptance of democracy] because of our experience." These references to the Czech experience are a particularly strong part of the discourse and may also provide a clue as to why the discourse about democracy-building among the Czech elite is much less enthusiastic than in the neoconservative literature. The Czech national character has been described as inherently cynical and self-critical (Holý 1996, Brodský 2002), and the discourse about politics, even among a very specific sector of the population, should not be expected to significantly differ. This may explain the cynical

attitude towards the success of democracy-building efforts, which sharply contrasts with the idealism considered so characteristic of US and neoconservative policy. This view parallels the above-mentioned distinction between "cynical Europe" and "optimistic America".

The evidence of a coherent discourse is less evident in this aspect than in the first area (American dominance). Several aspects of the texts share similar features, but the range of different reasons given for the possibility or impossibility of specific democracies and the means necessary to bring them forth are not systematic or representative of a consistent discourse informing Czech policy.

### *Evil*

Part of neoconservatism's underlying ideology is the view that there are unmistakable forces of evil present in the world. Also a centrepiece of conservative and moralistic views of foreign policy, the fundamental difference of the neoconservative view is a progressive belief that this evil can be overcome. Texts by neoconservative authors frequently refer to non-democratic, authoritarian regimes as "evil", and thus targets for aggressive American foreign policy. Respondents were asked to evaluate the use of the term "evil" in American foreign policy speech. In a discourse among Czech elites sympathetic to neoconservatism, one would expect references to evil as an existing, but eventually surmountable force, clearly distinguished by certain characteristics, and which can be contrasted with similarly clear "good" forces.

Nearly every respondent characterised the use of "evil" in rhetoric as a simple (or simplistic) means of expressing foreign policy. This is seen as both positive and negative. In a positive light, the policy shows that the US has the "will to speak clearly" or to mandate "clear policy", which can help overcome "European cynicism" or "relativism" which prohibits such clearly delineated policy from being set forth. One respondent characterised the US use of "evil" as a "tradition from the 80s" and several others identified it with the politics of President Reagan and the end of the Cold War. Reagan's "single-minded" policy and its legacy in central Europe seem to be an important aspect of the pro-American tendencies among dissidents (Bransten 2004).

The use of evil in American political speech was evaluated negatively by some respondents. One respondent noted that such vocabulary "puts one into the role of sovereign judge" – a role in which the United States does not belong. Another respondent, who voiced his support for such rhetoric, noted that although it is effective for mobilising a war-time population, it is not pragmatic for "serious political analysis". The simplicity and clarity of categorising some actors as evil is seen as having various uses and even political relevance, but many respondents also note that such language has distinct drawbacks.

This question was intended to reveal not only opinions towards US political rhetoric involving evil, but also at the existential level, whether evil actually exists in the international relations context. In hindsight, the question did not, in most cases, achieve this second purpose. Of the few respondents who offered their views on the existence of evil, all expressed a belief that evil does exist. In order not to presume the beliefs of those who did not offer them,

I shall concentrate only on these responses. The most striking feature of those who acknowledged evil is that the responses were couched in terms of personal experience. While there was very little narrativising, references were frequently made to “our experience”, encompassing various dimensions: small nation, Central Europe, part of the Soviet empire.<sup>15</sup> Offering an answer based on experience seems to lend it legitimacy, especially on a topic like evil, which cannot easily be objectified.

For those who acknowledge it, evil is an existential truth, one that simply exists or is embodied in a regime. There are no explanations as to how or why it came into being, whether it was always there or evolved. The discourse assumes that evil simply is. In the responses, *regimes* are described as evil, and sometimes leaders, but citizens and nations are excluded or excused from the description. These regimes have various evil qualities; in the words of one respondent, evil regimes force “people to give public agreement and express joy over policies that these very people considered criminal or idiotic”. These evil regimes are brutal, capable of breaking people’s wills and even of “stealing people’s souls”. Yet, the evil does not take on a personality, nor does it describe the people of the country; a distinction is made between the “regime” and the people, who are construed as its victims. Several common examples were given (North Korea, Iran, Nazism, communism), but very few references were made to individual leaders. The importance of the Czech lands’ historical experience is evident in the fairly consistent naming of the Nazi and communist regimes as evil.

Of the expectations of discourse, none were met by a majority of the respondents. A select few viewed evil as an existing and surmountable force that could be identified and distinguished from good and several others acknowledged parts of this understanding. Few commonalities emerged among respondents that could have led to fruitful analysis. The “moralistic visions of good and evil” is the feature of the neoconservative discourse that receives the least support among the interviewees. This is despite the emphasis on morality in politics and the evils of the communist regime prevalent in dissident writings.

### *Neoconservatism*

The final question in the interviews asked for the respondents to describe American neoconservatism directly. This question did not follow a foreign policy feature, but rather aimed directly at constructions of neoconservatism: its views and its influence. As an open-ended question, it left a lot of room for respondents to take any stance or framework for their descriptions. In the writings of prominent neoconservatives, there has been a contention that neoconservatism does not, in fact, represent a coherent body of thought nor group of individuals (Kristol 2003, Brooks 2004). Neoconservative writers themselves have trouble characterising neoconservatism; many decry the label altogether. In fact, the most concise depictions of neoconservatism often come from its harshest critics (Lind 2004, Zakaria 2004). I do not expect a discourse supportive of neoconservatism to adhere to a very simplistic characterisation. Instead one would expect such a discourse to present neoconservatism’s complexities alongside its strengths. Upon analysis, the interview

responses seem constructed to reinforce this disputed belief that there is a coherent and consistent body of neoconservative thought.

One of the key concepts in respondents' descriptions of neoconservatism is "idealism": neoconservatism is identified as idealist. In the discourse of international relations, "idealism" is often presented in opposition to realism. In the early 20th century, idealism encompassed the active pursuit of ideals such as civilisation, democracy and peace, challenging the traditional realist pursuit of economic power, military power, political power and strictly defined national interests. Traditional liberalism in American foreign policy represents this idealism, with a focus on negotiation, diplomacy and soft power. Contrary to liberalism, neoconservatism acknowledges possibilities for the use of force in its pursuit of goals like democracy, free trade and peaceful relations. This is what is referred to in neoconservative writings as "hard Wilsonian" policy. Neoconservatism is thus somewhat paradoxical in its combination of idealist goals with realist means. In the discourse of the Czech elites neoconservatism is depicted as opposing traditional realism and embracing an idealist view, and as a paradoxical mix of contrasting objects.

Derrida has noted that when binary opposites occur in discourse, they are almost always presented within a paradigm of power relations (Derrida 1981). This can be seen in the discourse of the US realist camp, which portrays neoconservative idealism as naive and uninformed (Prestowitz 2003). Yet the sense in which respondents used "idealism" to describe neoconservatism probably does not refer to the realist/idealist IR theory paradigm. Rather, the context is probably a more everyday one, which views "realistic" practical solutions as superior to unrealistic "idealistic" solutions, which can be naive, utopian, and unachievable. Furthermore, the language context also has bearing on the meaning of idealism. Although in English the word "idealism" has a more positively charged etymology, based in something higher – the "ideal" rather than in the ordinary "real" – the same is not necessarily true of Czech. Although the interviews were in English, it is highly likely that the linguistic context in which they are situated is Czech. In the Czech context, that which is "realistic" or practical is more reliable, and thus more desirable, than something ideal or utopian. So applying the notion of binary opposites, it can be said that idealism is the inferior of the two.

Expanding on the negative idealism that characterises neoconservatism, respondents often represented it as something of a mix of otherwise incongruous objects. For example, one respondent described neoconservatism as a mix of "neoliberal economic measures and (...) religious (...) input", while another characterised it as a "strange" combination of "antiestablishment thinking and conservative thinking", or as "trying to bring ideology into conservatism" (according to this respondent, conservatism is ideology-free). Neoconservatism thus reconciles measures or modes of thought often categorised as opposites. It also reveals a sense of confusion among the respondents as to what neoconservatism actually means and what its consequences for America and the world could be.

Those who ventured into longer descriptions of neoconservatism inevitably brought out the history of leftism and anti-Sovietism. In explaining the neoconservative turn from leftism, the most important reason offered (and for

some the only) was the disagreement with the policy of *détente*. This anti-Soviet tendency, from the perspective of dissidents of the former communist block, forms an important basis for the support, explicit or implicit, of the neoconservative position today. The experience of the dissident community under a restrictive communist regime gives these individuals empathy for dissidents under oppressive or non-democratic regimes. Furthermore, those who voiced support for the anti-Soviet policies of the neoconservative bloc most often expressed support for the current administration's policies towards other regimes (North Korea and Iran were most frequently mentioned).

The construction of neoconservatism as both idealist and hard-line in its confrontation with the Soviet Union forms a coherent picture of neoconservative foreign policy that matches the concept of hard Wilsonianism. While idealist in the sense of its belief in democracy and active global intervention, neoconservative policy is not limited to soft measures, but is willing to use hard (military) means against regimes not sharing its ideals.

Despite some convergence on the concept of idealism, and a few other scattered commonalities in responses, it is difficult to characterise the responses to direct questions about American neoconservatism as a coherent discourse. Many of the respondents were fairly knowledgeable about the origins and postulates of neoconservative thought, but understanding does not necessarily signify sympathy with the ideas. Although all respondents identified at least one of the concepts mentioned above, and several patterns can be established, the data set of texts is not comprehensive enough to comprise a coherent discourse.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study explored Czech elite constructions of American foreign policy and neoconservatism with hopes of identifying a discourse supporting neoconservatism among these former dissidents. After analysing the transcriptions of eight interviews with current members of the former dissident elites, a coherent and consistent discourse cannot be said to exist. The interview questions were scheduled around a set of neoconservative foreign policy features: American hegemony, democracy export and visions of evil. Among the respondents the most consistent discursive features included: the US's position as the dominant global power as a "reality", the US as a positive influence on the world, democracy-building as a "long process" requiring "the right local conditions", and American neoconservatism as "idealism". These discursive features, although occurring in the texts of several respondents, cannot be taken to form a consistent discourse because of the disparate nature of their occurrence and the relatively small size of the set of texts analysed.

Moreover, the constructions of American foreign policy and neoconservatism do not represent a wholly supportive view of neoconservatism for several reasons. First, there is a fair amount of disagreement on the feasibility of democracy export, especially to non-Western states, the belief in which is central to neoconservative foreign policy. Second, although many respondents expressed support for the use of "evil" in rhetoric, those who affirmed that evil is existent and recognisable in the world were few (only three). Finally, the construction of neoconservatism as "idealist", in the Czech context,

indicates a negative (although perhaps only slightly) perception of neoconservatism.

The objectives of this research were on two levels: first to establish whether a discourse exists and second to determine using that discourse the level of support for or acceptance of neoconservative political thought among the former dissidents of the Czech elite. From the data, it is not possible to state that a coherent discourse exists, despite a moderate level of similar discursive features found in the discussion of American foreign policy. This conclusion stands only for the data analysed, and a broader study of the Czech elite might provide more conclusive evidence of a discourse. Further research into the discourse of the Czech elite and former dissidents could provide more substantial evidence of a small body of support for neoconservatism in the Czech Republic. In addition, more in-depth research into the discourse of former dissidents, of which a fair amount has been written, could provide more similarities between neoconservative and dissident discourses in the Czech Republic and other former or current totalitarian societies. More systematic research into the topic on these three levels is needed for a more concrete conclusion on whether neoconservative foreign policy has found a haven in Central Europe. As such, this study can serve only as an introduction to the area, hoping to provoke discussion and further research.

#### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Due to the limited data set and scope of the project at hand, this paper aims to introduce an area in which further research is needed before concrete conclusions can be made.
- <sup>2</sup> “[D]iscourses operate as background capacities for persons to differentiate and identify things, giving them taken-for-granted qualities and attributes, and relating them to other objects” (Milliken, 1999, p. 231).
- <sup>3</sup> I acknowledge that the origins of the pro-democracy and anti-totalitarian stances of the US neoconservative community and the Czech dissident community stem from very different experiences of the Cold War. However, the formation of these ideas is not the focus, but rather their symbolic presence within the Czech discourse.
- <sup>4</sup> However, as Falk argues, these early pro-Communist intellectuals may have actually shifted *further left* rather than to the right, in the face of a dysfunctional Communist regime: “throughout the region much of the opposition to authoritarian communism grew from and remained committed to the Left” (Falk 2003: 61).
- <sup>5</sup> Perhaps because the neoconservative community is seen as naïve or even hostile by more leftist academia, or perhaps for other reasons, there seems to be a lack of literature taking neoconservatism as a serious strand of thought. Even among neoconservatives there is often some disagreement over the pillars of policy. Furthermore, the term “neoconservative” itself acquired a negative connotation and was perhaps misused in the wake of the US military action against Iraq in 2003.
- <sup>6</sup> The *Weekly Standard* is one of the leading neoconservative publications. For a more complete discussion of neoconservative thinkers, periodicals, documents and think tanks see “Empire Builders” at *The Christian Science Monitor Online*, [www.christiansciencemonitor.org/specials/neocon/index/html](http://www.christiansciencemonitor.org/specials/neocon/index/html).
- <sup>7</sup> Research scholars at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) are among the most prominent neoconservative theorists and the AEI is widely considered a “neoconservative” think-tank that pushes for policies in line with these beliefs.
- <sup>8</sup> Stelzer (2004), p. 11.
- <sup>9</sup> See Kristol and Kagan (2000), and Boot (2004), for dissenting opinions on unilateralism.
- <sup>10</sup> The authenticity of the neoconservative commitment to idealist goals has been called into question. In an analysis of post-Cold War US foreign policy, Mohamed Ben Jelloun takes a postmodern understanding of the policy, characterising neoconservatives as Straussian “gentleman” or Niet-



zschean “liberal impostors” who take on “an outward (exoteric) idealism and a basically subterranean (esoteric) realism” (Ben Jelloun, 2004, p. 5). American and European leftists emphasise the importance of corporate ties for many within the current administration and tend to view active policies proposed by the neoconservatives as fronts for maintaining favourable conditions for these corporations at the expense of the rest of the world.

- <sup>11</sup> Some of the names associated with the first generation include: Irving Kristol, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Daniel Bell, Nathan Glazer, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Michael Novak and Robert Nisbet.
- <sup>12</sup> The fact that evil is ever-present and yet good constantly gains ground on it is a central contradiction of neoconservatism, but perhaps functions as an important rhetorical tool. See Rhodes (2004) for an interesting discussion of the use of “evil” as a rhetorical tool in the discussion of NATO expansion.
- <sup>13</sup> Illustrating this, one respondent even asked to clarify if I was “talking about the actual situation, reality,” and proceeded to present American dominance as the reality of the international system.
- <sup>14</sup> Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění (CVVM), 24 March 2005.
- <sup>15</sup> These references were not limited to just this question, but were omnipresent in the interviews. They may also serve as a tool for explaining the situation to a researcher such as myself, as an American, who is perceived as not having had experience with non-democratic regimes or the “harsh realities” they can pose.

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# The Polish-Czechoslovak Conflict over Teschen Silesia (1918–1920): a case study

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**Abstract:** After describing how Czechoslovakia and Poland took up arms over their shared border, several conceptual tools are applied to this conflict. This article goes beyond pure historiography to reach a theoretical interpretation of the crisis. The analysis focuses by turns on ideological, economic and geopolitical arguments, as well as on the political framework which led to the conflict's resolution. Finally, the research indicates how the Teschen issue escaped a fair bilateral agreement. It also shows how it embedded a secular distrust and distancing between the Czechs and the Poles, which may have played a crucial role on the eve of the Second World War.

**Key words:** Teschen, Cieszyn, Silesia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, World War I resolution, Entente, levels of analysis, border conflict

## INTRODUCTION

Sometimes called a “(nearly) forgotten conflict”, the fight between Czechoslovakia and Poland for control of Teschen Silesia between November 1918 and July 1920 may seem to be a footnote of European history. More than 80 years after the events, nearly nobody but the Czechs and Poles remember the crisis. A few historical handbooks cite its resolution, mistakenly, as one of the few successes of the League of Nations in the 1920s. Today, the work between the Czechs and Poles within the Visegrad group (with Hungary and Slovakia) or within the European Union, shows a real partnership. Few remember that the two countries were in utter opposition for two decades due to a 2,000 km<sup>2</sup> province, far from both Prague and Warsaw.

Central and Eastern Europe knew many border conflicts of this kind, especially during the intense period of transformation following World War I. The empires which had governed the region for decades, if not centuries, disappeared. The Habsburg monarchy which had reigned over Bohemia crown for 400 years ceased to rule, creating a political vacuum in the heart of Europe. On the former territory of Austria-Hungary, in the very city where Austro-Hungarian headquarters were located,<sup>1</sup> the Poles and the Czechs fought to delimit their influences and sovereignties.

The former duchy of Teschen (*Cieszyn* in Polish, *Těšín* in Czech<sup>2</sup>), historically belonging to the Czech lands, was mostly inhabited by Poles, and was therefore claimed by both nations. The region possessed major strategic assets including rich coal-mines and the railway linking Oderberg (now Bohumín) with Poland (Cracow) and Slovakia (Košice).

## THE POLISH-CZECHOSLOVAK CONFLICT OVER TESCHEN SILESIA

In this article, we apply conceptual tools developed since the 1920s to analyze this particular crisis. Theories outlined by Carr, Morgenthau, Waltz, Campbell and Wendt in the 20th century provide the keys to further comprehend events in international relations. Applying such theories to this very crisis may allow a new approach, and might offer some clues in understanding this conflict.

After describing the facts of the crisis itself, we analyze it using by turns traditional (idealist, realist) and modern (levels of analysis, text analyses) methods.

### **DISPUTE, WAR AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION OVER TESCHEN SILESIA**

Immediately after World War I, new states, like Czechoslovakia and Poland, had to define boundaries that had not existed for decades, if not centuries. Teschen, a former duchy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was particularly at stake. Inhabited by some Poles, Czechs and Germans (also including Jewish and Silesian minorities), Teschen Silesia was rich in coal mines, an industrial centre for metallurgy and textiles, and a railway crucial junction. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the region became a source of contention. Poles and Czechs, undergoing their respective nation-building and industrialization processes, both claimed Teschen Silesia. Because of this opposition, they ended their previous co-operation and joint defence against the Germans.

During World War I, Teschen was thus discussed many times by Polish and Czech representatives, either in Prague, Kiev, or the United States. Yet those leaders did not rule their respective countries at the time, and any decision taken was more goodwill than binding agreement. For example, the resolution concluded in Prague in May 1918 dividing Teschen Silesia peacefully was never enforced.

Claimed by both countries for different historical, ethnic and economic reasons, the contested area was temporarily divided into two parts according to an agreement signed on 5 November 1918, as the war ended. This agreement, between the local Czech and Polish authorities (respectively the *Zemský národní výbor* and the *Rada Narodowa*), occurred a few days after the Czechoslovak Republic was proclaimed (28 October 1918), and two days before Polish independence was declared (7 November 1918). This agreement, concluded without the central governments' consent, shared Teschen Silesia in the expectation of a definitive treaty. The 5 November agreement basically followed an ethnic delimitation by putting the districts of Teschen, Bielitz (Bielsko) and Freistadt (Fryštát) under Polish control, and Frýdek under the Czechoslovaks. This agreement thus gave the majority of population to Poland but gave an economic advantage to Czechoslovakia (which gained 26 active coal mines out of 36). Relatively imprecise on the status of general infrastructure (the railway was to be jointly administrated), the accord clearly stated its temporary character, anticipating an agreement by the two governments.

Troops of each country occupied their respective controlled areas, whilst bilateral negotiations progressed less successfully than ever. The Polish government announced on 10 December that it would hold parliamentary elections in the parts of the Teschen Silesia under its control. This decision

was strongly criticized by the Czechs, who disagreed with this “appropriation” of Teschen Silesia, and hoped for a more favourable redefinition of the borders. Prague considered the regional elections to the *Sejm* a deliberate breach of the preliminary agreement and as a deliberate attempt to create a *fait accompli*.

Polish troops mobilized along the frontier on 17 December, Czech troops on 19 December. Three days before the elections to the *Sejm*, on 23 January 1919, when the Polish troops had withdrawn from the area, Czechoslovak troops invaded Polish-controlled Teschen Silesia. The so-called “Seven-Days-War” occurred on the Western side of the Olsa River, mainly in Freistadt and Teschen. Two-hundred soldiers and civilians died, and approximately a thousand were injured. More than 80% of the wounded were Polish (Kubík, 2001: 57). The Czechoslovak troops successfully seized the district of Freistadt and the city of Teschen, even facing an unexpected Polish popular resistance. Under pressure from the war-winning powers (the Entente), Beneš finally concluded an agreement on 3 February, known as the Paris Protocol. This was signed by the leaders of the Entente (Wilson, Lloyd George, Orlando, Clemenceau), as well as Dmowski on the Polish side and Beneš on the Czechoslovak side.<sup>3</sup> The agreement created a control commission,<sup>4</sup> which was sent two weeks later to Prague and Teschen. The commission’s members met leaders from both sides, as well as representatives of each ethnic group (Germans, Jews and Silesians). The commission informed the Entente powers of the situation, leading to the withdrawal of the Czechoslovak troops.

Czechoslovak President Masaryk and Polish Prime Minister Paderewski met in Prague on 25 May and began talks on the Teschen affair. While the leaders discussed the issue, political, economic and cultural agitation worsened the situation. Czechoslovakia demanded considerable changes to the solution laid out in the November agreement. Yet Poland rejected any agreement that would ratify or legalize the Czechoslovak invasion, and appealed to the Entente powers to arrange a plebiscite. Such votes had been used in other contested territories (Saarland, Schleswig, and Upper Silesia), and the Poles used these precedents as they would have gained the most from such a vote.

After some unsuccessful negotiations in Cracow (21–27 July 1919) and the constant rejection of a plebiscite by the Czechoslovaks, the situation remained unresolved. The solution backed by all countries except Czechoslovakia and France was a step-by-step plan towards a plebiscite. On 10 September 1919, at the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference, the United States, the United Kingdom and Italy supported an arbitrary division of the area until a plebiscite took place. Terrorist acts and political agitation (led for instance by the *Polska Organizacja Wojskowa*) continuously destabilized the region. Similar events also occurred in the disputed territories of Spiš (Spisz) and Orava (Orawa), occupied by Czechoslovakia. Yet the Czechoslovak authorities constantly delayed the popular vote and waited for change in the political situation. Negotiations did not recommence until late June 1920, at the Paris Peace Conference and later at the Spa conference.<sup>5</sup> The Poles were looking for a quick resolution of the Teschen problem to free their hands for their war against Bolshevik Russia.

The Spa joint declaration stated the acceptance of an arbitrage decided by the Entente powers. The Conference of Ambassadors in Paris proposed a final agreement, issued 28 July 1920, planning a division of the region and actually confirming the Czechoslovak military occupation. While the historical city of Teschen would become Polish (except the western part and the railway station), the Freistadt district and coal-mines would remain Czechoslovak. In the conflict, Poland obtained a 1000 km<sup>2</sup> area inhabited by 143,000 people, and Czechoslovakia a territory of 1,300 km<sup>2</sup> inhabited by 284,000 people including 120,000 Poles (Łossowski, 1995). In compensation, Czechoslovak delegates to the Conference assented to the districts of Spisz and Orawa in Slovakia becoming Polish. That arbitrage, accepted the day it was issued by Czechoslovakia, was signed by Ignacy Paderewski on 31 July 1920 after much hesitation. Thus the Teschen crisis temporarily ended.

***Looking for Legitimacy:***

***Polish and "Czecho-Slovak" Arguments***

The struggle between the Czechs and Poles for control of Teschen was largely shaped by arguments justifying the legitimacy of each country to rule this area.

The new order being set after World War I was, for the first time in history, particularly interested in peoples' self-determination. In a speech given on 8 January 1918, US-President Woodrow Wilson gave the impetus to the building of a new system in international relations, acknowledging democracy, law and open diplomacy. He emphasized the notion a nation's *right* to be self-governed. Wilson expressed his will to see an independent Polish state, and he wished the nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to accede to an autonomous development. The inter-war "idealism", which aimed at peaceful resolutions of conflicts by "outlawing war" and using international institutions, shaped the Czechoslovak and Polish arguments and attitudes. Both stressed first the aspects of legitimacy: either ethnic or historical.

Polish officials argued almost completely according to demographics, highlighting the statistical importance of the Poles. According to the 1910 statistics, the Poles actually represented 54.85% of the Teschen population (233,850 Poles) i.e. more than twice the proportion of "Czecho-Slovaks" (27.11%).<sup>6</sup> The Poles dominated the whole region except for the Frýdek district (almost entirely Czech), and therefore claimed the right to Teschen Silesia as part of the Polish State. The elections to the *Sejm* in the Polish-controlled areas of Teschen Silesia at the end of 1918 were the logical consequence of that argument. The emphasis put on the legitimacy of the Polish claim was doubled by Piłsudski's doctrine stating that all Poles had to live in Poland.

On the other side, the Czechs justified their right to Teschen Silesia mainly by historical and ethnic arguments. Teschen Silesia had actually belonged to the Crown of Bohemia since the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Austrian Empress Maria-Theresa lost the major part of Silesia through the Peace of Hebertsburg (1763), except for the Troppau (now Opava) and Teschen regions. During the Paris Conference, Czechoslovak officials emphasized this historical argument. The will to make the Czechoslovak state fit the historical borders of Bohemia's crown lands when they would be occupied by non-



-Czech people was the basis of all Czech claims over Germany and Austria in contested areas (for example the Sudetenland, Iglau-Jihlava, etc.).

The Czechs also rejected the Poles' ethnic argument, denying the validity of the 1910 Austrian census. The Czechs based this argument on some irregularities in the 1910 census, which was counted according to spoken language (*Umgangssprache*), and not mother tongue. The Czechs argued that important parts of the population were registered against their will as Polish or German instead of Czech. They also denounced the "forced Polonisation" of the area during the preceding decades. Teschen Silesia actually knew many waves of Polish immigration, mainly from Galicia, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to the Czechoslovak memorandum of 1919, which now seems quite dubious, "this majority of theirs [the Poles] is artificial and in reality does not exist."

These ethnic and historical arguments mainly emphasize each state's quest for legitimacy. As far as the Paris Council of Ambassadors took account of these requests, Czechoslovak historians traditionally defined the final decision on Teschen as fair and equitable, reflecting the result of an international process.

#### ***A Struggle Outside the Boundaries of International Law***

A more realistic approach to the crisis than that developed by E. H. Carr in the 1930s, would focus more on the actual capabilities of each country, particularly in the military sphere.

During the Czechoslovak occupation, Polish troops were almost all deployed elsewhere to defend Polish interests, for instance along the German frontier (particularly near Gdańsk-Danzig) or along the Eastern border. In January 1919, a few days before the Czechoslovak intervention, Polish troops withdrew from the Teschen Silesia to relieve Lvov. So from December 1918, Czechoslovakia had a military superiority in the region. Czechoslovak troops staying in France after their journey through Siberia returned home on 19 December allowing for the first time the Czech leaders to contemplate the possible non-peaceful seizure of Teschen Silesia. The concentration of Czech troops along the demarcation line frightened the new Polish Foreign Minister, prompting him to send representatives to Prague for negotiations. The Czechoslovak authorities ignored the Polish committee, and waited three weeks, in vain, for French approval of their intervention (Wandycz, 1962: 82). Facing the ambiguity of the French officials, the Czechs finally decided to act, violating the international consensus for peaceful means. They were particularly confident of victory both militarily and before the Paris Peace Conference.

Czechoslovakia's recourse to arms is typical of the unilateral approach of power. The state behaved as if outside the international consensus and legality embodied by the Entente. Yet the method of the intervention is symptomatic of the Czechoslovak will to intervene and to maintain a semblance of this legitimacy. While occupying the Polish part of Teschen Silesia, Czechoslovak troops wore the uniforms of Allied troops to trick the Poles and make them believe they acted with the Entente's legality. The Czechoslovak government also recruited many Czech or foreign officers who had served in the French, American or Italian armies. Yet it did not serve its purpose at all, and was denounced by the Poles as a masquerade.

Governments of both sides endeavoured to gain the support of the region's inhabitants. During World War I, propaganda was already being used to win public opinion, and again during the Teschen crisis propaganda played a leading role. Posters or flyers were distributed to sway undecided inhabitants with respect to an eventual plebiscite. The undecided Silesian minority (the so-called *Šlonzáci*), neither Polish nor Czech, was particularly targeted by this propaganda.<sup>7</sup>

Realist thinkers adjust their analyses towards power, and see the struggle for it as the first determinant in international politics. In the Teschen affair, Poland and Czechoslovakia tried to maximise their gains, in accordance with the newly established international order decided in Versailles. Czechoslovakia succeeded in maintaining the *status quo* until the Summer of 1920, when Poland faced the worst. The determination of Poland's Eastern borders and the non-recognition of the Curzon line actually led to the Polish-Soviet war in April 1920. After the capture of Kiev, Polish troops were driven back to Warsaw and dangerously threatened by Tukhachevski's armies. The Council of Ambassadors signed an agreement on 30 July 1919, on the eve of a crucial battle, when Poland needed international support. Actually, on 16 August the so-called "Vistula miracle" occurred with the successful Allied counteroffensive led by Maxime Weygand, supporting Marshal Piłsudski.

However, at the time of the final agreement on Teschen Silesia the situation was anything but favourable for the Poles.

#### ***The Predominance of the Entente Powers and the Versailles International System***

The Polish government accepted the agreement prepared by the Council of Ambassadors because it had no alternative. Poland had to follow the recommendations of the international authority ruling over the newly established European order.

Actually, the first level emphasized by Kenneth Waltz in the comprehension of any international event (crisis, war or conference) is the structure of the international system, which systematically shapes the way conflicts are resolved. First of all, we have to stress how unfinished the new international order was. At this key moment between the international order derived from the Vienna Congress and an utterly new deal in international politics, the whole diplomatic game was dominated by the Entente winners. The League of Nations was not yet founded (that happened in 1920), and what would become the Versailles system was still immature and incomplete. The destinies of Poland and Czechoslovakia – two newly-founded "little" states – were both in the hands of the major winners of World War I.

The extreme instability Europe's borders and regimes is fundamental to an understanding of the Entente's reactions. The fear of revolutionary Russia was a central issue immediately after the war. The rise of a new power in the East, utterly different in its very nature to the foregoing regimes, and trying to expand in Central Europe, was extremely preoccupying. The Entente countries therefore wanted to counterbalance Bolshevik Russia, or, at least, to isolate it. The building of a *cordon sanitaire* (sanitary cordon) or a *glacis protecteur* (slope of protection) became a priority.

Not having been defeated (unlike Austria or Hungary), Poland and Czechoslovakia were natural pivots and allies of the Entente powers in the region, while directly in contact with potentially dangerous Russia and Germany. The fear of communist-styled revolutions was however not focused solely on Bolshevik Russia, but also, in 1919, on the Spartakist insurrection in Berlin (January) and on the short-lived Republic of Councils in Bavaria (April-May), in Hungary (March-August) and even in Slovakia (June-July). The constitution of two non-communist (if not anti-communist) states in Central Europe was decisive. The Entente was therefore quite reluctant to judge a crisis between its two allies. Even the Czechoslovak government invoked the Bolshevich danger, allegedly in the very district of the Teschen coal mines (Wandycz, 1962: 80), to urge French Foreign Minister Pichon to support a Czechoslovak invasion in January 1919.

In this specific area, Czechoslovakia's government had a trump card over the Polish government. Actually, the Czechoslovak legions that fought in Russia against the Bolsheviks until the end of 1918 provided the Czechoslovaks a real advantage. The military successes achieved in Siberia gave Czechoslovakia the credit it lacked before. For instance, French Marshal Ferdinand Foch, supreme commandant of Allied forces during World War I, presented the Czechoslovak republic as a "dyke against anarchy and bolshevism" (Harušiak, 2002: 15).

As mentioned before, the Teschen crisis was a consequent source of hardships for the Allies as they wanted to ensure future Polish-Czechoslovak friendship and loyalty. Thus the international commission applying the Paris Protocol, (later Entente) decision was composed of winners' representatives (from France, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom), and of Czechoslovak and Polish representatives.<sup>8</sup> Without entering into too much detail, the goals of each great power were different, if not contradictory. The extreme French commitment towards Czechoslovakia was partly compensated by the relatively moderate positions of the British and Italians. Even if the Wilsonian conception of international relations prohibited secret diplomacy, attempts by the different sides to ensure their positions in the region were decisive.

The US foreign policy led by Woodrow Wilson was often referred to as idealist, or even utopian. The US President wanted actually to shape a new international order to guarantee a fair and long-lasting peace. His speech before Congress on 8 January 1918 developed Fourteen Points on how the future of international politics should look. Wilson's personal position was more favourable for the Poles than the Czechs. On the other side of the Atlantic, the British Foreign Office was mainly concerned about Poland's Eastern and Western borders and sought to stabilize the situation and maintain the UK's privileged position on the continent. Quite in a different way, Italy supported Poland mostly to counterbalance Czechoslovakia, ally of adversary Yugoslavia. The Italian authorities also hoped to gather all Catholic powers around its policy, including Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland (Kubík, 2001: 82). Under its leadership, it would have maintained a "Catholic pact" in Central Europe.

If the American, British or Italian behaviour towards Czechoslovakia and Poland are not underestimated here, France's role looks unparalleled. The

tremendous French involvement in the Teschen crisis and France's commitment to Czechoslovakia really weighted the situation in Prague's favour.

Clemenceau's diplomacy was at first willing to weaken Germany and Austria. Systematically, Clemenceau adopted the most severe attitude towards Germany and Austria and was among the hardliners of the Entente leaders. The French fear of Germany was omnipresent, partly due to France's own border problem in Alsace-Lorraine. A generation of Frenchmen grew up with aversion to and hopes of revenge against Germany. Even if, at least at the beginning of the war, Clemenceau was not the most decided opponent of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, he made Richelieu's doctrine ("*abaisser la Maison d'Autriche*") his own and supported the fragmentation of Austria. As a counterweight to the German and Austrian presence in Central Europe, he supported the concept of a Czech, and later Czechoslovak, state. However, the French policy in Central Europe was not purely rational, but rather guided by a particular representation of reality. On 28 September 1918, a month before the Czechoslovak declaration of independence, an agreement signed by Beneš and Foreign Minister Pichon recognized "Czecho-Slovakia" as an allied Nation and the National Council as an acting government. According to the agreement, France supported "an independent Czechoslovak state within the borders of its historic provinces." France therefore recognized Czech rights on every land of Bohemia's crown, including implicitly the whole of the Teschen Duchy.

During the 2-year crisis, the Czechoslovak policy was shaped by the will of its Western ally. From the beginning, the Czechs hoped they would be backed by France. In Paris they tried to gain, without real success, the support of Marshal Philippe Foch, chief-commander of the Entente forces. Before the New Year, the Czechs asked France about the opportunity for an intervention in Teschen. The French authorities stayed silent until 18 January 1919, when they proposed a French seizure of the area. Nevertheless, the French implicitly consented to a Czechoslovak attack while it seemed imminent. As the attack began, Clément-Simon, Quai d'Orsay's representative in Czechoslovakia, was out of Prague for a few days. We can only wonder whether this was on purpose, to let Czechoslovakia intervene without obliging France to officially condemn the attack on its other ally.

In the following months, France proved its position as the best (and sometimes only) ally of Czechoslovakia among the influential powers, and backed Prague's officials whenever necessary.

### ***In the Beginning: the Nation-State Building Process***

At a deeper level of analysis, we can closely analyse the situation of each protagonist state.

More than any other previous war, the first world war showed the antagonism between nations. Encouraged during the conflict, the nations' exasperation was at first a tool for the great powers to destabilize their adversaries. While the Central Powers supported Irish and Baltic nations in the fights against the rule of the United Kingdom and Russia respectively, the Entente strongly backed Slavic nations against their "oppressors". They supported the Serbs and Croats, as well as the Czechs, Slovaks and Poles in their claims for

self-determination and therefore supported the emergence of antagonists wills. Later, they recognized the right for each nation to own its state, and acknowledged the existence of those states even later, only in January 1919.

In his neo-realist synthesis, Kenneth Waltz considers the internal order of each state central. Waltz stresses the real tension from the interaction between nation and state. As we have said, the Teschen conflict must be analyzed within the wider perspective of the complete change on the European map after World War I. In many ways, the Paris Peace Conference destroyed an order established more than a century before in Vienna. The national claims which contributed to the collapse of Austria-Hungary implied the creation of two new states based on national roots: Poland and Czechoslovakia. The re-creation of Poland within its 18<sup>th</sup> century borders was the declared aim of many nationalists, including Piłsudski in particular. The creation of a totally new state gathering the Czech and Slovak nations was also the initial goal of politicians such as Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, Edvard Beneš and Milan Štefánik. Nonetheless, Czechoslovak officials also presented their country as a multi-national country, accepting and protecting its minorities such as Germans, Jews, Hungarians and Poles.

The creation of the two states was not yet complete when the Teschen crisis occurred. The local agreement of 5 November 1918 was signed five days after the Czechoslovak declaration of independence and two days before the Polish one. At this time, the two head of states, Masaryk and Piłsudski were not fully appointed in their functions and, tellingly, not physically in the capitals of their countries. During the crisis, and particularly at its beginning, the states were at a crucial point in their building process. In a letter to Beneš on 5 January 1919, Masaryk wrote that “the Poles do not have as yet a state” (Wandycz, 1962: 80), therefore putting the emphasis on the very difficulty of the Polish state’s establishment.

Czechoslovakia was particularly touched by the Teschen crisis as it touched upon elements crucial for its very existence. Czechoslovakia was not really able to agree with the Polish move to create borders according to ethnographic criteria, since such acceptance would have allowed the use of similar arguments by the more numerous minorities of Czechoslovakia, including the three million Germans that Austria or Germany claimed as theirs.

Teschen Silesia was also vital for the newly-born state due to the railroad linking Odeberg-Bohumín to Košice in Slovakia, described as “the only spot where a way exists leading over the mountains [the Beskydes] and giving means of access to the Slovaks”. In fact, Slovakia was not well integrated within the Czechoslovak territory, and Prague needed a railroad to strengthen the ties between the different regions. Besides, the Polish government partly supported Slovak agitators for autonomy to weaken Czechoslovakia’s unity. Monsignor Hlinka blamed the Prague government for the Teschen crisis and thereafter obtained, unofficially, a Polish passport (Wandycz, 1962: 102).

Poland, on the other hand, was also confronted with a problem dealing of its identity as a Nation-State in the crisis. If Czechoslovakia’s representatives liked to define their country as peaceful, being naturally a “small power” taking care of its minorities, the Poles emphasized Poland’s natural historical and political role as a leading state in Eastern Europe. The evocation of



Poland's glorious past before it was dismembered endorsed Piłsudski's severe policy towards Lithuania, the Soviet Union and Germany. Piłsudski wanted all Poles to be integrated within the territory of the new State.

***Economic and Ethnic Interests***

Going deeper in the analysis, the study of sub-state actors concentrates on the interests of social and ethnic groups, as well as economic ones.

Ethnically, the situation in Teschen was not evident, with a mix of up to five minorities, more or less separate and having diverging interests and behaviours. Besides the Poles and Czechs, whose political attitudes were directly understandable, the Germans, Jews and Silesians followed their own interests.

Actually, the German and German-Jewish communities sided for Czechoslovakia, as more favourable for their businesses. Being a part of Czechoslovakia would favour their relations with the former Austrian-Hungarian Empire, bringing them closer to Vienna than Warsaw. Furthermore, the dubious position of many Polish leaders concerning the Jews, and Piłsudski's ambitions convinced them to side with Czechoslovakia (Michel, 1991: 213).

Particularly influential industrials, such as Guttman, Rothschild and Sonnenschein, committed themselves to Czechoslovakia as being more stable than Poland (Kubík, 2001: 30). Larisch, a German industrialist of Jewish origin, met the inter-allied commission led by Grénard on 21 February 1919 (Kubík, 2001: 59), and supported the union with Czechoslovakia on economic grounds, above any patriotic or nationalistic considerations. At the least, he preferred that Teschen Silesia become an economically independent area administered by both countries, rather than it be integrated into Poland.

The industrial interests were also linked with French investments in the region. The Schneider-Creuzot metallurgy company owned 60% of the Bergund Hüttenengesellschaft company, located in Moravská Ostrava and Třinec, between 1919 and 1920, when the crisis was yet unresolved.

Finally, the Silesian minority was used as a tool in the conflict. Counted almost entirely as "Polish" in the 1910 census, Silesians were the privileged target of propaganda from both sides but mostly preferred to become part of Czechoslovakia.

***Characters of the Drama Backstage***

The fourth level of analysis emphasized by Kenneth Waltz concentrates on individuals. In this conflict, at a first glance, the heads of states seem to provide the most contrasted view. On one side we have Józef Klemens Piłsudski, a rebel still glorified by Polish national historiography but often referred to as a nationalist emblematic of the interwar authoritarianism. On the other side, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk was a democratic emblem of Czechoslovakia,<sup>9</sup> former professor and eminent thinker trying to serve his nation, although Franco-Hungarian historian François Fejtö depicted him as a "genius of propaganda" and conspirator, able to activate his networks to make his position succeed by any means (Fejtö, 1992: 350).

Beyond these clichés, it should be emphasized that the Teschen conflict notably escaped the two leaders. According to Coolidge, US representative to



the international special commission on Teschen, Masaryk “had been led rather than he had taken the lead himself” in the crisis. Piłsudski also was not the most involved leader. His interventions on Teschen were limited to writing a personal letter to Masaryk, and a statement before the *Sejm* on 23 January 1918, declaring that the armed intervention was an “indescribable treachery on the part of the Czechs” (Wandycz, 1962: 83).

The real protagonists in the resolution process were instead the influential diplomats in Paris. On the Czech side, Edvard Beneš proved his agility as foreign minister in comparison to his Premier Karel Kramář. Beneš, a realist politician devoted to his cause, succeeded in make his views dominate, helping Czechoslovakia benefit from his extensive networks. Beneš, who had obtained a doctor’s degree in France, was especially well known among scholars like Ernest Denis, journalists like André Tardieu and politicians, particularly the French minister of Foreign Affairs, Pichon. His secretary, Edward Taborsky defined him as “the great master of compromise” (Taborsky, 1958: 669–670). Actually, Beneš supported a moderate position, as he would do thereafter at the League of Nations.

Kramář’s intransigence towards Poland was quite the opposite of Beneš’s attitude, and probably helped the Teschen issue become a *casus belli*. Often defined as too nationalistic and close-minded, he claimed the whole of Teschen Silesia for Czechoslovakia on historical grounds (Kubík, 2001: 18). As a Russophile, he also denied Poland any rights over Bielorussia or Ukraine (Kubík, 2001: 23). Furthermore, Slovak Milan Štefánik also contributed to the cause in Paris by arranging a meeting between Masaryk and French Premier Briand in 1915. Masaryk was also well known among American officials since he had known US Secretary of State Lansing during his time in exile.

Poland’s representatives at the Paris Peace Conference were in less of a position to make their ideas prevail, while both of the highest representatives were differently appreciated. Ignacy Paderewski benefited greatly from large popular support, and his unique career span from artist to politician. Yet he suffered from a lack of experience in politics, in contrast with Roman Dmowski, who suffered the enmity of Britain’s David Lloyd George and Arthur Balfour for his anti-Jewish beliefs (Wandycz, 1962: 24). Finally, the diverging views of Dmowski and Piłsudski on the Polish territorial policy and policy vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia<sup>10</sup> also weakened Poland’s position with respect to the foreign powers.

So the excellent Czechoslovak networks probably had a decisive influence on the resolution of the conflict.

### GEOPOLITICAL AND DISCOURSE ANALYSES

After having analyzed the Teschen crisis at various gradually-deepening levels, we now focus on the geopolitical aspects of the situation. In *Peace and Wars among Nations*, French theorist Raymond Aron envisaged three dimensions of space, “considered by turns as *environment* (milieu), *theater* and *stake* of foreign policy” (Aron, 1984: 188). Actually, an area can be objectively defined by its concrete topography, population and resources. It may also be seen by foreign policy and diplomatic leaders as an abstract scene of in-

teractions on which actors and forces evolve. Finally, it can constitute a stake in international politics for different countries to appropriate it.

As we have said, the Teschen Silesia was a key-area. At the boundary between the Czech lands and Slovakia, close to the new German state, the coveted region encompassed both a strategic location and rich raw resources, particularly desired by the Czechs. The Teschen region was quickly seen in a geostrategic perspective, more important than just a duchy belonging historically to Bohemia's crown. Coal predominated as a strategic asset and strategic instrument in the whole diplomatic game of the post-war era.

If the Poland's strategic interests in Teschen were positively lower than Czechoslovakia's, Poland was, however, also dependent to some extent on the area. For example, the Czechoslovak aggression totally disorganized the whole country. Gasworks in Warsaw, Cracow and Lvov were stopped for two weeks, jeopardising the Polish economy at a crucial moment. Furthermore, it cut one of the few routes linking Poland to Western Europe. For a few days, Warsaw had to communicate with its delegates in the Paris Peace Conference via radio.

Czechoslovakia's claims on Teschen were also justified by the wider geostrategic context. Almost encircled by Germany and Austria (Wandycz, 1962: 89), and threatened by Hungary in the South, the Czechoslovak authorities sought a minimum amount of protection and resources guaranteed by the Entente. Czechoslovakia "should dispose of other forces in order not to succumb under the constant menace of its neighbours and acquire, in every respect, a tranquil development",<sup>11</sup> wrote delegates to the Paris Peace Conference.

However, both the Czechoslovak and Polish approaches were not only based on tangible elements, but also on imagined elements and historical representations. Poland praised its conception of a Nation-State within its borders of 1772. In the same way, maps representing the historical lands of Bohemia's crown including Teschen Silesia were published in Czechoslovakia and abroad (Kárník, 2000: 86). Yet those representations were not only historical, but also organic. Czechoslovakia was depicted as an organism which would die if amputated from one of its most important parts. In 1897, Friedrich Ratzel, a German natural scientist, developed his "organic theory", which contends that a state is like an organism that competes with others to thrive. In their speeches on the subject, Czechoslovak officials often used this metaphor, insisting more on their dependence on Teschen Silesia rather than on their historical claims. The Czechoslovak memorandum to the Paris Peace conference states abruptly in its very first sentence that "For the Poles the problem concerning the Silesia of Teschen is but of secondary importance while for the Czecho-Slovaks that problem presents itself as a *vital* question on the solution of which depends the very existence of the Czecho-Slovak Republic" (our emphasis).<sup>12</sup>

Czechoslovakia's officials, and foremost Premier Karel Kramář, mainly argued that their country, the most industrialized part of the former Empire, "could not exist without the large coal area which was within the disputed area" (Wandycz, 1962: 89). Edvard Beneš also tried to minimize the Polish claims on Teschen by declaring in Paris that "Poland without Karviná's mines [was] already the richest country of Europe concerning coal reserves" and

that Czechoslovakia needed this region more than Poland. Another fact minimising the sincerity of Czechoslovaks' historical arguments is given by the future Czechoslovak President. On 10 September 1918, as the First World War was not yet finished, Masaryk evoked, while talking with Polish leaders, the eventuality of exchanging the region of Teschen for the one of Racibor (Ratibor), also rich in coal-mines. Nevertheless, it seems that the growing influence of communists in Racibor's region led to the rejection of this initial project.

The fight for Teschen shaped minds in Poland and Czechoslovakia during these years, and so it also shaped the opinions and foreign policies of influential politicians. In these bilateral relations, we can apply deconstructivist theory by showing the existence of an inside/outside phenomenon, in accordance with David Campbell's thinking. According to Campbell, this phenomenon would explain a state's identity and its foreign policy. In the Teschen case, such an inside/outside distinction was especially encouraged by authorities. For instance, Czechoslovak defence minister Kľofáč encouraged anti-Polish beliefs.

A 1920 brochure on Teschen Silesia, written in French and edited in Prague, gives another good illustration of the Manichean inside/outside approach as defined by Campbell. In it, the Poles are systematically stigmatised by referring to them as "immigrants" or "foreigners". The brochure also states that Polish workers are "still at a very low degree of civilisation", lacking education, violent, etc. It also stipulates that

"Western workers [i.e. Czechs and Germans] tried to introduce civilisation among them. Nonetheless, Polish workers, due to their lack of instruction, are easily seduced by suggestions of demagogues" (Beaufort, 1920: 18).

By contrast, Czech workers are presented as "sincere", "obliging" and "hard-working" (Beaufort, 1920: 21–22). Facing the "forced Polonization", the original inhabitants of Teschen Silesia "felt themselves – rightly – oppressed by immigrated foreigners". The brochure also maintains that the Poles were working with the Austrians to weaken the Czech regional influence, and that "the Poles [in contrast with the Czechs] became enthusiastic supporters of the Entente in 1918".

More than a mere fight between two policies in the military and diplomatic spheres, the conflict over Teschen evokes a real battle of minds, symptomatic of the 20th century.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this particular conflict, Czechoslovakia's leaders succeeded more or less gaining dominance for their views, owing to the French quasi-unconditional support. The Poles' dangerous situation, facing the Red Army at the very moment of final decision on Teschen Silesia, forced them to accept a disadvantageous agreement. This agreement, though sanctioned by the Entente powers supposedly in accordance with democratic and idealist norms, was neither consensual nor compromise. In accordance with Alexander Wendt's three different states of anarchy – Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian, each corre-

sponding with a different stage in international politics (Wendt, 1999: 247) – the Teschen case exemplifies the Lockean state of anarchy: neither a war of all against all, nor the development of friendly harmony between countries. Furthermore, in the 1920s Czech-Polish relations fit the relevant characteristics of this distinction, such as inter-sovereign relations and rivalry. Poland and Czechoslovakia quickly recognised their mutual existence and admitted each other's sovereignty. Before World War I, Masaryk wrote "without a free Poland there will be no free Bohemia, and if Bohemia is not free, Poland cannot be free either" (Wandycz, 1962: 26). They actually tried, but failed, to use peaceful means in governing their relations.

During the interwar period, the Teschen Silesia remained at stake, at least in Czech-Polish relations. It nourished the Polish nationalist propaganda. Criticisms of Czechoslovakia focused on the treatment of the Polish minorities and on the constraining policies targeting them. In 1935, ten years after the friendship treaty between the two states, Teschen remained a problem in international politics and a possible powder keg for future conflict,<sup>13</sup> emphasising the massive resentment on the issue during the inter-war period. Teschen undoubtedly allowed the expression of national frustrations and nationalist hatred, as did bolshevism. Before the Warsaw *Sejm*, Józef Piłsudski mixed up the two threats in a severe speech towards Czechoslovakia, which he depicted as the "flying boat of bolshevism in Central Europe" (Kubík, 2001: 127). Piłsudski thus preferred to ally with Hitler's Germany or Horthy's Hungary instead of Czechoslovakia, then the only democracy in Central Europe.

On 2 October 1938, two days after the signing of the Munich agreement dismembering Czechoslovakia, Polish troops invaded Teschen Silesia with Hitler's consent. The cities of Bohumín, Karviná, Orlová, Třinec and Jablunkov were occupied, and Poland established a new border on the Ostravice River. The Poles finally avenged themselves and obtained the territory beyond the River Olsa. The area became fully Polish, all administrations were polonized, and nearly 30,000 the Czechs were expelled. That part of Teschen Silesia became part of Poland, and thereafter came under Poland's General Government, until 1945. During the war, Sikorski's and Beneš's London-based governments in exile failed to reach any agreement on the topic. After World War II, Stalin attributed the contested areas again to Czechoslovakia, in accordance with the 1920 treaty. He thus gave assurances to the third Czechoslovak republic, after having annexed sub-carpathian Ruthenia, part of the former Czechoslovakia to the USSR.<sup>14</sup>

E. H. Carr, often defined as the first realist thinker, noted in his most famous work *The Twenty Years' Crisis* that

"Naumann with his Mittel-Europa proved a surer prophet than Woodrow Wilson with his principles of self-determination. The victors of 1918 'lost the peace' in Central Europe because they continue to pursue a principle of political and economic disintegration in an age which called for larger and larger units" (Carr, 1991: 230).

Geographically restricted, and apparently short-lived, the issue of Teschen Silesia probably had a greater influence that we usually think. By remaining

a discordant theme between Poland and Czechoslovakia, the affair hindered the development of good bilateral relations and stalled the idea of a Czecho-Polish federation suggested by Tomáš Masaryk in *New Europe* a few years before.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps, even, Poland would not have sided with Hitler after the Munich agreement if the case of Teschen had been resolved, and a fair agreement had been truly accepted and respected by both sides.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The seat of the Austrian-Hungarian army (the *AOK Armee Oberkommando*) was located in Teschen.
- <sup>2</sup> In the following article, we will use the denomination of Teschen, traditionally acknowledged in English-speaking historical literature.
- <sup>3</sup> The original text of the agreement is available in the diplomatical archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reference Z-864-5, p. 124.
- <sup>4</sup> Composed of Grénard (France), Coulson (United Kingdom), Coolidge and Dubuis (United States).
- <sup>5</sup> The declaration of Polish and Czechoslovak officials in Spa on 10 July 1920 can be found in Haruštiak (2002).
- <sup>6</sup> Czechoslovak delegation to the Paris Peace Conference (1919), p. 2.
- <sup>7</sup> Excellent examples of Polish and Czech posters can be found in Schultz (2001).
- <sup>8</sup> Attending were Manneville (France), Wilton (United Kingdom), Marquis Borsarelli (Italy), Professor Jamada (Japan), Doctor Matouš (Czechoslovak republic) and Deputy Zamorski (Poland).
- <sup>9</sup> Vladimír Peška and Antoine Marès (1991) subtitled their book on Masaryk “European and humanist”.
- <sup>10</sup> Dmowski was ready to back Czechoslovakia’s territorial claims against Germany and Hungary, as argued in his book *Polityka polska i odbudowanie państwa*, published in Warsaw in 1925, quoted from Wandycz (1962), p. 13.
- <sup>11</sup> Czechoslovak delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, op. cit., p. 7.
- <sup>12</sup> Czechoslovak delegation to the Paris Peace Conference (1919), p. 1.
- <sup>13</sup> Tapié (1936) in particular stresses the potential for conflict over Teschen with regards the role of Nazi Germany in the region.
- <sup>14</sup> Sub-carpathian Ruthenia was annexed by Hungary following the Nazi invasion in 1938, before its annexation by the Soviet Union.
- <sup>15</sup> Soubigou (2002, p. 386) remarks that Masaryk and Dmowski agreed on the principle of a free-trade union between the two countries on 10 September 1918.

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## THE POLISH-CZECHOSLOVAK CONFLICT OVER TESCHEN SILESIA

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***Graeme P. Herd and Jennifer D. P. Moroney (eds.):  
Security Dynamics in the Former Soviet Bloc.***

*London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, 200 pages, ISBN: 0-4150-29732-X.*

US foreign policy veteran Lawrence Eagleburger once noted that the bi-polarity of the Cold War era would be missed due to its perceived simplification of the international system. The West often thought of the East bloc, and particularly the USSR, as a monolithic whole, often referred to merely as "Russia".

This book, "Security dynamics in the former Soviet bloc", gives a glimpse into the rapid transitions and changes in the recent past in the former USSR territories, and compares the different paths the newly-independent states took. The editors, Graeme P. Herd of the George C. Marshal Center for Security Studies, and Jennifer D. P. Moroney of Defence Forecasts Inc International, USA, have divided the book by three main regions: the Baltic region, the Slavic core of the USSR and an outer rim including Moldova, the Caucasus and Central Asia. They have asked a number of scholars familiar with the region to contribute articles on developments in the different states/regions. The emphasis, as the title says, is on security and issues such as civilian control over the military, conflicts and their resolution, the involvement of international organisations, and relations with neighbouring countries and the West.

To make Western audiences better understand how and why the republics of the former Soviet Union developed in different ways, Herd and Mooney's book offers a good insight. The introduction sets the scene, describing the hopes for a "third wave" of democratisation and economic liberalism, which would spread throughout the former communist bloc at the end of the Cold War. This is contrasted with the opposite views that the transitions and introductions of democracy bore risks of instability and fears that could be compounded by extremists and increasing social tensions. After this foreword, part I outlines the different developments in the former republics of the USSR.

The following part examines the Baltic region. Adam Grissom, a RAND expert on military issues, describes the motives behind the energetic drive for independence, and the desire to join NATO and the EU. The motives of the Baltic states (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia) were their trauma of being abandoned by the international community in the 1930's and their vulnerability vis-à-vis their giant neighbour, Russia. The aims of this region were safeguarding national independence by receiving recognition of their state sovereignty, and later by seeking European sponsorship to integrate with Western security and economic structures. The EU's and NATO's conditions for entry positively shaped reforms, and helped stabilise the Baltic economies and democracies. However, although the transitions were painful, the states have yet to reach NATO standards. Another problem is that with EU and NATO memberships, the Baltic States might lose interest in further regional co-operation, leaving the region "more exposed than it needs to be to such challenges as Russian military vulnerability and instability in Kaliningrad" (p. 29). Even

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though he incorrectly cites the Baltic's annexation by Russia as being in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (it was the 18<sup>th</sup>), Grissom's arguments are coherent and well-applied. As a point of critique, it would have also been very interesting to consider how much (if at all) the Baltic states could try to influence other former USSR regions, and states like Ukraine and Belarus. Unfortunately, none of the authors spend any time discussing the prospects of the Baltic states becoming a role model for others.

Following this analysis, Mel Huang examines inter-Baltic cooperation. People tend to see the region as one unity due to geography and shared history, yet regardless of differences in language, religion, and other social factors, there is reciprocal attraction between Estonia and Finland due to ethnic ties, and another between Lithuania and Poland, so some regional politicians show little interest in Baltic unity. In the defence sector, a joint battalion (BALTBAT) was created, but soon became "a giant PR-tool" (p. 38). The results of other efforts were mixed due to limited financial resources. In addition, other defence co-operation tools like BALTRON, BALTNET and BALTDEFCOL are discussed. On the question of whether NATO entry would undermine Baltic military co-operation, Huang sees little reason for this, noting positive events such as the attempted restructuring of BALTBAT for modern peacekeeping missions, and efforts to co-ordinate defence procurement. The chapter provides a clear, balanced analysis of inter-regional co-operation and the difficulties facing it.

Huang's chapter is followed by one from Ingmar Oldberg, associated research director at the Swedish Defence Research Institute, examining Russian policy towards the Baltic states. Many Russian pressure tactics (mostly economic) backfired and damaged Russian commercial interests, while increasing Baltic determination to become more Western-orientated. A further problem was the presence of large Russian minorities in the Baltic region. Given these issues, mutual trust between the Baltic states and Russia has been stunted. Russian policy was often incoherent and unpredictable, and sometimes contradictory, reflecting differing Russian styles and domestic turbulence, such as tensions between the Russian government and businesses, as well as attempts to redefine its global position throughout the 1990s. Oldberg cites the example of oil exports through the harbour of Ventspils, Latvia. Russia is unhappy about the NATO enlargement, and worries about the future status of Kaliningrad and loss of trade due to the Baltic accessions to the EU. Putin's pragmatic foreign policy allowed Russia to accept the Baltic memberships, although tensions remain. Oldberg's excellent descriptive style facilitates an understanding of this complex topic, which he covers comprehensively, making it easy to grasp the difficulties between Russia and the Baltic states.

The third part deals with the core of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) – a loose organisation of the former Soviet republics, minus the three Baltic States. When the USSR dissolved, Russian foreign policy was Western-orientated, but, following an identity crises and economic deterioration, this shifted to an anti-Western stance aiming at balancing US domination by co-operation with China and India, and by restructuring the CIS. Putin's foreign policy can be seen as a combination of the two trends: At-

lanticism and Slavicism. The author of this part, Rosaria Puglisi, research fellow at the University of Leeds, calls this pragmatic nationalism with a post-colonial approach towards the CIS. Economics played an important role in developing this attitude by providing Russian capital and industry with new markets, while shielding them from foreign competition. Although there is increased cooperation between the different Russian elites, foreign policy still contains many contradictions, sometimes embodying the clash between big business interests and the state. This chapter gives a good summary of the main trends in Russian foreign policy and its conclusions are still valid, as current events have proven.

LTC Frank Morgese, US Army, writes about border security between NATO and EU states, and Ukraine and Russia, an issue that remains sensitive for many in the West. NATO's eastern frontier is less of an issue, since NATO is concerned with "hard" security, while international attention has shifted to 'soft' cross-border issues such as immigration and the drugs trade. The Finish-Russian border is examined as an example of future Schengen border relations. Yet this border is relatively easy to maintain due to geography and history, so the lack of difficulty can hardly be repeated at the new eastern frontiers following the Polish adoption of the Schengen rules in October 2007. The question remains as to how states with Schengen borders will relate to their neighbours, and whether the borders could become a new curtain dividing the continent. Morgese's arguments are convincing, and help the reader comprehend the nature of future problems, especially between Poland and Ukraine. The West can certainly expect difficulties at the outpost of the EU border.

This analysis leads to a chapter from Victor Chudowsky from the University of Connecticut, which tackles the difficulties of Russian-Ukrainian relations by examining disputes like the Black Sea Fleet and the status of the Crimea. Ukraine, like the Baltic states, sought to secure its independence and to counter Russian neo-colonialism by moving Westwards. According to Chudowsky, it was mainly American support that secured Ukraine's integrity and helped shift Russian attitudes from imperialism to pragmatism, even though Ukraine is aware that its geography, its history and its economic weakness dictate good easterly relations. Chudowsky's points are valid, but his conclusion that the USA should expand this policy to all CIS-states neglects their diversity.

Belarus, north of Ukraine, is a sort of Soviet Museum, as Clelia Rontoyanni, research fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, explains. Its president acts like a power-hungry communist, viewing NATO's expansion with suspicion, and moving towards closer cooperation with Russia, particularly in defence matters. Ironically, the EU is seen as a model for the union between Russia and Belarus. Yet this project faces difficulties, the most important being that dictators do not dilute their power-bases. Rontoyanni's topic takes in the scope of the Belarusian government, but could have further analysed the Belarusian opposition to see whether there are sufficiently developed alternatives.

The final part examines the situation on the periphery of the CIS. Trevor Waters, analyst at Jane's Intelligence Review, capably describes the developments in Europe's poorest state, Moldova. In the Moldovan conflict national-

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ity is less important; Waters attributes the conflict more to a clash of ideologies between those wanting a return to the USSR, and those trying to create a modern state. The importance of Russia's influence in dividing the state is examined. With the electoral victory of the Communists, Moldova moved further towards Russia, while "Moscow will continue to pursue the policy of equivocation and prevarication" (p. 149). Water's points are well-considered and logical, and portray the underlying knowledge of the author. This chapter is particularly interesting, as it contradicts the common view describing the state's problem in ethnic terms.

Another outer rim of the ex-USSR is the South Caucasus, "A quagmire in which ideology, natural resources, historic feuds and nationalism clash" according to authors Tamara Pataria and David Darchiashvili, both leading experts at the Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development in Georgia. The Southern Caucasian states are weak, and have problems with minorities. War broke out between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Russia tried to restore its influence using similar methods to those used in Moldova. Recent initiatives towards regional co-operation made by Georgia and Azerbaijan are orientated more towards the West, while Armenia moved closer to Russia. In their conclusion, the authors are somewhat optimistic, although they offer no concrete ideas on how to improve the situation. Prospects look poor, and power struggles between the two blocs of Russia, Iran and Armenia against Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and the USA seem likely.

Finally, Jennifer Moroney examines an area long neglected by the West, but brought to American attention in the course of the War on Terror. Central Asia, with rich oil and gas resources, serves as a springboard to places like Afghanistan. Central Asian states seek Western aid to consolidate themselves and overcome Russian dominance. The main dilemma for the West is that while it seeks regional stability for geopolitical security, it also wants to promote democracy and socio-economic reforms. Currently the Central Asian states are brutal dictatorships, showing scant interest in democracy. The West, and in particular the US, has so far opted for stability but, as the author explains, these states are in desperate need of reforms to ease social tension. Moroney shows detailed knowledge of this region, and calls for greater Western involvement. Her points are valid and well explained, but her arguments are somewhat over-optimistic with regards to Western capabilities. Other factors that should have been examined further include Russia's and China's interests, as well as those of Iran, Turkey and other mid-sized powers.

In conclusion, this book is a good resource for explaining how and why the republics of the former USSR developed in different ways. This is in particular true for Western audiences which have interests in understanding this complex and vast territory, but are not experts in the area. The only notable omission is the failure by the authors, writing in 2003, to cover the possible impacts of 9/11 and the "war on terror" on their respective regions and states. Nonetheless the book is easy to read, the chapters are well structured, encompassing a comprehensive and coherent analysis, and giving the reader a valuable insight.

*Marcus Cavelius*

***Matthew Hughes and Gaynor Johnson (eds.):  
Fanaticism and Conflict in the Modern Age***

***London: Frank Cass, 2005, 196 pages, ISBN: 0-714-68584-4.***

Fanaticism has recently become an omnipresent word. Since the events of 9/11 the world's sensitivity towards its manifestations have naturally increased, and we all have been reminded with bitter regularity that this phenomenon, however defined, is fundamentally present in current international affairs. The use of the term is certainly much easier in banner headlines or media reports, where *fanatic* or *fanaticism* can encompass many undefined or abstract issues. Here the terms do not help or explain events but instead attract attention. As a result the words derived from fanaticism suffer from inflation, leading to ill-considered abbreviations or cliché-ridden definitions. From this perspective, Dominic Bryan in his contribution to the volume notes that the events of 11 September changed the political make-up of the world, allowing the claim that there are terrorists who use illegitimate violence, and those who fight terrorism using legitimate violence. It seems particularly important to relativise this false dichotomy today. Moreover, it is also apparent that the political and historical analysis requires more a precise conceptualization of the problem.

In the introduction the editors pose the key question that, in moderate variants, exercises scientific inquiry and motivates responsible strategists trying to frame the analysis of this phenomenon: *can we talk of a fanatic in terms of a set of defining characteristics?* Readers who expect a direct response will be disappointed. Nevertheless, the question is crucial for the book since it implies the complexity of the concept. Indeed, the proposed objective of this volume is to discover and expose various dimensions of fanaticism that have appeared in the selected modern conflicts. One of the essential messages, which repeatedly confronts the reader, is that the factual meaning of what makes a fanatic is very subjective. However, the contributors rightly attempt to get further behind the popular saying that one man's fanatic is another man's freedom fighter. In fact, the appreciation of subjectivity should not lead to an ignorance of society and falling-back onto absolute values. Instead it is suggested that the label fanatic may be applied instrumentally to outsiders, and hence become a tool or even a weapon. In such cases, the editors suggest, this labeling can say as much about the judges as the judged.

The volume consists of two introductory chapters and nine case studies written by prominent scholars and specialists. Editors Matthew Hughes and Gaynor Johnson provide a framework in the introduction. After a short historical review they argue that there is some continuity as well as change between the religious fanaticism of the medieval and early modern periods and the political fanaticism of the Right or Left shock troops in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both continuity and change consist essentially in the way states have utilized the concept of fanaticism to challenge particular groups. The difference that partially breaks the continuity lies in the fascist and communist fanaticisms



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of the majority or most powerful group in some states. In such cases fanaticism should be regarded as a state activity rather than a sub-state one. The last shots of the Second World War then dislodged the Rightist fanaticism from the political mainstream, but mainly led to the reemergence of fanaticism at the sub-state level. Governments began to identify certain minority groups as threats, as opposed to the pre-war situation when other states were the threats, and hence the meaning of fanaticism returned to its pre-Enlightenment origins. As will be seen later, this book observes two such groups – terrorists/guerillas and religious fundamentalists.

The studies cover a manifold range of events and conflicts. Four of them describe the different kinds of fanaticism of the German and Japanese armies in the Second World War. The first two examine the ideological background of Japanese soldiers' behavior in the Pacific War, and the particular conditions of that war. The other two describe the fanaticism that dominated Wehrmacht troops during the anti-partisan warfare in the Soviet Union, and the infamous case of the 12<sup>th</sup> SS Panzer Division of Hitlerjugend that fought in Normandy in 1944. Although this latter piece is certainly written to high academic standards, the reading still leaves a peculiar impression. Indeed, Brian Holden Reid, one of the editors of the entire Cass Series of Military History and Policy, of which this volume is issued as a part, notes in the preface that among all the themes of this book, the link between fanaticism and the young impressed him most.

The first case study of the volume is exceptional because it brushes the accepted border of modernity, focusing on the Mahdist revolt, which intended to carry *jihad* throughout the Sudan to Egypt, and thence further East in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The reminiscence of the colonial period in Northern Africa is also present in a chapter describing fanaticism in Algeria after the unsuccessful political and economic reforms at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. As mentioned, Dominic Bryan, in his work on the disputes between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, shows that behavior that may be considered fanatical may also appear among ordinary peoples of the United Kingdom. Finally, to conclude this short summary, it remains only to mention the case study from the region that could be hardly missing in such a book – the Middle East. Another respected specialist, Meir Litvak, in his chapter focuses on The Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

I have decided to review the last of the nine chapters in more detail, since it is this multi-case study that provides some general observations on fanaticism's role in guerilla warfare. Carl von Clausewitz described war as a province of extremes and primal hatreds, making fanaticism inseparable from warfare itself. Although this remark is connected particularly with guerilla wars, many aspects of fanaticism are present in all kinds of conflicts. After all, the statistics of world conflicts show that intrastate conflicts entirely prevail over interstate wars. The first phenomenon, mentioned by Christopher C. Hanlon, is the suicide attack. Two important notes relate to this topic. First, it was often imagined throughout the 1970s that military suicide attacks ended with the Japanese kamikaze pilots. However, this method was revived in 1983, when Muslim militants assaulted the US Marine Corps barracks in Beirut. Se-



cond, the suicide attacks have been most often associated with Hamas or Islamic Jihad, but as Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Kurdistan Worker's Party have shown they have no monopoly on them. Another manifestation of fanaticism may be found in methods of killing that violate international laws and traditional norms of warfare. One of these might be the especially slow and painful methods of execution often including trademarks such as, for example, "the big smile", known viciously from Algeria. The use of children is another marker of the ferociousness of fanatics. According to UN estimates some 300,000 children participate in regular and irregular troops in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Central America, and Colombia. Hanlon further explores the more commonly-mentioned sources of fanaticism such as thirsts for power, revenge, or hatred of foreign occupation. Yet, he also analyses one more point worth underlining: an intellectual love of action. He concludes that the fanatical attraction of activity that suppresses thought can affect the immature and young particularly.

The case studies deal with diverse topics and events spread out over the last 120 years and in all parts of the world. Although the essays provide relevant and interesting insights into the problems of fanaticism, the volume as a whole exudes an impression of incongruity. For all that, after careful reading I can highlight three essential ideas that the specific and finely focused essays contribute to the analysis of fanaticism. Firstly, fanaticism can help explain a particular behavior or motivation. Regarding the selected studies this was the case of Mahdists, who managed to complement their efficient civil and military administration with fanatical ferocity in the battlefield, as well as Hamas, which is built on a religious and nationalist fanatical basis. Obviously, a cultivated fanaticism was also a driving force of the teenage SS troop.

Secondly, using the concept of fanaticism for an objective analysis is dangerous since it offers simple but superficial explanations. This volume tries to emphasize this danger primarily in the chapter dealing with anti-partisan warfare in the Soviet Union, where Ben Shepherd shows that the brutality and atrocities of the German soldiers were not only driven by fanatic National Socialist convictions but also, if not chiefly, by the frustration and difficulties of their conditions or, for example, by careerism and institutional rivalry. Similarly, the explanation of the virtual civil war in Algeria at the beginning of 1990s must, besides Islamic fanaticism, refer to factors derived from the pre-colonial and colonial period.

Finally, Craig M. Cameron in his study on the Pacific War indicates that the label of fanaticism can serve as a tool to promote certain strategies or even methods against the enemy. Cameron particularly shows how the perceived characteristics of Japanese soldiers as fanatics had two consequences for the American soldiers and society. First, the image of a fanatical enemy supported the indoctrination of the American soldiers, who themselves tended to behave similarly fanatical on the surface. Second, American society began to perceive not only the Japanese army but the entire Japanese culture as fanatical, removing some of the barriers that restricted certain means of defeating the enemy.

This book is not intended to respond to the rise in interest in the greatest challenge to the world's security, global terrorism. The purpose, as satisfac-

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torily given, is instead to indicate various dimensions which should be included in the analysis of conflicts where fanatical behavior plays a definite role. As a concluding remark, the irrational realm of fanatics cannot be considered as always separate from the world of rational and strategic decisions. After all, as Dominic Bryan notes, commonly-used definitions of “fanatic”, as well as experience, imply that such people are neither deranged nor mentally ill. In fact, those considered fanatics usually take the values of their societies or beliefs to extremes. However, their understandings of values and their extremist tendencies signify choice. Hence fanatics are often regarded as crazed but can be sanely rational at the same time.

*Vít Střítecký*

***Yasir Suleiman:***  
***A War of Words: Language and Conflict in the Middle East***

*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 286 pages, ISBN: 0521546367.*

The repertoire of books dealing with Middle Eastern issues available in Central Europe is generally limited to historical reviews or analyses of Islam. However, the reality of the Arab world and the Jewish state is more complex than the chronology of the events described in these books. This is why I am drawing attention to Yasir Suleiman's "A War of Words", which aspires to offer Central Europe a much broader perspective of the Middle Eastern affairs.

Yasir Suleiman is professor of Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, and Director of the Edinburgh Institute for the Advanced Study of the Arab World and Islam at the University of Edinburgh. His professional interest lies in the field of politics of identity in the Middle East, particularly in linguistics and nationalism. He is a Palestinian Arab, enabling him to offer an authentic picture of the differences in Arab society, and especially in the Arabic language.

The aim of this book is to show the connection between language (especially Arabic) and conflicts. Suleiman focuses on matters of national identity in relation to language and describes the differences between intra-state linguistic groups. He also deals with intra- and inter-state dissimilarities related to language, and studies the interaction between language and national/ethnic identities in situations of inter- and intra-state conflict. The analyses of these two phenomena, language and conflict, are undertaken from three different perspectives, according to which the book is structured.

In the introductory part "Language, power and conflict in the Middle East" Suleiman puts forward the main theoretical concepts of the study, based on the interaction between language and conflict, as well as between language and power. The key chapters explain the linguistic collisions between (1) a language and its dialects: "When language and dialects collide: Standard Arabic and its 'opponents'", (2) the dialects of a language: "When dialects collide: language and conflict in Jordan" and (3) two languages in contact: "When languages collide: language and conflict in Palestine and Israel".

Suleiman sees language as a link connecting people sharing a common identity, rather than as a means of communication. It is not only a technical instrument of understanding, but also "a referent for loyalties and animosities, an indicator of social statuses and personal relationships".<sup>1</sup> In the beginning Suleiman points out that language remains an inevitable part of every conflict, however, talking about "linguistic conflicts", as he does here, might cause a number of confusions. On the one hand, Suleiman explains, "the linguistic conflict is not to be perceived as a conflict between languages or language varieties *per se*, but between the speakers of a language who compete over resources and values in their milieus in inter- and intra-group situations."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, he uses this term for both situations throughout the book. While chapter 2 describes the dispute between defenders and modernizers of Standard Arabic, chapter 3 discusses the political and military con-

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flict in Jordan between Jordanians and Palestinians with respect to language dialects, calling each a “linguistic conflict”.

Suleiman is right in stating in chapter 2 that language is implicated in inter- and intra-group conflicts, but it is hardly ever a cause of a conflict. Language is only an additional part of conflict, never the cause, nor the purpose itself. The aim of bringing this up is not to underestimate the meaning of language as such, since it serves as the most efficient resource for expressing and ideologising conflicts. Nevertheless, language is merely an alternative device for exploring the conflicts in the Middle East, the diversity of people and their viewpoints, as Suleiman correctly maintains later in the chapter: “conflicts are more dependent on how the speakers interpret the facts of their situation than on the objective reality of these facts, although the conflicts always relate to an objective reality.”<sup>3</sup>

On the one hand, he says that language is only an alternative device for exploring conflicts, but on the other, he actually states that language takes priority in explaining and interpreting conflicts. If language only accompanies conflicts, it contradicts the author’s later statements that conflicts actually depend on the interpretations by means of language (irrespective of what objective realities cause the conflict). The discussion of these issues must take into account the realities of Arab states. Firstly, Arab society is extremely divided into families, clans and tribes using their own specific forms of Arabic and defending their own interests, producing an enormous number of interpretations of conflicts. Language is therefore an unstable factor for explaining conflicts, so we should therefore focus more on the interests of the groups involved in a conflict, their political power, economic strength and military capacities, to give a more detailed picture of conflicts. Language is indeed only an additional tool.

The great importance of the relation between language and power is also discussed in chapter 2. Suleiman states, that “while power may be allocated differentially between competing individuals and groups, it is nevertheless possible to achieve some reordering of this allocation by exploiting the linguistic resources available”.<sup>4</sup> In order to introduce the interaction between language and power, Suleiman turns to his personal experience. As a Palestinian Arab entering the occupied territories, he refused to use Arabic at the Israeli checkpoints, even though the Israeli soldiers did speak Arabic. Living in the diaspora in Scotland, his professional knowledge of English allowed him to make the soldiers speak the same language. Regardless of who was in charge at these checkpoints, thanks to the Israeli soldiers’ restricted knowledge of English, he had an opportunity to redefine the power relationship between the soldiers and himself. By using advanced English, he managed to tilt balance of power in his favour. Suleiman concludes that language can play an important role in balancing the power between individuals. However, the allocation of power relations between different linguistic groups is subjected to “a state, which can issue a variety of legal instruments to suppress competing languages”<sup>5</sup> as in the relationships between Turkish and Kurdish, and Turkish and Arabic, in Turkey.

Language represents one of the many elements that build national and ethnic identities, and hence creates an indivisible relation between these two phenomena. This point is illustrated in chapter four, by a case study relating to the situation in Jordan. The different ethnic groups in the Jordanian king-

dom ended up in a conflict, where the collision between the Jordanian and Palestinian dialects of Arabic played a role, albeit a peripheral one. Suleiman claims that the notion of the clashes reflects the warlike situation in Jordan between 1970 and 1971.<sup>6</sup> Based on this, the author maintains that misunderstandings between two or more different linguistic groups at an intra-state level are the results of political conflicts.

Jordan's demographics show on one side a majority of Palestinians, but on the other the political dominance of Jordanians. The Jordanians' dominance did not prevent them from fearing the quantity of Palestinians in Jordan, and eventually sparked animosity between the groups. Both felt a need to circumscribe their intra-state boundaries. They defined their ethnic identities in accordance with "us vs. them" premises. One of the most marked components of this delimitation was the various local dialects. Palestinian refugees who fled into Jordan in the 1920s and 1930s and people from urban areas used the Madani dialect, whereas those coming after the 1948 and 1967 wars, and those living in rural areas, used the Fallahi dialect. Standard Arabic was ascribed to original population of Jordan, Bedouins. When these two entities confronted each other, as Suleiman explains in chapter 4, they did not use their original dialects, but rather shifted into other ones to avoid inconvenience. Here the author applies a few sociological surveys to show that this situation was visible first after the Black September conflict. These sociological surveys show what patterns these shifts in dialect followed, that is, which groups of the population switched dialect and why. Nevertheless, these surveys lack time specifications, and do not prove that the shifts in dialect were directly caused by Black September, which ultimately undermines the hypothesis.

When approaching the diverse dialects in Jordan, one must understand how the national identity was formed in the monarchy. The differences between Jordanians and Palestinians have always characterised Jordanian society, yet the formation of both groups' identities was affected by an intense effort to unite the two ethnic groups under a common Jordanian identity, a so-called hybrid identity.<sup>7</sup> These attempts, dating back to the reign of the first King Abdullah (1921–1951), failed. Even then, before the overt eruption of conflict between Jordanians and Palestinians, the differences and animosities between the two ethnic and linguistic groups emerged. The political conflict in the 1970s actually resulted from the enmity between the two groups, and not vice versa as Suleiman asserts, with his argument that misunderstandings between two or more linguistic groups at an intra-state level are the result of political conflicts.

Furthermore, the author relies on sociological studies that illustrate shifts of dialect. Taking into account this discussion of the interaction between language and national/ethnic identity in Jordan in chapter four, the gender-based explanations applied here are objectionable. The author emphasizes that dialectal variables correlate with the gender of speakers, pointing out that the shifts in dialect of women are different to those of men, concluding that the male dialect shifts are more relevant to national/ethnic identity than female ones. Regardless of how strong male dominance is in Arab society, this statement needs stronger evidence.

Suleiman further elaborates his theory of the interaction between language and conflict in chapter 5 by considering the language situation in Israel/Pales-

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tine. The argument that “since language constitutes one of the elements of national identity, the tension of the national conflict may well affect the attitude of each nation toward the language of the other,”<sup>8</sup> is substantiated by the relations between Palestinians and Israelis. They are antagonistic towards each other’s language. Suleiman repeatedly uses the term “linguistic conflict”, which might be applied here again as a conflict between languages as such, as the author points out that the conflict is actually fought in schools. The educational system in Israel underlines the Palestinians’ subordinate position in the country. The curricula for Arabic and Hebrew in Jewish and Arab schools signals that Hebrew is a compulsory subject in the Arab schools, whereas Arabic is a “semi-compulsory” one in the Jewish schools. Students in the latter can ask for exemptions from Arabic, and can opt to study French instead.<sup>9</sup> However, claiming that political conflicts are reflected in a war of languages presents only one partial and additional aspect of such conflicts. Researchers must be aware that economic issues, religious matters and the historical context must be included in these studies.

As far as methodology is concerned, Suleiman draws upon an enormous number of analyses, statistics and resources from different sources to support his study. But the author’s habit of referring to references downgrades his work. In addition, the relevancy of information given in the sociological statistics presents a restricted point of view on the reality in the Arab world. Undoubtedly, language has great symbolic meaning for Arabs and Israelis, but the political realities of Arab societies are affected by many more different factors and circumstances.

The questions of conflict, power and national identity posed in this book are analysed through the lens of languages and their differences. Even though Suleiman tries to offer a new interpretation of Middle Eastern realities, the centre of his work is language. His analysis of the Middle East, will therefore be of huge importance to linguists, but for all its flaws of a limited one to IR researchers. However, the book successfully crosses disciplinary boundaries to offer rare insights into both Arabic linguistics and Middle Eastern studies.

*Nataša Kubíková*

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Suleiman, Yasir (2004), *A War of Words: Language and Conflict in the Middle East*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>6</sup> These were the years of the civil war in Jordan known as Black September. The war started with clashes between the Jordanian army and Palestinian guerrillas, and ended with the expulsion of the Palestinian Liberation Organization’s representatives. The Headquarters of the Organization later moved to Lebanon.

<sup>7</sup> Brand, Laurie A. (1995), “Palestinians and Jordanians: A Crisis of Identity”, *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4., p. 50.

<sup>8</sup> Tabory, Mala (1981), *Language Rights in Israel*, cf. Suleiman, Yasir: cit. op., p. 140.

<sup>9</sup> Suleiman, Yasir: cit. op., p. 150.



***Milada Anna Vachudova:***  
***Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage,***  
***Integration After Communism***

*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, 341 pages, ISBN: 0-19-924119-8.*

The Eastern enlargement of the European Union has been studied quite extensively lately in international relations and European studies, and yet a monograph dealing with the issue from a coherent theoretical perspective is still rather unique. So this book deserves some attention. Milada Anna Vachudova is an American scholar who has devoted her interest to Central and Eastern Europe for more than a decade, with a command of some of the regional languages.

In 2003 she contributed to the debate on EU enlargement with an article co-written with her more famous fellow scholar Andrew Moravcsik,<sup>1</sup> using to great effect the theoretical framework of liberal intergovernmentalism. That article, and this book, made the case that: "Straightforward national interest explains not just why the EU's aspiring members have been willing to go through so much to secure EU membership, but also why the EU's existing members have been willing to let them in."<sup>2</sup> In this review I will discuss some of the problems of explaining enlargement from this perspective, but first let us examine the disposition of the book and some of its main conclusions.

Vachudova's main goal is to explain the European Union's leverage on the political transformation of six East and Central European (ECE) post-communist states: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. The book is divided into eight chapters, with the first two studying why three of the discussed countries turned to an *illiberal* pattern of political change more or less immediately after 1989 (Bulgaria, Romania and later Slovakia) and the remaining six chapters dealing extensively with the EU's leverage on the political transformations of the six countries.

One keyword that traces throughout the book is political competition. Chapters one and two present the argument that the lack of political competition in the illiberal states allowed the ruling elites to violate the rule of law, and the political liberties of their citizens, and turn to rent-seeking behaviour. The level of political competition in a single country is in turn explained by the communist legacy. The nature of the former regime determined the character of the elites after the democratic revolutions of 1989. In the so-called *liberal pattern states* there was at this turning-point in history: "...a liberal democratic opposition to communism strong enough to take power and to prevent the democratic monopoly of rent-seeking elites." Countries with working political competition were faster to implement economic reforms and adapt to the rules that would bring them closer to EU-membership.

Even if it were possible to criticise Vachudova for having a one-sided approach to political competition, and disregarding other important factors in the political transitions of the ECE countries, that might miss the point. In particular, this one-sided focus on political competition enables Vachudova to

draw some rather provocative conclusions. For instance, the Czech Republic is labelled a hybrid case (between liberal and illiberal) because of its restricted political competition from 1992 to 2002.<sup>4</sup> The lack of political competition is in turn explained by the absence of a reformed Czech communist party, leaving a vacuum on the left of the political spectrum.<sup>5</sup> Due to this absence of political opposition there was more space for political and economic rent-seeking in the Czech Republic than in Poland or Hungary. In consequence, the reformed communist parties' elections to power in Poland in 1993 and Hungary in 1994 are considered crucial for those countries' liberal trajectories.

Chapters three to seven examine the EU's leverage. Once more political competition is highlighted, being presented as the main factor explaining why the ECE-countries reacted so differently to the EU's leverage. Given the assumption, stressed throughout the book, that membership was in the national interest of all six states, we would have expected them to be equally eager to comply with the Union's demands. Vachudova's explanation for why this was not so is that in countries with restricted political competition the ruling elite is likely to prioritise its own interests at the expense of the general population.

Furthermore, Vachudova argues, the illiberal pattern governments in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia had more to lose from adopting the *acquis communautaire*, which would undermine their power-base, which depended on: "...limited political competition, partial economic reform and ethnic nationalism."<sup>7</sup> Limited political competition also enabled the ruling elites of these illiberal regimes to mediate between the EU and the electorate, and thus for a long time they simultaneously kept the impression of being seriously committed to EU membership and carried out domestic policies contradicting this goal.

Even if the illiberal regimes were more immune to EU-leverage than the liberal regimes, the EU still played an important role in these countries, primarily by encouraging political competition. In her view the EU contributed to the regime changes after the elections in Romania in 1996, in Bulgaria in 1997 and in Slovakia in 1998, by strengthening the civic sector and opposition parties.

So this begs the question of why these countries' opposition politicians were more open to European influence than the ruling elites. Vachudova consistently adopts rationalist explanations of actors' behaviour, in contrast to constructivist ones. By doing so she portrays an opposition between material interests and ideological convictions. So from her perspective, the opposition politicians decided to embark on an EU-friendly path not because of idealistic convictions but because it was a path that eventually would reward them with power.<sup>7</sup>

The weak point in the chain of causality presented in the book is not so much that politicians are presented as rational actors as how this conception is projected onto state-actors. Vachudova largely ignores the issue of how a national interest is articulated, thus we must assume that this is something out there, ready to be used by anyone interested in the general wellbeing of a nation.<sup>8</sup> This simplistic view of the national interest is crucial for Vachudova's distinction between liberal and illiberal regimes; illiberal regimes can afford to neglect the national interest whereas liberal regimes can not.

Vachudova acknowledges the role of public opinion for the turnaround of politics in the so-called illiberal states. In her words: "...citizens of Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia overwhelmingly favored a westward orientation for their countries and joining the EU..."<sup>9</sup> The reason for this support, or indeed the main themes of the public debate in these countries, is either not discussed or is discussed only very briefly. About the early 1990's Vachudova writes: "[t]o a great extent elites and publics now equated Europe with the EU. And for them, the appeal of EU membership was initially as much a question of beliefs about their identity and culture as it was a matter of geopolitical and economic interest."<sup>10</sup> This idealistic attitude is, however, argued to have been quickly replaced by an approach dominated by trade and economics. Vachudova is cautious when it comes to showing that the decisive issue for the mentioned elections was concern for EU-membership. Yet even so, the chain of causality presented must be interpreted as such, because the argumentation suggests that once political competition is in place then the electoral outcome will naturally correspond to a national interest that can be *objectively* defined.

Furthermore, if we ignore the problems of defining a national interest and assume the possibility of rather simple cost benefit calculations, it is unclear, at least given the discussion in this book, as to why the poorer member states in particular, which arguably had the most to lose from enlargement, committed themselves to admitting the ECE-states at the European Council's Copenhagen Summit in 1993. Even if this is primarily about the political developments in six ECE-countries on the road to EU-membership, Vachudova emphasises that it also was in the national interests of the existing member countries to expand, and includes some lengthier discussions on this topic in chapters 5 and 8.

Still, Vachudova makes a big case out of the asymmetric interdependence that she sees between candidates and members, precisely when the enlargement was less important to the EU-15 than to the candidates. Without this asymmetric relationship the EU would have been unable to use the strategy of leverage based on conditionality including credible claims of exclusion.

Furthermore, the material interests of the member states fail to explain why the EU made such a big effort to ensure the attainment of democratic standards in the candidate countries: something that Vachudova also acknowledges; "[a]nd even if the EU's liberal norms only *reinforced* material interests in bringing about the decision to enlarge, they were clearly important in other ways, for example, in shaping the EU's pre-accession process and influencing the content of the EU's membership requirements."<sup>11</sup>

In chapter eight Vachudova also provides some insights on further EU-enlargement. Due to the incomparable benefits of a membership, the EU has a unique capability to influence domestic politics in candidate countries. However, the precondition here is that aspiring countries believe that they will eventually join. Thus Vachudova's conclusion is that if the EU wants to play a major role in stabilising its borderlands, it needs to carry on expanding. Furthermore, in a country that was once treated as a candidate country, like Turkey, a later rejection can lead to a severe backlash and a stall in reforms.

The case of Turkish membership of the Union can also provide an interesting case to portray enlargement as a matter of national interest. Vachudova ar-

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gues that the EU's national interest, geopolitical interest/stability, "...is precisely why the EU has let itself go so far with Turkey."<sup>12</sup> If so, a rejection of Turkey might turn out to be a setback not only for Turkish reformists, but also for a theory of EU-enlargement based primarily on national interests.

In conclusion, it is stimulating to read a monograph written from a cohesive theoretical perspective on such an urgent topic. Thanks to the author's knowledge of the region and to the decision to include (only) six case-countries, as opposed to all of the post-communist candidate countries, it provides an interesting and somewhat lengthy discussion on the development of the individual countries. This makes the book well worth reading for the reader who wants an overview of the political development of any of the six countries in the last fifteen years.

*Mats Braun*

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Moravcsik, Andrew and Vachudova, Milada Anna (2003), "National Interests, State Power and EU Enlargement". *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 17, pp. 12–57.

<sup>2</sup> Vachudova, Milada Anna (2005), *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage, Integration After Communism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, chapters 2, 4 and 7.

<sup>5</sup> The Czech communist party's inability to reform is explained by the cleansing of intellectual forces inside the party during the normalisation period.

<sup>6</sup> Vachudova, *cit. op.*, p. 73.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 140, 163.

<sup>8</sup> The definition of what is included in the national interest when it comes to EU-membership is discussed on pp. 65ff, but in a rather broad and inclusive way, rather than a narrow one as Vachudova claims.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250.

***Immanuel Wallerstein:  
World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction.***

*Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 2004, 109 pages, ISBN: 0822334429.*

“The longer I spend on Wall Street, the more convinced I am that Marx was right. I am absolutely convinced that Marx’s approach is the best way to look at capitalism.”

~ Alleged words of an economist at “a big Wall Street investment bank”, quoted in an article in the New Yorker magazine, October 1997.<sup>1</sup>

Immanuel Wallerstein adapted a quite specific and unique macroscopic point of view to critically study both the reality and the history of the modern world. The theory he developed, called a world-systems thesis, has provoked many discussions, was criticised, and became well-known – especially among the public and scholars concerned with the economic processes of “globalisation”. Probably the best known and most discussed part of his work is his analysis of the core-periphery relation, and the related concept of semi-peripheries. In this book, Wallerstein presents a comprehensive explanation of his world-systems concept.

Before he steps up to his topic, in first chapter Wallerstein discusses the character of modern knowledge: the emergence and development of science, the social sciences, and the humanities. In next part of the book he presents his economic analysis of the modern world-system. The following two chapters explain the impact this economic background has on the way the societies are organised politically, and on culture and ideologies respectively. The fifth and last chapter is an analysis of the present world-system crisis.

The world-systems theory, as explained in the first chapter, is simply an approach, an analytical tool, a basic framework for studying reality. The author’s approach is purely holistic: actors such as individuals, states, firms, etc., “are not primordial atomic elements, but part of a systemic mix out of which they emerged and upon which they act. They act freely, but their freedom is constrained by their biographies and the social prisons of which they are a part.”<sup>2</sup> This is the point of view for his analysis of the global capitalist economy. For him capitalism is defined as a system that gives priority to the endless accumulation of capital. Other markers are the division of labour, and therefore intensive exchange (trade) and flows of resources.

The second chapter explains the crucial economic aspects of the world-system. Most importantly, Wallerstein argues that the priority of accumulation means that the absolutely perfect market is disadvantageous. This is because in a market where all relevant factors can flow perfectly freely, where there are large numbers of both buyers and sellers and there is perfect information, then competition would be maximal, hence profits minimal. For this reason the perfect free market is not only impossible, but at the same time not suit-

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able for the accumulation of capital. The monopolies, not the perfect markets, offer high profits and, therefore, better conditions for such accumulation. Hence Wallerstein inherited Braudel's view that "capitalism was the 'anti-market'"

While the ideal perfect monopolies are very rare, Wallerstein speaks about *quasi-monopolies*, which are more common. These are sustained thanks to support from the state (patents, restrictions, subventions, etc.). But quasi-monopolies don't last forever: other entrepreneurs see the profitability of the quasi-monopolised business, so they struggle to enter the game. The quasi-monopoly gradually becomes more and more competitive, and consequently less and less profitable. Of course, as the profits become minimal, capital moves to new industries, new types of production offering higher profits and hence better conditions for the accumulation of capital. As the former quasi-monopoly dies in the growing competition, a new one emerges.

This gradual process of de-monopolisation is related to Wallerstein's core-periphery concept, or, more adequately, his approach to this concept. Some might be surprised that the core-periphery is an economic, not a geographical phenomenon. Wallerstein writes about core-like and periphery-like production processes (or simply core-production and periphery-production). Core-periphery is in fact a measure of the profitability of production. Core-production is production in quasi-monopolised industry, i.e. a highly profitable business. On the contrary, periphery-production is production in a competitive, less profitable business, or, I would say, *ex-quasi-monopolies*.

Core-periphery is a relational concept – the core is defined through its relation to the periphery, and vice versa. When trade between core-production and periphery-production occurs (as is highly probable within the capitalist world-system, which is defined by the divisions of labour and trade), the core is in a strong position, while periphery is in a weak one. So the core-periphery relation is unequal in favour of the core, and this inequality is the root of the core-periphery thesis.

Quasi-monopolies depend on the protection of strong states: that is why they usually settle within them. And as they become more competitive, they usually, in a move to reduce the costs of production, relocate to weaker states with cheaper labour and other factors of production. This is exactly how the geographical dimension of core-periphery emerges: we have core-states that host core-production, and periphery-states which host periphery-production. Somewhere between these are several states which have a mixture of core-like and periphery-like production processes – they're called semi-peripheral states.

So the decline of profits in an economic sphere (the shift from quasi-monopolised core production to highly competitive peripheral production) is accompanied by a geographical move (from core to semi-periphery to periphery). For example, while the textile industry was a highly profitable core-like production in the 1800, two hundred years later it has become a minimally-profitable periphery-production.

This gradual disintegration of quasi-monopolies, and their replacement by new ones, creates the cyclical rhythm of the world-economy. Wallerstein incorporates Kondratieff's waves theory: the expansion of the world-economy



(phase A), marked by the existence of quasi-monopolies, is followed by a contraction (phase B, recession), marked by the de-monopolisation of industries and the shift to periphery both in terms of profitability and geography. Peak follows trough in one wave after another.

This “cyclical” quality is the basis of Wallerstein’s concept of a world-system crisis – one of the central points of his work, which is discussed in the fifth, and last, chapter. Wallerstein explains that the priority of endless accumulation of capital brings demand for the continuing expansion of all relevant frontiers. There is constant demand for additional resources: for newly-urbanised (former agrarian) non-organised workers who will accept low pay, for new dumping grounds, for untapped natural resources, for new infrastructure. There is a need for development in science, technology, speed of communication, and so on. However, while this accumulation is supposed to be endless, the resources it is based on are definitely not. So, at one particular point, the maximum, an *asymptote*, is approached – there is no more rural population for urbanisation, there is no more space for dumping, no more natural resources, etc. Then there comes the unavoidable systemic crisis. According to Wallerstein, capitalism has an inherent certainty of crisis, and currently, at the beginning of the 21st century, we are witnessing it.

Leaving aside its analytical value, Wallerstein’s *approach* to the topic also deserves attention. In recent years, much has been written on themes such as globalisation, neo-liberalism, capitalism, development, global injustice, etc. Some might say even too much. I would argue that a significant part of this work was written popularly and is biased – as a clear political message or even as a sort of “wake up call” to appeal to (direct) action. Such works can be labelled “ideological”. The authors don’t hide their values, opinions, and judgements. This agitating character of the texts is accompanied by clear and emotive “us”-vs.-“them” dichotomies. While “them” are the capitalists, politicians, employers, etc., “we” are supposed to be the emphatic critical-thinking readers. Noam Chomsky is representative of this type of writing. Or, an example of a quite moderate, but still “activist” text might be one written by the well-known Czech sociologist and ecological activist, Jan Keller.<sup>4</sup> Yet the name of that book, which translates to “Down to the Bottom of Prosperity”, is an appeal, a message, a warning. Inside the book, author often uses quite emotive language, often cites alarming statistics, and presents critical evaluations and suggestions. And he writes about “us”, the concerned public, and “them” – economists, political elites, etc.

Wallerstein’s approach is different. First, he never (or nearly never) openly agitates. Even emotive language is very rare. He writes about the alleged contemporary systemic crisis in a cool, calm way. The unequal relations between core and periphery are discussed without any noticeable bitterness or anger. And, more importantly, there are no significant us/them distinctions. In fact, he describes all of the relevant actors – workers, households, firms, states, etc. – in a quite level-headed manner, neutrally and objectively, as rational actors seeking to fulfil their needs. There are no “good” or “bad” guys. Some might also find surprising Wallerstein’s main concern, which is not the inequality and injustice produced by the capitalist world-economy, the suffering of some of the actors. Instead he deals exclusively with the systemic

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crisis. This is all connected with the author's holistic approach – all actors are determined by and act within the framework of the world-system; they all are seen as subjects of anonymous systemic powers, mechanisms, and processes.

In fact, while Wallerstein is politically quite close to “activist writers” like Chomsky and Keller,<sup>5</sup> his approach to the subject shifts him significantly closer to the mainstream of economics and political-economy scholars. This is not only the case regarding the terminology used; I would say that even some economists would agree with Wallerstein's analysis of particular economical processes. All in all, the book isn't anti-capitalism, instead it is *about* capitalism. Hence, it might be an interesting and thought-provoking read even for pro-capitalist readers, as long as they aren't scared off by the author's “neo-Marxist” label.

*Ivan Eckhardt*

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Available at: [www.laborstandard.org/New\\_Postings/Prolabor\\_philosopher.htm](http://www.laborstandard.org/New_Postings/Prolabor_philosopher.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Wallerstein, Immanuel (2004), *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Keller, Jan (1993), *Až na dno blahobytu*. Brno: Hnutí duha.

<sup>5</sup> The entry in *Wikipedia* ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)) states that Wallerstein is “a grey eminence with the anti-globalization movement (...), along with Noam Chomsky and Pierre Bourdieu”. Available at: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wallerstein](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wallerstein).

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# European integration and European public

Edited by Jan Karlas

A new book published  
by the Institut of International Relations in Prague, 2006,  
with a financial support of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.



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This publication, entitled “European Integration and the European Public” is the result of a series of conferences with the same title held in Prague, Pilsen, Olomouc, and Brno in 2005. Their purpose was to discuss the European Constitutional Treaty, as reflected in its original title, “The European Constitutional Treaty and European Public”. The conferences were to consider scenarios of its ratification, assess its costs and benefits, reflect on the communication of its content to the public, and to analyze the democratic nature of the Constitutional Treaty itself and the process of its drafting. However, the primary goal of the series was to contribute to the Czech debate on the Constitutional Treaty before its ratification. This was the spirit in which the first two conferences were held in Prague and Pilsen in spring 2005, discussing the ratification scenarios of ratification and benefits of the Constitutional Treaty.

But the rejections of the European Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands changed the situation significantly. The key issue of current European politics turned out not to be the fate of one specific document, but the fate of European integration as such. Debates before the referenda in Spain, France and the Netherlands showed that while arguments about the advantages and disadvantages mostly bore little relevance to the content of the Constitutional Treaty, they often went to the heart of the European integration project. Moreover, the results in France and the Netherlands uncovered the divide between the political elites and the citizens of the EU Member States. In addition to the existing and well-charted dividing lines between EU Member States, such as the rich/poor, Northern/Southern, and old/new distinctions, a new line is emerging which divides the ruling elite from the rest of the society. This contrast is more dangerous than the other divisions, particularly due to the fact that, by their very definition, the current political institutions and processes controlled by the isolated elite may not overcome or mitigate it.

In that situation, we felt it important to continue with the conferences, one of the reasons being that, from the very beginning, they had been envisaged as a forum for discussions and confrontations between representatives of the political elite and the general public. Since the agenda was no longer confined to the European Constitutional Treaty, we extended the scope of the two autumn conferences, in Olomouc and Brno, to discuss issues of European integration as such. In this broader context, issues concerning communication with the public and the democratic nature of the integration process were then discussed.

The smooth progress and completion of “European Integration and the European Public” conferences would not have been possible without support from a number of institutions. The Institute of International Relations, which co-ordinated the entire project, could rely particularly on the sponsoring co-organizers – the Prague offices of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and Centre Français de Recherche en Sciences Sociales. A key role was also played by academic co-organizers from Czech universities – The Department of Political Science and International Relations, Faculty of Philosophy and the Arts, University of West Bohemia; The Department of Politics and European Studies, Philosophical Faculty, Palacký University; and The Department of International Relations and European Studies, Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University. The conferences were organized with financial support from the

Communications Strategy Department of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from the Department of Information on European Affairs of the Government Office of the Czech Republic. This institutional support was vital to the conferences' success, which was, however, the result of dedicated work by a number of individuals – Jan Karlas, Kristina Larischová, Christian Lequesne, Dan Marek, Markéta Pitrová, Vít Střítecký, Šárka Waisová and many other colleagues and co-workers who helped prepare the conferences.

A brief analysis (policy paper) was drawn up on the topic of each conference to systematize and elaborate on what was heard at the conferences. The uneasy task of converting the conference discussions, often very complex, into accurate and coherent policy papers fell to Jan Karlas, researcher at the Institute of International Relations. The result is the four texts which we present in this publication. We hope that the analyses and recommendations will make a valuable contribution towards a deeper reflection on European integration at a time so uneasy for Europe.

*Petr Drulák*  
*Director, Institute of International Relations*

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Acknowledgements

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