

27 Winter 2006/2007

Perspectives

*The
Central European
Review of
International
Affairs*

IMF Surveillance and America's
Turkish Delight

The European Union's Strategic
Non-Engagement in Belarus

Conflict Transformation
the Estonian Way

Legitimisation Struggles
in Hungarian Politics

Managing Expectations
and Hidden Demands



INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PRAGUE

Perspectives
The Central European Review of International Affairs

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IMF Surveillance and America's Turkish Delight

BESMA MOMANI

Abstract: Recently, there have been US offers to payoff Turkey for its cooperation in the war against Iraq. They are as follows: First, USD 6 billion were offered in exchange for the use of Turkey's bases during a US attack on Iraq; second, USD 1 billion dollars were offered in exchange for the use of the Turkish air space, contingent upon Turkish compliance with the continued IMF surveillance. It is argued that the United States used the IMF as an agent to impose, monitor, and assess strict financial discipline on Turkey. Borrowing arguments from the growing literature on delegation to international organisations and principal-agent models, this case raises important points and explains how the US have benefited from delegating loan monitoring to the IMF's surveillance function.

Key words: delegation theory, IMF-Turkish negotiations, US-Turkish relations, IMF surveillance

INTRODUCTION

The United States' (US) behaviour and actions in recent years have perplexed analysts, pundits, and politicians alike. While the United States has, on one hand, used its military might to invoke changes in state behaviour; it has also successfully and unsuccessfully tried to use international organizations (IOs) as tools of its statecraft. In an attempt to understand the recent case of US endeavours to co-opt Turkey in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, this article uses the principal-agent models as a tool for analysis in understanding the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is argued that, when the US offered Turkey financial assistance for its cooperation in the war against Iraq they effectively delegated their policy-monitoring authority to the IMF. The US made its financial offers to Turkey conditional upon continued Fund surveillance because the US perceived that the IMF could manage, dictate, and monitor the Turkish financial and economic policies better than its own US officials. In this particular case, the IMF was delegated to by its most powerful benefactor and arguably main principal: the United States. This article explores the reasons why states choose to delegate to IOs, as well as examines the case of the United States, Turkey, and the IMF (in 2003), and finally it raises arguments to explain why the United States might decide to opt for delegating loan monitoring to the IMF.

LITERATURE ON DELEGATING TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A growing and nascent body of IR literature examines the question: Why do states delegate certain tasks to IOs? This is placed into question more so when powerful states, such as the United States, opt to use IOs as opposed to bilateral instruments. How does one explain, why powerful states delegate to

international organisation tasks that could be accomplished bilaterally? (Milner, 2003) The literature on delegation to IOs has helped address this and many other questions.

Borrowing from public-choice theories of delegation, the key analytical tools of this emerging IO literature on delegation are derived from rational-choice inspired principal-agent (PA) models, traditionally applied to analysing US domestic politics and corporate behaviour and structure. Principals, such as legislatures or company shareholders, opt to delegate some policy-making authority to outside agents such as legislative committees or operating executives. When applying the PA model to international relations, the state acts as a principal that delegates tasks for an international organisation, the agent, to carry-out on its behalf. At times, powerful states choose to delegate tasks to IOs because of the perceived benefits to be gained. Powerful principals delegate to IOs because the benefits of delegation outweigh the costs incurred and because IOs can achieve outcomes that principals might not have been able to achieve alone. (See Pollack, 1997)

Specifically, this established body of PA models argues that principals delegate authority to agents for a number of reasons. First, powerful states delegate tasks to IOs that can punish offences and reward compliance. International organisations reduce states' incentives to violate rules and norms that underpin the organisation's overall mandate, be it: Arms control, fiscal discipline, trade liberalization, or the disclosure of information regarding potential pandemics. Powerful states perceive these norms as public goods that other states might want to either violate or take for a free-ride. Delegating authority to IOs that can monitor public goods and reduce free-riding behaviour is desirable. Punishment, be it blunt sanctions or indirect humiliation, can be better applied by IOs rather than by powerful states.

Second, states can delegate to IOs rather because they have an aura of neutrality and can effectively arbitrate potential disputes between states. International organisations act as judges, trustees, allocators, and monitors of international agreements and IO norms and conventions (Abbot and Snidal, 1998: 19–23). Having an IO that appears to operate at some arms-length from the principal(s) is important for when disputes arise and resolutions need to be made. The use of IOs has expanded as states have sought legalized, rule-based forums (See Goldstein, et al. 2000). Again, states receiving these rulings might not feel that they are neutral or bias-free; nevertheless, the resolutions have a relatively more neutral aura about them when coming from an IO than a powerful state. Of course, it helps if powerful states can shape the rules and legal norms of the issue-area to reflect its own interests and have the IO package the rules in a code that appears technical or scientific. Consequently, using an IO as arbiter can be a preferred option for powerful states. That said, powerful states will remain wary of delegating to IOs and may prefer “soft laws” that can be complemented by ad hoc bargaining and issue-linkages (See Kahler, 2000: 666).

Third, powerful states choose to delegate tasks to IOs when it is thought to improve policy credibility. Powerful states find this useful when they fear that their short-term interests might prompt them to undermine the future

value of their policies (Hawkins et al., 2003). In essence, powerful states “lock-in” their commitments to preferred policies by delegating to an international organisation (Moravcsik, 2000: 226). This “lock-in” function works well when the international organisation’s policy prescriptions are consistent with the powerful states’ long-term interests and when IOs have an even stronger commitment to the policy than would powerful states (Hawkins et al, 2006: 21). In other words, IOs are useful because they can remain strict and firm in their policy prescriptions, even in the face of political meddling or changes in state power and leadership. Powerful states, particularly democratic ones, cannot always be strict when electoral cycles and public opinion can bend and change state preferences in the short term.

Fourth, states delegate to IOs when it is difficult for contracting states to reach a firm agreement. International organisations set the agenda and push states towards a common ideal point (Hawkins et al, 2003). International organisations can, at times, be delegated considerable authority because it would be difficult for member states to reach a multilateral consensus on pervasive governing issues (See Pollack, 2006a). Consequently, principals are more likely to delegate to an IO when their ideal point is close to that of the collective group’s. Plus, the likelihood of delegation will increase as principals have a say in outcomes and, inversely, delegation will decrease as agents have too much autonomy (Hawkins et al., 2006). Moreover, powerful states are more apt to delegate authority to IOs that have voting rules, which closely mirror the international distribution of power (Hawkins et al., 2006); otherwise, they will resort to their “go-it-alone power” (Gruber, 2000). It follows then, that the common ideal point will be heavily tilted towards powerful state interests with the guise of a collective agreement. An IO leader, if chosen by a coalition of powerful states, can be instrumental in moving member states to this coalition’s ideal point (Hawkins et al., 2006). Hence, the institutional design of an IO can become an important factor as to whether or how far a powerful principal can delegate to an IO.

Fifth, specialization is an important function and benefit of delegating to IOs. It is assumed that international bureaucrats have the “...expertise, time, political ability, or resources to perform [assigned] task[s]” (Hawkins et al, 2003). Principals delegate tasks to international bureaucrats because the latter have knowledge in set tasks; tasks that are frequent and repetitive (See Hawkins et al, 2006, 14). This specialized knowledge is easily thought of as being scientific or technical in nature but also applies to sought-after expertise. These international bureaucrats are deemed to be apolitical and capable of devising policy based on technical criteria. This neutral and technocratic image of the IO staff serves to enhance their organisation’s credibility as independent agents that are not under the direction of principals. While powerful states need to delegate tasks to organisations with credibility, they are likely to delegate less high politics issues and more low politics issues; moreover, powerful states are less likely to delegate to IO’s authority to monitor other powerful states (Hawkins et al, 2006). That said, as IOs become more autonomous international bureaucrats can overstep their mandate, also referred to as mission creep, or can devise a policy that contradicts powerful states’ national interests. Powerful states need to keep

short leashes on IOs and accordingly design IOs that allow powerful principals to continue to monitor IOs. The principal's oversight of its agents' policies remains key to continued delegation.

Sixth, powerful states delegate to IOs to defer responsibility and avoid being blamed for any perceived negative results of controversial or tough policies. In effect, a powerful state launders its preferred policies using IOs. Laundering occurs when "activities that might be unacceptable in their original state-to-state form become acceptable when run through an independent, or seemingly independent, IO" (Abbott and Snidal, 1998). Powerful states need to launder their policy preferences using IOs, more frequently than smaller states, to maintain legitimacy and avoid being labelled the ugly imperialist power. As Hawkins et al. explains: "Precisely because great powers can act unilaterally, delegating to an IO demonstrates a commitment by that state to working within the international consensus" (Hawkins et al, 2003). For these beneficial reasons described, powerful states often opt to delegate tasks to IOs.

According to the principal-agent models, delegating to IOs is assumed to be a rational choice calculation of state actors; but this state-centric perspective can have limitations in explaining why and how IOs at times shape their own preferences. The latter criticism of the rational-choice basis of PA theories is highlighted by a growing and important field of constructivist inspired theories of sociological institutionalism and organisational theories, which give "ontological" and "purposive value" to IOs (See Barnett and Finnemore, 2004). In delegating to the IMF, there are potential costs to be incurred by the principals, what sociologists have called, "unintended consequences", and what IO observers have noted as, "mission creep". After all, to be effective and maintain legitimacy international bureaucrats need to be accorded some autonomy and independence. At the same time, there are risks associated with delegating to IOs – including organisational insularity, staff shirking, and deviation from powerful state interests – generally referred to as "dysfunctional IO behaviour" (Barnett and Finnemore, 1999). In other words, delegating to IOs can backfire and defeat the aims of the principals' preferences – IOs can become insulated from international politics and move away from reflecting the interests of the powerful states. How is this then reconciled by the rational-choice premise of the principals having the knowledge of potential costs and benefits of delegation to IOs? The division between rational-choice and constructivist accounts of IOs, however, has been "bridged" by a recent study that accepts delegations to the IO staff while noting the importance of organisational culture in the staff's respective "zones of discretion" (See Nielson, Tierney and Weaver, 2006; Thatcher and Stone Sweet, 2002: 5). Moreover as Pollack (2006b) notes, principal-agent analyses does not argue that agents are slaves to the principals, but rather it offers theoretical insights into "the sources and the extent of agents' autonomy and influence" (p. 3). The gap between principal-agent models and sociological organisational theories is then perhaps not nearly as wide. In the final section of this article, the ideas of constructivist-inspired theories will be reflected upon by considering the application of the principal-agent model in the case of the IMF.

DELEGATING TO THE IMF: THE UTILITY OF FUND SURVEILLANCE

What is the connection or link between powerful states and IOs, or for the purposes of this study, between the United States and the IMF? While there are many studies that suggest outright US utilization of the IMF as an agent of capitalist control (See Payer 1974; Hayter, 1971; Kahler, 1990), recent studies suggest a more nuanced interpretation of US politicization. Indeed, in many contemporary analyses of IMF decision-making, it is argued that America wields a considerable amount of power and weight within the organisation, particularly at the Executive Board (See Rapkin and Strand, 1997). It has been argued that the United States throws its weight in the designing of IMF loans when strategic states' interests are at risk (Momani, 2004), US global alliances are under threat (Thacker, 1999), and when private financial interests or US commercial banks are in hazard (Gould, 2003; Broz and Hawes, 2006; Oatley and Yackee, 2004; Stiglitz, 2002). While these recent empirical case studies have highlighted US interests, they have not demonstrated why the IMF is delegated to. In other words, why is the IMF chosen as the primary institution that carries out US preferences? Why does the United States trust the IMF as its agent? What is it *about the IMF* that makes it a useful tool for US foreign economic policy?

The Fund has a comparative advantage in conducting surveillance, as it has a wealth of expertise in providing economic and financial analysis to its many members at economies of scale. National governments would be deemed bias in assessing their economic conditions and economic policies. It is difficult for national governments to conduct apolitical audits and to give potentially negative assessments of their economic state of affairs. Moreover, private firms assess states where there is a strong financial and economic interest, to reap the costs of preparing their assessments. Smaller economies and less developed countries would be left on the wayside of private firms' analyses. Hence, the Fund's universal surveillance of its members is a unique public good: Large financial contributors subsidize the expert analysis of smaller free-riding economies (IMF, 1999: 18).

Fund surveillance comes in two forms: Global and, more relevant for our discussion, country surveillance. Country surveillance is achieved through the Fund staff's Article IV Consultations with members. Historically, Article IV Consultations were discussions on coordinating appropriate exchange rate policies; today, Article IV's involve more than discussions on exchange rate policies, as the staff's mandate has expanded to include advising on structural policies, financial policies, military spending, environmental policies, and budget spending (IMF, 1999: 21). According to the Fund's Articles of Agreement, Fund staff should limit their policy advice to quantitative macroeconomic policy reforms. However, in recent years the scope of Fund surveillance has extended beyond macroeconomic policy recommendations, causing some concern. Throughout the 1990s, mission creep of Fund surveillance escalated in reaction to two events: That is, former socialist states seeking membership into the Fund and the Fund's misdiagnosis of the Mexican Crisis. First, the failure of socialist economies and the fall of the Soviet Union resulted in a number of countries seeking the Fund's advice on the transition to neo-liberal economic policies (See Feldstein, 1998: 21–22).

Second, after the Mexican crisis, the Fund attempted to better forecast systemic crises; the Fund was assigned this role because it could best collect, provide, and analyze countries' information. The Mexican crisis also highlighted that "...it is not primarily surveillance over the most likely users of IMF support [i.e. developing and heavily indebted countries], but rather over the countries of greatest systemic importance, this is most vital" (Masson and Mussa, 1995: 38). This expanded scope of Fund surveillance allowed heavy Fund staff scrutiny of "too-big-to-fail countries", such as Turkey.

US AID TO TURKEY: DELEGATING LOAN MONITORING TO THE FUND

In 1999, Turkey tried to tame rapid inflation using an exchange-rate disinflation program, supported by a three-year IMF package. After their brief success, the Turkish government ran into difficulties and the IMF backed Turkey with another emergency loan package in late 2000. The academic and policy literature have pointed out various plausible causes of both the initial and continued Turkish financial crisis (See Eichengreen, 2001; Akyuz and Boratav, 2002; and, Yeldan, 2002).

Following the height of the 2000/2001 financial crisis, Turkey had become one of the largest borrowers of IMF funds, adding a USD 16.3 billion IMF Standby Arrangement (SBA). The 2002 SBA loan agreement included Turkish commitments to floating exchange rates, financial and banking reforms, spending and tax reforms, and public sector reforms. The 2002 Turkish-IMF agreement initially required six staff reviews of the program (later extended to eight). In July 2002, the Fund staff completed its third review of the 2002 SBA and was scheduled to conduct its fourth review at the end of the same year. A few days prior to the Fund staff's third review of the 2002 SBA, US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz (2002) stated:

"Turkey's economic situation simply is of great concern to the United States. We've been working closely with Turkey for over a year now I believe and we've discussed this with the IMF. Again, I mentioned these are not normally the subjects a deputy secretary of defence gets involved with, but when it comes to Turkey, it does, although it's the secretary of treasury who has a leading role in it. Turkey's economic health is hugely important..."

Although of traditional strategic importance to the United States, future IMF-Turkish negotiations were to be complicated by the US administration's plans for Turkish cooperation in the invasion of Iraq. Moreover, Turkey's coalition government announced it would dissolve its government and allow for an early election. The conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP) were favoured to win the November elections, promising a mix of fiscal conservatism and continued cooperation with financiers and the IMF while maintaining socially responsible policies (Selcuk, 2003: 2). The US government, capital markets, and international financiers watched the AKP with ambivalence, uncertain if the party's religious roots would turn them against Western interests. These misgivings were soon abated as the AKP repeated its commitments to working with the international financial system.

The Washington Post reported that as early as October 2002, America and Turkey had already discussed the possibility of US foreign assistance in exchange for Turkish military cooperation (Graham, 2002: A12). A month later, the US administration started to publicly court Turkey's newly elected government to join the coalition against Iraq. Wolfowitz, who was a strong and long-time proponent of strengthening US-Turkish relations, headed high-level meetings between America and Turkey.

On December 3rd, Wolfowitz and Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman discussed military arrangements and economic aid with the Turkish Prime Minister Abdullah Gul. After Wolfowitz met Gul, he spoke to journalists about the continued importance of IMF-Turkish negotiations:

“One thing that we did talk about is the deep concern in Turkey about the condition of the Turkish economy. We've been working closely with the Turkish Government and the IMF and bilaterally ever since the economic crisis broke. We've tried to help Turkey manage its way through it. We understand those anxieties. We are determined to support Turkey, whatever comes, to make sure that the Turkish economy continues to recover. If there is a crisis in this region, we know that Turkey is going to be one of the countries that is the [sic] most affected. We want to make sure we deal with that (Wolfowitz, 2002).”

Wolfowitz acknowledged that the United States was mindful of the economic costs associated with Turkish involvement in a war against Iraq. To deal with Turkey's potential economic costs, it was reported that the United States offered USD 4 billion in exchange for Turkey's military support. Media reports suggested that the Turks had loosely accepted the US offer. Wolfowitz invited the leader of the ruling AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to Washington, DC to further discuss Turkish participation in a war against Iraq. Wolfowitz and Grossman then returned to Washington, to reportedly convey a positive message from the Turkish government.

Immediately following Wolfowitz and Grossman's visit to Turkey, Turkey invited senior IMF officials to discussions with senior officials in Ankara. The Fund's head of the European Department Michael Deppler met with Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Ali Sahin and Finance Minister Kemal Unakitan. Restoring Turkish-IMF talks was a step forward, as the new AKP government was effectively ignoring the Fund and the impending fourth review of the 2002 SBA. A formal staff mission followed the senior Fund officials, commencing on December 9th, and lasting for approximately two weeks. The Fund staff conducted its fourth review of Turkey's 2002 SBA, suggesting that a formal report would be completed in January, when it anticipated that the Turkish government would both finalize their 2003 budget and submit a Letter of Intent (IMF, 2002: 392).

On 26 December 2002, Undersecretary of Treasury John Taylor and Marc Grossman arrived in Turkey to discuss the particulars of the US aid offer. Interestingly enough, Taylor was the senior US administration official in charge of IMF affairs¹. In their discussions with the Turkish government, Taylor and Grossman made it clear that continued Fund surveillance was required to secure US aid. In an interview with Turkish TV and Radio, Grossman (2003) stated that:

“But of course, all of this [aid package] is dependent on all of the other things that we’re talking about with Turkey: Turkey’s continuation with its IMF program, the conversations we’re having with Turkey on other parts of our policy on Iraq. So we’re continuing this conversation and we look forward to it.”

Grossman also confirmed that the principles of the US aid package to Turkey were agreed upon, but that the amount had not yet been determined. In the event of an invasion of Iraq the US administration was prepared to support Turkey financially, but only when Turkey successfully passed subsequent IMF reviews of the 2002 SBA.

In mid-January, an IMF staff team headed by Deputy Managing Director, Anne Krueger, arrived in Turkey to assess the economic situation and to recommend a series of economic policy reforms that would allow for another disbursement of funds under the fourth review of the 2002 SBA. Turkish media reported that Krueger’s visit followed a stern letter sent from Fund management to the Turkish authorities; the letter reportedly warned of noted implementation slippages of the 2002 SBA. The IMF’s second in-command told the local press that there were no plans to increase the loan already committed to Turkey and further denied any US pressure to do so (TDN, 2003a). Krueger (2003) reiterated that the Fund required Turkey to: reduce the public sector primary surplus target to 6.5 percent of GNP for 2003, reform the banking system, and liberalize investment. Krueger reaffirmed the Fund’s demands for tough and immediate policy reforms.

Later that same month, America reiterated their bargaining position. On January 24th, President Bush reportedly sent a letter to Prime Minister Gul that promised US aid in exchange for Turkish cooperation in the invasion of Iraq, but this aid would have conditions. Among the conditions: Turkey must comply with IMF-demanded reforms and pass the, much-delayed, fourth review of the 2002 SBA. Bush’s letter noted that the economic benefits of US aid would best be ensured with continued Fund surveillance of Turkish reforms. Contents of the letter were leaked to the International Herald Tribune and confirmed to be authentic by a senior US official at the Davos economic summit. The same US official further confirmed that they would only release its aid package once the Turkish government passed the fourth review of the 2002 SBA. The Tribune further reported that the US Treasury believed that the Turks were already failing to comply with many of the IMF’s targets. The Treasury, moreover, suggested that serious structural conditions were needed in Turkey. The US government was apparently not budging on its position towards continued Fund surveillance over Turkey. (Friedman and Crampton, 2003)

Once again, the US sent their top official in charge of IMF affairs to Turkey. On February 6th, Taylor, arrived in Ankara to finalize the details of the US aid package. The next day, an IMF mission arrived in Ankara to report on implementation of Turkish reforms (TDN, 2003b). On February 8th, an undisclosed memorandum was signed between the Turkish and US governments on details of US use of Turkish military bases. Taylor returned to Washington to report on the negotiations. Meanwhile in Ankara, Turkish-IMF negotiations continued for weeks throughout early

February; negotiations included the IMF's Turkish Desk Chief Juha Kahkonen, Economy Minister Ali Babacan, and Finance Minister Kemal Unakitan. The focus of discussions was on Turkey's 2003 budget, specifically, policies required to achieve a 6.5 percent of GDP public sector primary surplus. Pursuant to the negotiations, the government had announced the privatisation of Vafibank and the downsizing of 10,000 government employees. Turkey was busy hosting discussions with both US government officials and Fund staff on its economic policies.

Back in Washington, on February 13th, Secretary of State Colin Powell met with the Turkish Foreign Minister Yasar Yakis and Ali Babacan for further discussion regarding the US offer. The same day, US and Turkish negotiators continued talks on the parameters of US aid. Powell invited the senior Turkish delegation to his Northern Virginia home to put a personal touch on the US offer. The very next day, President Bush also met Yakis and Babacan, adding formality to the US offer (Boucher, 2003). Less than one week after these top level meetings, the US became impatient with Turkish ambivalence and offered Turkey USD 6 billion in grants, converted to USD 20 billion in loans, in exchange for the use of Turkey's Incirlik base. This offer also included the provision that the Turkish government passes the fourth IMF review under the 2002 SBA. The US administration wanted Turkey to respond within 48 hours, by February 21st. Turkey continued to hold out on accepting the US offer because it did not want the Fund staff to be indirectly in charge of authorizing the disbursement of US funds (The Economist, 2003: 22).

A few days after the US deadline passed, the Turkish cabinet agreed to recommend the US offer to Parliament. America put its offer in writing with the provision of continued Fund surveillance. Despite the Turkish government's initial optimism, on March 1st, the Turkish Parliament voted and rejected the US offer of USD 6 billion in exchange for the use of Turkish military bases. Two days after the failed vote, Gul announced that Turkey was still committed to implementing IMF suggested reforms in an effort to quell investors' speculation that Turkey would default on its debt obligations. Gul reaffirmed Turkey's commitments to keeping the public sector's primary surplus target at 6.5 percent of the GNP for 2003, fulfilling its commitments to pay back government debts, implement tax reforms, downsize state enterprises, and reform the banking system (IMF, 2003). These reforms were difficult to commit to, because many policies contradicted previous election promises.

The Fund mission team, still in Turkey from February 7th, was discussing the conditions of passing the fourth review. The mission stayed an unusually long time, waiting for Turkey's Letter of Intent and arguably, for Turkey's decision on the US offer linked to the Fund's fourth review. A few days after the failed Parliamentary vote, the IMF reaffirmed that fulfilment of the policy commitments, announced by Gul, would release the fourth instalment of IMF funds.

On March 4th, the IMF's Director of External Relations denied that the US offer of financial assistance to Turkey was ever linked to a continuation with Fund surveillance. In response to a question regarding the link between US aid and the IMF's review of Turkey, Dawson (2003) stated:

“With regard to the linkage that you cited in your question to the vote in the Turkish Parliament, we don’t see what the linkage is. We’ve been continuing these discussions with the Turkish authorities on a program, and the program has the same broad parameters that it has had from the beginning. So I would question the premise, politely, but I would question the premise that there is a linkage.”

The IMF attempted to distance itself publicly from the US offer. The Turkish authorities, however, were quite open about their triangular relationship. On March 12th, Gul (2003) told the press that “meetings [with the US] in the economic area and the aid to cover the damage Turkey could see [from an Iraq war] are tied to the IMF letter of intent. There is no reason to hide this.” Turkish officials refuted the Fund’s emphatic denial of a connection between US aid and Fund surveillance over Turkey.

After the Parliamentary vote against providing the US with access to Turkish military bases, the Turkish government agreed to consider the US’ second offer: USD 1 billion in financial assistance in exchange for the use of Turkey’s airspace. On March 20th, Parliament agreed to allow US over-flights. This put a bandage on US-Turkish relations that were temporarily strained after the first failed parliamentary vote. The favourable March 20th parliamentary vote had also allowed for the United States to ask Congress to consider giving Turkey another package of financial aid. Although there was a serious deterioration of Turkish-US relations, the US government soldiered on to mend the relationship. According to Edward Erickson, the US State Department (and presumably the administration) pressured the Defense Department to quickly mend the rift (2004). Clearly the US viewed that it needed to keep a strong alliance with Turkey (which is also militarily aligned with the US’ Middle East ally, Israel) in light of the inhospitable Iraqi neighbours, namely Syria and Iran. Hence, on March 24th, the Bush administration requested from Congress the release of USD 1 billion in aid, convertible into USD 8.5 billion in loans, for the Turkish government.

In late March, several media reports suggested that the US would weigh-in negatively at the Fund’s Executive Board discussion of Turkey’s staff report, because they were disappointed by Turkey’s March 1st vote in Parliament. These rumours had also sparked some unrest in Turkey’s financial markets. In an interview with Reuters on March 31st, John Taylor was on the defensive by stating that any US reaction to the staff report would be based on economic rather than political considerations. Taylor also added that the staff review of Turkey would most likely be approved (TDN, 2003c). Indeed, on April 6th, the Managing Director announced that Turkey had, in fact, passed its fourth review of the 2002 SBA. On April 18th, the Executive Board officially approved Turkey’s fourth review, enabling Turkey to receive USD 701 million of the original billion-dollar loan package.

After some Congressional debate and hesitation over giving Turkey financial aid, the legislature finally approved the President’s proposals. On April 16th, the US Senate and House agreed to appropriate USD 1 billion for Turkey under Public Law 108-11. According to the statute, the funds would be provided but “...the President shall determine the terms and conditions for issuing the economic assistance [of \$1billion] authorized by this paragraph

and should take into consideration budgetary and economic reforms undertaken by Turkey” (US Congress, 2003). This statute included a loophole: Turkey could be refused the money if it rebuked on Fund surveillance in the upcoming fifth and sixth reviews.

The US promise of USD 1 billion in aid was still earmarked by mid-June, but not delivered to the Turks. A Treasury department spokesperson stressed that talks with Turkey were continuing, but that the US still wanted to see Turkish compliance with Fund reviews. Similarly, Counsellor Minister Tuluy Tanc, of the Turkish Embassy in Washington DC, also confirmed: “the US treasury has expressed that the signing and the finalization [of disbursing US aid] is dependent on the IMF conclusion and the IMF review” (TDN, 2003d). The US had a substantial lure in front of the Turkish government: Cooperate with Fund surveillance and receive USD 8.5 billion in loan guarantees was their appeal.

The Turkish government complied with Fund surveillance and passed the fifth review by the end of the summer, but the United States continued to hold out on giving Turkey the funds. On August 1st, the Executive Board had officially completed the fifth review of Turkey’s 2002 Standby Arrangement; accordingly, the Fund disbursed USD 476 million to Turkey. Originally scheduled for August, the sixth Fund review of the 2002 SBA was then postponed to October 2003. The United States again claimed that the Turkish government had to complete the sixth Fund review to receive the US funds. Turkey remained lured into complying with Fund surveillance until October.

By September, the President’s office alerted Congress that it was ready to transfer the USD 1 billion appropriated for Turkey from the State to Treasury Department. Treasury would leverage the USD 1 billion into USD 8.5 billion in loans for Turkey (Entous, 2003). Details of President Bush’s September 5th letter were obtained by Reuters and included the terms of the money transfer. The Bush administration noted in its letter to Congress that, indeed, Turkey was “presently on track with its IMF-supported economic program” (Entous, 2003). The letter also reconfirmed that US aid to Turkey was “conditional on Turkey’s continued adherence to its IMF-backed economic reform program” (Entous, 2003). For nearly five months, the US delayed disbursing the funds appropriated for Turkey to ensure that the Turkish government complied with the fifth and sixth Fund reviews.

In the corridors of the 2003 IMF-World Bank meetings in Dubai, America and Turkey formally announced the terms of the US financial offer. On September 22nd, John Snow and Ali Babacan officially signed a US-Turkey financial agreement. At the official signing, Snow (2003) commented that: “This U.S. assistance aims to reinforce the Turkish government’s own economic policies. Although the US Treasury will administer the loan program. State and Defense have roles in determining whether Turkey is meeting conditions.” Three days after the signing of the US-Turkish financial agreement, an IMF mission arrived in Ankara to begin the sixth IMF review of the 2002 SBA and to begin preparatory work to allow the release of US loans into Turkey.²⁾

The terms of the 18 month US loan included a 10-year maturity and a 4-year grace period to pay back the principal of the loan. To disburse each of

the four equal instalments in six month intervals, the Turkish Treasury was required to place its request through the US Treasury Department. The US Treasury would then consider Turkey's request – by also taking the views of both the Departments of State and Defense, regarding Turkish compliance with IMF economic reforms and with the US occupation of Iraq – and respond to Turkey's request within 8 business days. It was expected that the first instalment of the US loans would be disbursed after Turkey formally passed its sixth review at the Executive Board (completed in December 2003). Fulfilment of the US loan terms would allow Turkey to draw on needed funds. Although the funds would relieve the Turkish economy, Turkish compliance with Fund surveillance ensured continued adherence to neo-liberal policy reforms.

US DELEGATING SURVEILLANCE OF TURKEY TO THE IMF

Building on the principal-agent (PA) model described and on the IO delegation literature, it is argued that the US delegated its authority to the IMF to monitor its financial offers to Turkey. This section reflects how PA models are used to help us understand why America delegated the monitoring of its loans for Turkey to the IMF. While PA models have often described state motivations, they have been less fruitful in explaining what it is about the agent discussed that makes it a useful tool. Many applied PA models acknowledge “agency slack” or “dysfunctional IO behavior”, where agents motivated by their own bureaucratic consideration can act in contrast to principal preferences. But, what if principals are willing to incur the costs of agency slack because the agent is predictable? To address this, we need to examine why the US preferred to delegate its loan monitoring to the IMF? What is it *about the IMF* that makes this a useful agent? Here, sociological organisation theories are added into the analysis, not as a criticism of the PA models but as a complement to understanding why agents in PA models are useful to their principals. In other words, borrowing from sociologically-inspired theories that give ontological value to IOs: What can we learn about these very IOs to enrich a PA analysis? The six theoretical PA factors previously discussed and the empirical process-tracing of events surrounding the IMF-Turkey-US relationship are assessed when considering why a powerful state like the United States prefers to delegate loan monitoring authority to the IMF.

First, the US perceived that the IMF would be strict in its assessment of Turkish economic reforms and reduce Turkish incentives to renege on its economic commitments. The IMF, notorious for its in-depth and hard-line analysis, would best assure compliance to economic reforms. Here the insights of sociological organisation theories show us that the Fund's organisational culture is characterized as technocratic, hierarchical, conforming, and bureaucratic (Momani, 2007) – for the US, these served as valuable attributes to have in an organisation entrusted with monitoring its loans to Turkey: strict, hard-lined, clear chain of command (and potential interference points), and predictable advice. The Fund also had significant leverage: Thus, renegeing on IMF terms and conditions would likely disqualify Turkey for subsequent loan disbursements under the existing agreement, lead to complicated negotiations for subsequent agreements,

reduce donor confidence in disbursing loans to Turkey, and stymie financial investors' confidence in Turkey. In essence, continuing with Fund surveillance was important to Turkey's long-term macroeconomic health. Moreover, having added US loan offers to the pool of potential IMF disbursements actually strengthened IMF bargaining vis-à-vis Turkey. Turkish compliance and implementation of the 2002 IMF loan, according to both the Fund and the United States, was already perceived to be problematic. Congress was simultaneously criticising the US administration for failing to be "tough" with Argentina. The Argentinean government took advantage of its significant exposure to multilateral lenders and capital markets, by effectively segmenting its creditors (see Cooper and Momani, 2004). The US was worried that Turkey might repeat the Argentinean strategy and renege on its IMF commitments. To prevent this and augment the Fund's leverage with Turkey, the US could use its aid offer to augment the Fund's hand in negotiations with Turkey and ensure continued Turkish compliance with its IMF loan reviews. By delegating to the Fund, the US simultaneously enhanced the Fund's capability to punish and reward Turkey for good behaviour, while ensuring better use of its loan offer.

Second, the US chose to delegate monitoring responsibilities to the IMF because the Fund is better regarded as a neutral agent. To some, the key benefit of delegation is this "credibility rationale" (Majone, 2001; Alter, 2006). Finding an agent whose values differs from the principal and who has an arms length relationship from the principal can lend credibility to agent decisions (Ibid.). It helps to visualise this by questioning whether Turkey's Central Bank or Finance Ministry would have been more receptive to scrutiny by IMF staff than to US State and Defense officials. It is suggested that, indeed, the IMF staff have better access to and relations with debtor state officials. As Louis Pauly reminds us:

"...the Fund and its surveillance apparatus could also play the role of 'heavy' with indebted countries. It could not force policy changes, but it could encourage changes in a way that was less of an affront to national sensitivities than direct interventions by the authorities of another state... [moreover] the Fund could bring its own financial resources to bear and in the broader legal foundation on which its surveillance mandate rested" (Pauly, 1997: 120).

The optics of US monitoring and scrutiny of Turkish economic policies would have been potentially problematic within the Turkish bureaucracy, media, and public. Simply put, monitoring and access to information is easier to attain under the banner of the IMF. This relative ease of access is attainable, because Turkey rightfully perceives itself to be a full-fledged member of the Fund. In contrast to relations with US Treasury officials, Turkish officials are more likely credulous, relaxed, and forthcoming with Fund staff. It has even been suggested that relations between the Turkish and Fund officials have been at times too chummy, particularly since a high profile Turkish official had been a part of the IMF staff.

Third, the United States delegates to the Fund because it improves policy credibility, both in the US and in Turkey. At home, the US wanted to "lock-in" the agreement with Turkey to circumvent Congressional

efforts and subsequent US administration efforts to revoke, change, or write-off the offered loans. Many members of Congress, primarily supporting Greek and Armenian constituencies, have long rejected US aid to Turkey. At the time of Congressional debate on the war in Iraq, members of the House questioned the “wisdom” of giving Turkey financial aid (See Pallone, 2003). Again most recently, the Schiff Amendment attempted to prevent the disbursement of aid to Turkey on the grounds that funds could be used to continue to deny its involvement in the Armenian Genocide. Moreover, the US administration, and the Treasury Department in particular, also “locked-in” a commitment which the State Department and Defence Department could not later circumvent. The Treasury Department could acquire strict surveillance yet, remain un-politicised by the bureaucratic interests of the State and Defense that related to Turkey. Abroad, the US wanted to ensure that the Turkish government continued on the path of economic liberalisation by “locking-in” the existing Turkish government. The US feared that Ankara would take the funds and renege on Fund surveillance (Filkins, 2003). The US was particularly concerned because the AKP had won the November 2002 elections, on a populist and Islamist platform; this platform contradicted many of the previous commitments to IMF reforms. Secular Turkish political elites and domestic business interests also remained weary of the AKP, fearing that the AKP had a religious agenda that would clash with free market interests (Turan, 2003: 1). Throughout the campaign and immediately after taking office, the AKP continued to state and confirm their obligation to fulfil the terms of the 2002 SBA; but, Turkish secular elites, financial investors, journalists, and the Fund continued to be cautious of the government’s populist tendencies. The US did not want to see its financial assistance used to delay the implementation of painful economic liberalisation measures and to bypass Fund surveillance. The US administration feared that the Turkish government would use US aid to circumvent the Fund’s tough economic conditions.

Fourth, the US delegated to the Fund because the IMF staff could clearly set the agenda for continued economic reform in Turkey. The Fund had significant and concurrent experience with understanding Turkish economic policies. US agencies could not produce the type of credible policy papers that would convince the Turkish government of needed economic reforms. Again, the bureaucratic nature of the IMF – an insight of the sociological organisation theories – has shown us that the Fund staff is meticulous about standardisation and, most importantly, documentation (See Harper, 1998; Momani, 2007). The IMF staff was both thorough in their analysis and possessed an important stream of papers (the continuous Article IV consultation arrangements) that the US administration and Treasury Department could use in their analysis and check. The United States understands that the Fund staff is best at monitoring and prescribing neo-liberal economic policy conditions to debtors. Of course the US Agency for International Development has monitored US financial assistance in many developing countries, but much of this agency’s work centres on promoting

trade and investment through project-lending. USAID is less capable than the Fund in monitoring such things as exchange rates, government spending, and financial sector reforms. The US could depend on the Fund to firmly set goals and objectives for the Turkish government. The international community also approved of the Fund's economic prescriptions for Turkey by accepting the initial agreement at the economically representative Executive Board. The existing 2002 SBA loan agreement was a common ideal point already accepted by the Executive Board.

Here the insights of sociological organisation theories are useful for understanding why the IMF, in particular, is effective at ensuring credibility and setting Turkey's economic agenda. The IMF staff, in Barnett and Finnemore's (2004) terms, is "an authority" because they have the expertise and training in macroeconomic policy-making. They are also "in authority" because they can determine Turkey's future access to commercial loans – the "good housekeeping" seal affect of good Fund relations. The United States is more comfortable with delegating loan monitoring to the IMF because the IMF staff is made up of professional economists committed to economic liberalisation. Although, a critic of PA models, Karen Adler has noted that agents can be more influenced by "...professional norms than by concerns about Principal preferences, sometimes dying on their sword rather than be seen as caving to political pressure" (2006: 496) – something Axel Dreher has similarly (although less graphically) suggested about the IMF staff (2004: 447) – this is not necessarily a bad thing when it comes to the IMF staff and economic liberalisation. Here the US' "ideal point" is close to the IMF staff and arguably the IMF staff is more stringent than the US in prescribing economic liberalisation. The IMF staff also helps to "lock-in" US economic preferences. This rarely poses a risk or cost to the US; that said, in rare cases where the IMF staff has devised IMF agreements with debtor countries that are seen to be too strict, the US was given the option and ability to intervene and veto the IMF, so that its policies returned to the US' ideal point. This was exemplified in the case of US interference in Egyptian-IMF loan negotiations, when the IMF staff devised agreements that were too strict and therefore, could potentially jeopardize the stability of the pro-US regime (See Momani, 2005a). The United States was then able to usurp the IMF analysis and effectively water-down the severity of the loan agreements. In the case of economic liberalisation, it serves the US to have the Fund staff stricter in its economic analysis – that the IMF staff is committed to their professional integrity as economists is even better – which, if need be, the US can always usurp using its veto at the Executive Board. It follows then, that the institutional design of the IMF (discussed in the final section) can hold the key to assuaging US fears of "agency slack".

Fifth, the Fund is a highly specialised organisation with valued expertise. The IMF has the expertise and labour power to support investigating and monitoring debtor state policies. It is also to the advantage of the Fund that its staff's policy advice can be deemed as sound and, in many economic and business circles, respected. Compared to US officials, the IMF staff is more likely to be perceived as international civil servants that use economic

evidence to dictate their policy prescriptions rather than political agents. These “econocrats” are often viewed as international bureaucrats above the ugly-business of politicking. This is not to say that IMF staff advice is not viewed by some to be politically harmful, but the key point is that *relative to* US officials and bureaucrats, the Fund staff policy advice is deemed less politicized. At the same time, the Fund staff share similar economic paradigms with the US Treasury and other international aid agencies; this shared worldview is often reflected in the concept of the “Washington Consensus”. It also helps that the Fund staff is primarily made up of US-trained economists, despite having diverse multinational backgrounds, who have shared the same technocratic and neoclassical economic training (Momani, 2005b: 167–187). So, the Fund and the US economic paradigm are closely aligned and the US loses little in terms of potential policy slippages when delegating to the IMF.

Sixth, the US wanted to defer the responsibility of monitoring and dictating Turkish economic policy to the IMF, to avoid blame and criticism of undermining Turkey’s economic policy-making sovereignty. As Abbott and Snidal suggest: “IFI [international financial institution] restrictions on national autonomy (e.g., on project design or broader economic policies) may not carry the same domestic political implications of dependence and inferiority as would conditions imposed directly by, say, the United States or France” (2005: 18). The US made its offer for financial assistance to Turkey on condition of continued IMF surveillance because the US, politically speaking, could not put or monitor stringent economic conditions on the funds. The potential political quagmire that would have been created between Turkey and the United States, had the latter placed conditions on its loans, was addressed by laundering. The United States laundered its preference for strict economic conditions on its financial assistance to Turkey by using Fund surveillance to its advantage. The Turkish case demonstrates the US perceived utility of delegating tasks to the IMF. While the six aforementioned factors discuss the perceived benefits of delegation, I will now turn to what this means for powerful states, like the United States, as principals and the future use of PA modelling.

As noted earlier, powerful states are likely to delegate less high political issues and more low political issues – in both technical and scientific issue areas. The IMF, like the scientific and environmental IOs rest on technical staff and will therefore see more delegation. That said, powerful states as principals will not delegate authority to IOs to monitor other powerful states (Hawkins et al, 2006). This is perhaps why the US ensured that recent calls for multilateral surveillance of global imbalances, principally involving China, Saudi Arabia, Japan, and the US, would stay out of the IMF staff’s hands and in state official-level conversations. Principals will be more comfortable delegating to IOs on issue-areas that affect weak states and less comfortable when delegating to strong states. Institutional design will often entrench this tendency. After all, the IMF uses weighted-voting based on members’ liquidity position in the Fund (financial contribution to the IMF overall) and gives the US a veto on many important decisions. If principals cannot secure their ultimate control over the organisation, there are fewer

chances of delegation and frankly involvement in the organisation. The case of the United States being snubbed by the United Nations is indicative of this potential, which proves IOs to be irrelevant.

Institutional design of IOs will also determine how much authority a powerful state delegates. Egalitarian – like IOs will be used less and even circumscribed by principals – the proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements and stalling at the World Trade Organization is perhaps telling of this. This is not the case at the IMF. Indeed, the IMF’s institutional design is well – suited to its principal’s interests – and on some issue areas the G5 constitutes a “collective principal” (See Copelovitch, 2006). Voting rules are highly tilted in favour of the United States, such that the common ideal point is reflective of US interests. The IMF voting rules have historically ensured that the US retained their veto power, as the largest contributor of Fund liquidity. The Fund staff has “zones of discretion” in which it can design autonomous ideas and policies, but the United States has its say at the end of the process on the Executive Board. The institutional design of the IMF is a mechanism to ensure that the IMF staff does not become overly autonomous and take the IMF in the wrong direction.

CONCLUSION

The current interest in using PA models, by both proponents and critics, to explain why powerful states delegate to IOs is clearly growing. Like all models, there are limitations to PA assumptions. Some of the criticism has centred on how IOs are bureaucratic entities that have acted in contrast to their principal’s bidding, thus creating “dysfunctional behaviours”. The tools of the PA critics, namely sociologically-inspired theories, could be used to better understand why IOs are used. Again, what is it about some IOs that make them attractive to principals?

The growing principle-agent literature has provided a valuable tool to understanding why powerful states like the United States benefit from delegating policy monitoring authority to international institutions like the IMF. The case of Turkey and the US, ensuing from the invasion and occupation of Iraq, has demonstrated America’s perceived utility of delegating its policy preferences through the Fund. The Fund will continue to play an important role in international affairs and global governance as its mandate to increase country surveillance enlarges. Presumably, we may find America also increasingly resorting to IOs to exercise policy monitoring and surveillance as its international stature continues to diminish. The United States will find it useful to hide behind IOs, like the IMF, which share its policy preferences and paradigms.

ENDNOTES

¹ In coming to office, Taylor had argued that strong IMF conditions ensured continued Turkish commitment to IMF conditions. See Baker (2001).

² Turkey completed the sixth review in December, and two remaining reviews were completed successfully through 2004. The agreement expired on 3 February 2005.

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The European Union's Strategic Non-Engagement in Belarus Challenging the Hegemonic Notion of the EU as a Toothless Value Diffuser

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Abstract: Beyond the European Union's increasingly fortified eastern border lies the continent's blind spot – Europe's last dictatorship. The Republic of Belarus, which slid into authoritarian rule in the mid-1990s, is amongst the academically most underinvestigated states in contemporary Europe. This article will contribute to the thin body of literature on Belarus by exploring the policies of the European Union, the continent's self-styled bringer of peace and prosperity, towards its unknown eastern neighbour. Within the existing literature on the EU's policies towards Belarus, the article identifies a dominant narrative, which depicts the Union as a 'toothless value diffuser'. This hegemonic notion shall be challenged and replaced by the concept of "strategic non-engagement", which more adequately describes the EU's approach vis-à-vis Minsk.

Key words: European Union, Belarus, value diffusion, Westphalian agenda, democratisation, stability, the EU's eastern neighbourhood, the "Russia factor"

INTRODUCTION

A simple EU-centred model of post-Cold War Europe will unearth the underlying power structures by distinguishing between three types of states – EU members, potential EU members and outsiders. Whilst the members of the first group decide upon the rules for accession and the members of the second group respond to the rules by remodelling their economies and state *apparati*, it is the third group that requires attention, for it is between the enlarged European Union and the latter group that the Europeans are witnessing the emergence of a new fault line – a "golden curtain".¹ The Republic of Belarus is clearly to be located in this outsider group. Minsk was in 2006 the only European capital that had not yet explicitly asked for admission to the exclusive Western club. Moreover, it is the only member of the former Soviet Union that does not have a contractual relationship with the EU. The young state does not only possess a comparatively anomalous form of government, but also an extraordinary position in the European system of states, which might best be described as westward isolation. The

exceptionality of the Belarusian case and the country's position in the Union's direct geographical proximity qualify it as an ideal testing ground for theories of European Foreign Policy (EFP).² Few theorists have however taken up the challenge. Yet, this should not imply that texts on the EU's policy towards Belarus have been theory-free.

In fact, a cluster of theoretically related ideas, for simplicity summarised under the term toothless value diffusion, can be identified as tacitly underlying the vast majority of contributions to the topic.³ As will be pointed out in more detail below, this notion of toothless-value diffusion, also referred to as model 1, rests on the assumption that the EU has an interest in engaging in Belarus. It however excuses the failure to achieve this goal by pointing at the circumstances under which the Union is forced to operate in its relations with the country. Hence, it creates the image of an EU that wishes to engage but is a victim of its own weakness. The tacitness and uncontested status of model 1, as well as its proximity to official sources on EU-Belarus relations are somewhat problematic. After all, any theory that confirms the government's official position in principle legitimises its actions and even its very existence. Robert Cox' words, "[t]heory is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose", should be regarded as a warning in this respect (Cox, 1981: p. 359). Such a theory, whether explicit or implicit, may have the potential to obstruct a critical view and render impossible the intellectual aim of "speaking truth to power" (Said, 2001). Therefore, this article challenges this hegemonic model by contrasting it with a second notion, that of strategic non-engagement (model 2).

Both models depart from similar assumptions about the Union's interests – in both cases the EU is said to prioritise stability in its neighbourhood.⁴ Both models focus on the European Union as a more or less homogenous actor, although the first model stresses its status as *sui generis*. This might be problematic for various reasons, perhaps above all because of the fact that the EU does not possess the main features of statehood. Furthermore, this difference between the European Union and typical Westphalian states is significant in that its institutional framework is not comparable to that of any such state. Nevertheless, treating the EU as a homogenous actor *vis-à-vis* Belarus can be defended on the grounds that the EU's (in) actions have considerable impact on its external environment. Hence, it has been increasingly perceived as an actor in its direct neighbourhood. Secondly, even Westphalian states are less unitary than they were before the early 20th century. In fact it may be argued that whilst the European Union has been acquiring some of the attributes of Westphalian states, the foreign policy process in Westphalian states has become more like that of the European Union, decentralised and fuzzy. The competition of governmental and non-governmental actors in a Westphalian state is in many ways comparable to that of the member states and institutions on the EU level. Most importantly, it is possible to treat the EU as a homogeneous actor if one places the spotlight on the policy outcome as opposed to the policy process, which is the case in this study. Especially the second part will follow the latter approach by observing the way in which the EU's (in) actions shed light upon its interests.

This article poses the question as to which of the two chosen models, that of toothless value diffusion or that of strategic non-engagement, best describes the EU's policy towards Belarus. It claims that by employing the notion of the EU as a toothless value diffuser, the mainstream discourse has neglected a second, more Westphalian model, that of strategic non-engagement. Furthermore, it has helped to camouflage this second agenda by excusing the European Union for failing to achieve its explicit goal – the democratisation of a country that finds itself hurled back into the bleak days of the Brezhnev era. After a short description of EU–Belarus relations since the establishment of the republic in 1991, the essay will introduce the hegemonic model of toothless value diffusion and by x-raying the supporting evidence show its weaknesses. Subsequently, the model of strategic non-engagement will be advanced. This section will form an attempt to fill in the first model's gaps and urge scholars to re-conceptualise the European Union's actions towards Belarus.

THE EU'S POLICY TOWARDS BELARUS: THREE USEFUL SUBDIVISIONS

This short section aims at subdividing the time span between Belarusian independence in 1991 and the current state of affairs into three periods. This will enable the article to outline the evolution of the EU's policy and clarify some of the essentials. Initially, the European Communities' policy towards Belarus had been indistinguishable from the approach towards the other Western Newly Independent States (WNIS)⁵. In 1993 for instance, the young Belarusian state and the European Union, began the negotiations on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), signed two years later. Similar to the EU's relations with Ukraine, the policies originally aimed at freeing the WNIS from remaining Soviet nuclear warheads. On the Union's full agenda, the relations with Belarus and the other WNIS were however overshadowed by the EU's internal evolution and the gradual integration of East Central Europe into the Western institutional structures (Löwenhardt, 2005: p. 27). Hence, the first period was marked by relative disinterest and neglect from the side of the EU. When and whether this indifference finally ended is disputed. Whilst there are some signs that this lack of concern continued to be a driving force behind the EU's policies, the advance of the populist Alexander Lukashenka, who assumed the presidency after a landslide victory in 1994, is commonly regarded as a turning point towards a more concerned EU approach.

The first key event that impacted directly on the relationship was the EU's response to the November 1996 referendum by which Lukashenka established his firm grip over the country. In its 1997 Council Conclusions the Union failed to recognise the referendum, the constitutional changes made by the president, as well as the new puppet parliament. Furthermore, it devised a catalogue of measures to punish the emerging dictatorship, including the non-ratification of the PCA (Davidonis, 2001: p. 23). In the aftermath of these events the mutual relationship deteriorated rapidly with the 1998 Drazdy affair forming a nadir, during which a number of EU member state ambassadors were forced by the regime to leave their residences. Whilst some contributions on EU-Belarus relations claim that the

Union's policy underwent a second remodelling after the establishment of a "step-by-step approach" in 1999 (Schimmelfennig, 2005: p. 21), others have identified a 1997 policy framework, which has survived all major attempts to find a new approach (Lynch, 2005: p. 106).

This article claims that the next main turning point was the Union's Neighbourhood strategy, devised in response to the altered political landscape that was to accompany the 2004 enlargement. For both of the two chosen models, this last period is of relevance and must be regarded somewhat separately from previous phases. For model 1, the incentive for value promotion increased due to the fact that Belarus was to emerge as a direct neighbour of the enlarged Union. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is interpreted as a major attempt to offer Belarus an opportunity to cooperate and catch up with the West. Model 2, however, observes an increased motivation to harden the EU's new border and respect Russia's sphere of influence. Hence, this last period is characterised by diverging interpretations between the two models. It is now time to reveal their strengths and weaknesses.

Model 1: toothless value-diffusion

The dominant narrative on the European Union's policies towards Belarus depicts the EU as a toothless value diffuser. This image is loosely and tacitly built upon some of the recent non-realist conceptualisations of the EU as an external actor, including Ian Manners' idea of a "normative power" and Robert Cooper's notion of a "postmodern" foreign policy. Manners for instance emphasises that in addition to traditional accounts of the Union as an external actor, European Foreign Policy may be characterised as guided by "common principles and a willingness to disregard Westphalian conventions" (Manners, 2002: p. 239). Cooper maintains that "the postmodern, European answer to threats is to extend the system of cooperative empire ever wider" and consequently to engage in the European Union's neighbourhood (Cooper, 2003: p. 78). These statements rest on the idea that a specifically European identity and "the complex EU decision making contribut[e] to a strong resistance to geopolitical zero-sum thinking" (Löwenhardt, 2005: p. 41) and a "preference for engagement" (Smith, 2003: p. 107), especially in the field of human rights and democracy. Model 1 does however not argue that the diffusion of values has replaced an interest-based foreign policy; instead, it merely describes the means by which these interests are achieved.

Unlike model 2, the implicit notion of the EU as a toothless value diffuser sets out from the assumption that the EU and Belarus are the important objects to be examined in the context of the EU's policies towards Belarus. Whereas the European Union is depicted as a somewhat static actor, whose actions reflect the goal to promote its internal values, Belarus is assigned a more active role - it has the choice of accepting or rejecting the EU's offers. From this point of departure, the model proceeds by forwarding a set of partially interconnected statements. Firstly, the European Union is said to have a strong self-interest in the promotion of its values in Belarus. This interest includes the democratisation of Belarus with all its dimensions and

the introduction of Washington consensus reforms. Secondly, the EU is said in the past to have engaged in Belarus to diffuse its values. Thirdly, most defendants of this model conclude that the Union has failed to diffuse its values because of the unfavourable domestic structures in Belarus and most importantly, because of Belarusian self-isolation.

The hegemonic conceptualisation of the EU in its relations with Belarus is derived from the thin body of available literature on the topic, mostly from policy papers written for foreign policy think tanks. In order to counter the possible criticism of having created a straw man, it must be acknowledged that model 1 has simplified the dominant narrative to a necessary degree. Some of the texts that are tacitly based on the idea of toothless value diffusion for instance incorporate what later will be referred to as the “Russia factor”. It is however important to separate the two models, as they present the European Union in two distinctly different shapes. The following section will be structured according to the main statements, which have been chosen to identify the notion of toothless value diffusion. Where appropriate, it will also point out the similarity between the dominant academic and the official discourse.

1) The EU’s interest lies in the diffusion of its values in Belarus

The idea that the European Union has an interest in engaging in Belarus by diffusion of its values is based on both a simple and plausible logic, which model 2 however will criticise as being simplistic. Model 1 rests on the idea that conflict between states which have internalised the principles of liberal democracy and market capitalism is unlikely.⁶ Furthermore, states embracing Western principles such as the respect for human rights, the rule of law, and market capitalism, will be inclined to cooperate to their mutual benefit. Belarus with its authoritarian ruler and its Soviet-style command economy forms an anti-model to the European West, which makes it an enclave of uncertainty.

Based on the above and similarly to model 2, the authors using the toothless value diffusion framework identify stability as the EU’s primary goal in Belarus as part of the WNIS (Björn Hettne & Frederik Söderbaum, 2005: p. 550; Hiski Haukkala & Arkady Moshes, 2004: p. 13; Heinz Timmermann, 2003: p. 7). As in the case of Belarus an armed conflict is unlikely, the aim of stability is a response to the perceived dangers of internal unrest, which could threaten the Union’s trade with Russia. Secondly, so-called soft security threats, like immigration, cross-border crime, the proliferation of weapons, or environmental hazard serve as incentives to engage and ensure the stability in Belarus. Based on the above ideas about interdependence and further encouraged by the belief in the superiority of Western values, stability is to be achieved by the establishment of “systems of ‘good governance’ [...] and a certain degree of ‘westernisation’” (Guicherd, 2002: p. 11). This westernisation rests on two pillars – democratisation⁷ and economic restructuring (Dumasy, 2003: p. 184), the latter implicitly referring to the adoption of reforms which are in compliance to the rules set up by the Washington consensus institutions. The European Union is thus presented as an actor, which “seeks possibilities to

overcome Belarusian isolation” and has a strong interest in including Belarus in the “European family” (Piehl, 2005: pp. 255 & 303).⁸ The EU is said to have engaged in the export of its model of democracy in the WNIS “because it was confident that democratisation would ultimately result in stable, friendly states” (Löwenhardt, 2005: p. 34).

Without engaging in a discussion about the European Union’s (dis)interest in Belarus, the dominant narrative has chosen to adopt a view on the EU’s interests, which is dangerously similar to those interests propagated by the Union’s statements and documents itself. The European Security Strategy for instance speaks of the need to promote “a ring of well-governed states to the East of the European Union” (European Council, 2003: p. 8). In 2002, Romano Prodi exclaimed that the aim of the European Neighbourhood Policy in general was “to extend to this neighbouring region a set of principles, values, and standards which define the very essence of the European Union” (*as quoted in*: Kelly, 2006: p. 40). The Commission’s Country Strategy Paper on Belarus holds that, “the long-term goals of the EU are that Belarus be a democratic, stable, reliable, and increasingly prosperous partner” (European Commission, 2004: p. 3). It is almost needless to say that the objectivity and trustworthiness of official sources in the academic debate are to be doubted. Nevertheless, there seems to be a lack of critical distance between official and academic sources.

II) The European Union has engaged in Belarus to diffuse its values

Model 1 holds that the Union has continuously engaged in Belarus by the means of value diffusion. Since the authoritarian shift and especially since the adoption of a step-by-step policy in 1999, the Union is said to have acted to democratise Belarus with the vision of normalising the relationship (Piehl, 2005: p. 303). This second statement is also marked by closeness to the official position. Uta Zapf, member of the German Bundestag, for instance stressed that, “the EU has repeatedly held out its hand towards Belarus” (Zapf, 2003: p. 19), whilst some scholars have explained that “the EU gave Belarus several occasions to reverse its policies” (Gnedina, 2005: p. 29). Whereas academics have labelled the EU’s approach “value-based” when compared to the policies of the United States in the region (Haukkala, 2004: p. 20), the Commission’s Communication on Wider Europe emphasises the “EU’s commitment to common and democratic values” (European Commission, 2003: p. 15). After Belarus’ flawed elections of March 2006, Javier Solana, the EU’s High Commissioner for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, was quick to point out that the EU “would like to continue being engaged with the people of Belarus, [...] so that they really accept to move on to being a democratic country” (*as quoted in* Lobjakas: 2006). Whilst in the following the evidence for this statement is presented, model 2 will later question this claim by presenting counter-evidence that suggests that the EU’s approach may more adequately be described as non-engagement.

The proponents of model 1 argue that the EU’s policies have rested on a dual strategy that encompassed both positive engagement towards and pressure on Lukashenka’s Belarus. This “carrot and stick strategy” was

introduced in the second period of EU-Belarus relations, but may also be found in period three (Sadowski, 2003: p. 248). In the first period, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which was granted to all members of the CIS, is said to have been the main tool for value diffusion in Belarus. Its agenda included assistance with the transition to a market-based economy and the establishment of a free trade zone, both dependent on Belarus' achievements in the political realm. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the previous section, the Union decided not to ratify the agreement in response to the domestic changes introduced by the government in Minsk, which formed part of its pressure approach.

In the second period, after the introduction of the EU's catalogue of punishments, the step-by-step approach tried to bring Belarus back on the track of economic and democratic transition, a policy that is said to "illustrat[e] the EU's commitment to encouraging peaceful opposition and a regard for human rights in the country" (Dumasy, 2003: p. 183). In the run-up to the 1999 parliamentary elections, the EU offered a revision of its policies, conditional on Belarusian reforms leading to a free and fair election. The EU sent a signal by returning its ambassadors to Minsk and lifted the initial visa bans, which resulted in Lukashenka's government signing the OSCE Istanbul Summit Declaration, which supported the actions of the OSCE Advisory and Monitoring Group (Sadowski, 2003: p. 244).

The European Neighbourhood Policy has been interpreted by the proponents of model 1 to reflect value diffusion, as it "offered an opportunity [for Belarus] to join the enlarged EU's 'ring of friends'" (Haiduk, 2004: p. 130). The ENP would have aimed at the participation of Belarus in the European Common Market and the assistance with Belarus' integration into the global economy as well as increased cooperation in a variety of areas, including that of soft security. As however the ratification of the PCA serves as a precondition for the participation in the ENP, Belarus has been excluded from this key policy that governs the Union's relations with its periphery (Piehl, 2005: p. 314). The EU's engagement strategy throughout the second and third period was accompanied by repeated public condemnation of the regime. Furthermore, the Union froze the dialogue on the official level time after time and initiated a number of visa bans, as happened again in the aftermath of the 2006 presidential elections. In the last period, the European Union also increased its support for the Belarusian opposition. Javier Solana for instance met with opposition leaders in 2005. Additionally, the Commission started to co-fund "independent" broadcasting into Belarus, as for instance the short daily programmes, launched in 2005 by Deutsche Welle (Euractive, 2005).

III) The EU has failed to diffuse its values

As the dominant narrative rests on the assumption of the EU's interest in value promotion, the statement that the EU's policies have failed is nothing but a logical conclusion, given the continuing situation in Belarus (Lynch, 2005: p. 100; Gromadzki, 2005: p. 2).⁹ Whilst the European Union's official documents tend to avoid the word "failure", and therefore depart from the dominant academic narrative, they both find a common voice in explaining

the Union's apparent difficulties in exporting its values to Belarus – Belarusian self-isolation and the unfavourable domestic structures.

The idea that the unfavourable domestic structures have significantly contributed to the EU's "failure" focuses on two levels – the regime and the population. Model 1 convincingly argues that Lukashenka's regime neither has a basic interest in the transition to a liberal democracy, nor to a market-based economy. Whilst the former might weaken his grip over the opposition and the media, the latter would destroy one of the main pillars of his rule – the command economy. Furthermore, the weakness of the opposition is frequently mentioned as a factor undermining the success of the EU's strategy. As model 2 will argue, these obstacles are, however, far from insurmountable. Concerning the Belarusian population, some have identified a "misunderstanding of the notions of democracy and market economy" as an underlying impediment to the success of a Western-style transition (Gnedina, 2005: p. 33). Whilst it remains somewhat debatable whether there really is a "correct understanding" of these two concepts, the statement highlights a tendency to confuse the popular support for a cruel, but charismatic ruler with the rejection of forms of democratic organisation *per se*. Similarly, Belarusians' suspicion towards Washington consensus reforms, which after all did not have the promised effect on Russia and Ukraine,¹⁰ must not be interpreted as a general aversion towards transition. Other common explanations of the EU's failure include the lack of a clear national identity in Belarus as a basis for a democratic community (Davidonis, 2001: p. 33; Piehl, 2005: p. 256), a statement, which has been credibly refuted (Brzozowska, 2002). To conclude, the argument that unfavourable domestic structures have led to the failure of the EU's policies must be treated with great caution. Whilst the regime level obstacles are significant yet vanquishable, the idea that the Belarusian population presents an impediment to democratisation lacks substance.

The term "self-isolation" (Lindner, 2005. *See also*: Sadowski, 2003: p. 240; Haiduk, 2004: p. 127; Davidonis, 2001: p. 22; Timmermann, 2003: p. 16) unites academic and official sources (European Commission, 2006ii). Ernst Piehl even goes as far as to denounce the idea that the EU has participated in the isolation towards Belarus as a myth (Piehl, 2005: p. 304). Evidence for acts of self-isolation on the side of the regime may indeed be found in excess. Although the relationship with Russia has deteriorated to some degree during the two terms in office of Vladimir Putin, Belarus has orientated itself eastward at the expense of a closer relationship with the West. This is manifest in the regime's attempts to integrate with the Russian Federation whilst openly rejecting the possibility of accession to the European Union. Belarus has hardly made any attempts to fulfil the Istanbul criteria, which would allow the country to reacquire observer status in the Council of Europe, which it lost in 1997 (Haiduk, 2004: p. 110). In general, Belarus' uncooperative behaviour towards the phalanx of the EU, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE, is well documented, making it unmistakably clear that Minsk has consciously acted to isolate itself from the West. However, by emphasising self-isolation as a reason for the EU's failure, one implicitly deemphasises or even rejects the European Union's

participation in Minsk's seclusion. The Union's active involvement in the isolation of Belarus is however of key importance to reach a satisfactory understanding of the matter, as model 2 argues.

Model 2: strategic non-engagement

Although it has been claimed that "as it stumbles into the region beyond its eastern border, the EU sometimes appears clumsy and somewhat reluctant", it is increasingly clear that the European Union is following a strategy in its eastern neighbourhood (Trenin: 2005, p. 8). Whilst this strategy may involve engagement and value diffusion towards some states and regions, model 2 claims that concerning Belarus the European Union's policies are best characterised by conscious non-engagement. Although it acknowledges that the EU has undertaken some limited actions against the regime in Minsk, model 2 argues that non-engagement describes the EU's approach more adequately than engagement or inconsistent engagement.

The idea of strategic non-engagement has received little attention in the contemporary debate despite the fact that some of its arguments are part of the mainstream discourse. Although the model is vaguely built upon realist ideas about power politics, it departs from Waltz's slim neo-realist theory in a number of aspects. Neither does model 2 reveal exogenous interests, nor does it rely on the absolute importance of material capabilities. However, it is realist in assigning Belarus the role of an object, and instead focuses on the EU and Russia, the wielders of power in Europe and their relationship analysed in terms of power. Secondly, it stresses the importance of perceived spheres of influence in contemporary Europe. Finally, model 2 questions the assertion that the EU's complex decision-making apparatus disallows a Westphalian foreign policy agenda.

This second model puts forth four statements. Firstly, the European Union's policy may best be described as that of non-engagement. Secondly, the European Union is said to prioritise the promotion of political stability in its neighbourhood, which serves the Union's perceived geo-economic as well as both hard and soft security interests. However, unlike in model 1, this stability is not necessarily one that is based upon democratic and economic transition. Thirdly, the EU is said to aim at creating a hard border between itself and Belarus by excluding the country from European integration. Finally, the European Union responds to Russian influence in the WNIS by not intervening with its full capacity in Belarus. Model 2 puts forth the idea that the EU has deliberately opted for a policy of non-engagement. Unlike the first model, the notion of strategic non-engagement does not principally describe the European Union's policy as a failure, as it does not use the same yardstick to measure success. In fact, it leaves room for the assertion that the Union has been able to promote its interests in Belarus. Moreover, Belarus and the EU have found a comfortable status quo, which enables both actors to divert attention to other fields of foreign political action (Guicherd, 2002: p. 28).

"[I]n its external action the Union [...] wants to be seen as an essentially normative power" (Haukkala, 2005: p. 2). Thus, the presence of an agenda of non-engagement is a thorn in the European Union's flesh. Whilst value

diffusion carries a positive connotation and legitimises the EU as an actor in international politics, which can be seen for instance in the Union's expansion to Central and Eastern Europe, a more Westphalian agenda is considered "immoral" and could lead to criticisms of the EU's policies by civil society. There is however evidence of Westphalian aspirations and of policies reflecting these interests, quite to the resentment of the EU officials and some academics who have upheld the image of the European Union as a foreign political actor *sui generis*.

1) The EU's non-engagement

When faced with an uncooperative dictatorship like Lukashenka's Belarus, there are two basic options of promoting change – an aggressive strategy of regime change or the provision of powerful incentives that nudge the regime in the direction of change. Whilst the first approach would be antagonistic towards the regime and try to remove the ruling elite, the second leaves the regime intact, but aims at changing its behaviour. The European Union, however, has chosen neither path. Model 1 has largely retrieved the evidence for characterising the EU as a toothless value diffuser from an elaboration on the EU's carrot and stick approach. Karen Smith has described Belarus as an "extreme case of an authoritarian regime apparently little enticed by the EU's carrots and little disturbed by the EU's sticks" (Smith, 2005: p. 770). It is important to stress that this observation by itself says little about the sticks and carrots. The carrots, given by the European Union to Belarus, were visibly ill-designed for uncooperative authoritarian states. The sticks, which mainly consisted of stripping the regime of its international legitimacy, were more geared at upholding the image of the EU as a democratising force than they were of any practical significance. The European Neighbourhood Policy has for instance little to offer as an incentive and the non-ratification of the PCA had little effect due to the existence of the most-favoured nation status (Hukkala, 2004: p. 29). Engagement has been sporadic and rather declaratory in nature. The public denunciation of Minsk has been limited to short periods before and after presidential and parliamentary elections and has in some cases been followed by some limited form of punishment. It is often the larger states that make sure that this penalty is not too severe, as the case of the recent visa bans shows (Lobjakas, 2006).

Furthermore, there exists a considerable discrepancy between the EU's actual policies and a list of possible actions the Union could have resorted to. This shows that the European Union did not exhaust its powers. Although the European Union demanded from Belarus to "fundamentally alter its course", it did not offer incentives that had the potential of impacting on the regime in Minsk (Lynch, 2005: p. 97). The European Union for instance did not hold out the long-term prospect of EU membership. Whilst to Lukashenka's anti-capitalist and anti-democratic government such a prospect would have been of little interest, it would have created pressure on the government by depriving the regime of the anti-Western image, which has been of great significance to Belarusian propaganda. The fact that the inclusion of the membership option as a powerful incentive for reforms is not as "totally unrealistic" as some scholars argue, can be seen from the fact

that the Union has followed a very different approach on the Balkans (Linder, 2004: p. 202).

The European Union has also had great “difficulties” in supplying the Belarusian opposition and civil society with financial support. In general, the EU’s financial support to the Belarusian non-governmental sector has remained insubstantial, especially when compared to the United States (Association of International Affairs, 2004: p. 29). The lack of higher financial efforts, which would have been part of a more hard-line strategy of regime change, is often blamed on the rigid TACIS system (Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States). TACIS limits the EU’s aid only to states, which are willing to cooperate in this field, a precondition that is not met in Belarus for obvious reasons (Bertelsmann Stiftung, n.d.). Nevertheless, financial support to countries under authoritarian rule has been technically possible, as can be seen from the case of *Solidarność* in the 1980s, as Zurawski points out (Zurawski, 2005: p. 90). A number of other more symbolic facts illustrate the European Union’s disinterest in engaging in Belarus. Few member states maintain embassies in Minsk and the European Commission has not opened a delegation in Minsk, which demonstrates the Union’s indifference towards self-advertisement (Grant, 2006: p. 4). Neither has the European Union formulated a Common Strategy on Belarus, although Common Strategies on both Russia and Ukraine have been devised, nor was it particularly benevolent towards Poland’s proposal of an “Eastern dimension”. Having established the EU’s non-engagement, it is difficult to negate the “EU’s *de facto* isolation of Belarus” (Guicherd, 2002: p. 28).

II) Stability in Belarus

As stated above, the model of strategic non-engagement, similarly to model 1, puts forth the idea of stability as the key to the European Union’s interest in Belarus. As the field of energy security has risen on the EU’s agenda, Belarus has become of special interest to the Union as a transit country (European Commission, 2006ii). Belarus does not only possess shorter transit routes from Russia into the enlarged European Union, it has also charged lower fees for the transit of gas.

Beyond the status as a transit country, Belarus has however little to offer. Its economy is comparably insignificant, although its importance has risen since the accession of Poland and Lithuania. The Belarusian command economy is however relatively stable and will remain so if Moscow does not decide to significantly increase the energy prices, which Belarus still receives at a favourable rate. In 2001, the average income in Belarus was comparable to that of Latvia and considerably higher than in Bulgaria and Romania (United Nations, 2003: p. 238). On the UN’s human development index, Belarus ranked 53rd, just behind Latvia (50th) and before Romania (72nd) (ibid). Thus, there is no urgent need for the European Union to encourage economic stability in Belarus by Washington consensus reforms. Although Dimitri Trenin and others have referred to Belarus as a “political time bomb”, one may argue that the current political situation is comparably stable (Trenin, 2005: p. 3). Furthermore, unlike most other members of the

CIS, Belarus does not have any open border disputes or minority issues that are likely to disrupt into violent conflict. Most importantly, Alexander Lukashenka's iron fist and the opposition's weakness have decreased the chance of destabilisation.

In the realm of hard security we find the next reasons for the sufficiency of non-engagement. As Löwenhardt has pointed out, the WNIS "were considered a nuisance but unlike the successor states to Yugoslavia not as really troublesome or threatening" (Loewenhardt, 2005: p. 28). This especially counts for Belarus, which under the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty destroyed more conventional weapons than France, the United Kingdom and the United States together (Martinov, 2002). In the first period after the demise of the Soviet Union, the West's attention towards Belarus focussed on the remaining nuclear war heads. After the Belarusian nuclear arsenal was however handed over to the Russian Federation, "Belarus fell off the EU radar screen" (Sadowski, 2003: p. 241). Additionally, the EU has also been little concerned with a possible threat from Belarus because of the fact that NATO did not respond in lockstep with the EU to Lukashenka's authoritarian reforms, but continued cooperation with Belarus for instance under the Partnership for Peace programme (Lindner, 2004: p. 200). To achieve its central aim of stability, the EU has neither actively needed to support reform, nor has it felt the need to prop up the regime as it has been the case with secular authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. A strategy of non-engagement has served its interests adequately.

III) The aim to build a hard outer border between the Union and Belarus.

The EU's border *vis-à-vis* Belarus may already today best be described as a *limes*. William Walters defines this form of a border as a dividing line "between a power and its outside" (Walters, 2004, p. 690). It is characterised by a certain degree of permanence and an aim to create stability around the empire or power erecting such a *limes*. "The problem facing those outside [...] is not the imperial domination or attempts to annex their resources, it is neglect and exclusion" (Hirst and Thompson, as quoted in Walters, 2004: p. 692). With regards to Belarus, this hard outer border, which would provide the EU with a new Westphalian feature, has a second dimension besides the one that it is simply materialising - it is consciously created. In the eyes of one observer "[a]t this stage the process seems to have run its course and the gates are being closed once again" (Anonymous, 2002: p. 157).

A powerful incentive for the creation of a hard eastern border is the possibility of a long-term enlargement fatigue, which to a certain degree is a result of the fear of the EU's imperial overstretch. This phenomenon can be observed in the discourse about an "ungovernable Union", which frequently arises when the EU and its media landscape discuss the accession of Turkey. Secondly, there is general consensus arising that although enlargement was a tool for the export of stability in the 1990s, further enlargements would be "a way of importing instability" (Economist, 2005). Thirdly, despite the fact that the Baltic States acceded to the EU, the former Soviet Union is still greeted with age-old suspicion by both public and elites.

There are clear signs that the EU is increasingly developing “egocentric[ity]” (Ulachovic, 2004: p. 207). Before the enlargement to East Central Europe was completed, Romano Prodi expressed his concern that the European Union could be “watered down” by “enlarging forever” (*as quoted in*: Haukkala, 2004: p. 15). Willy Bruggemann, Deputy Director of Europol, used stronger words when he declared that he regarded the main goal “to maintain fortress Europe, but based on a democratic approach” (*as quoted in*: Lavenex, 2005: p. 123). In a common unpublished study of the German and French foreign ministries it was made clear that the European Union should not seek to enlarge to Belarus or Ukraine (Bremer, 2000). This however does not mean that there has been no cross-border cooperation with Belarus, after all the containment of so-called soft security threats has ranked high on the Union’s agenda and there has been substantial cooperation between the two parties. Nevertheless, the “continued emphasis on the externalisation approach” (Lavenex, 2005: p. 136) does reflect the aim to harden the EU’s border *vis-à-vis* Belarus and to counter the “fuzziness” of the Union’s external borders (Zielonka, 2006).

IV) The “Russia factor”

Finally, model 2 argues that the European Union has opted for a policy of non-engagement due to the Russia factor. The Russia factor denotes the Union’s reluctance to engage in the WNIS, and in this case in Belarus, because of the presence of Russia. This behaviour is based on the fear that to engage in Belarus would be to penetrate the Russian sphere of influence, which would endanger the European Union’s relations with the post-imperial Russian rump state. It is the Russia factor, which makes the European Union look the most Westphalian, after all, the phenomenon makes it clear that it is embedded in a system of states and has to also adhere to the norms, which prevail in this system. Whilst the above sections have shown that the EU has abandoned the short- and mid-term goal of democratising and including Belarus in the European project, the Russia factor helps to explain this behaviour.

Due to the image of weakness the Russia factor creates and the fact that it undermines the idea of a normative agenda, it is denied by officials¹¹ and even some academics (Piehl, 2005: p. 320). In many contributions to the topic it is however present, whereas scholars from the Central and Eastern European region usually use the hardest words to describe it. Zurawski for instance names it the EU’s “political reluctance (or inability) to challenge Russian neo-imperial ambitions” (Zurawski, 2005: p. 90). He continues by stating that “by seeking to advance freedom and democracy in Belarus” [model 1], “the EU challenges Russian interests as they are defined currently by the Russian political elite” (*ibid*). Sadowski suggests that “it could be supposed that the low level of European engagement on Belarus is caused by the EU’s reluctance to stir up conflict with Russia” (Sadowski, 2003: p. 247). Whilst some scholars point at the fact that “the sheer level of attention granted to Russia is likely to reinforce the EU’s inclination to consider other NIS, including Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova, in the shadow of Moscow and as second rank priorities” (Guicherd, 2002: p. 19), others claim that the

Union has decided to leave Belarus in the Russian sphere of influence for at least another decade (Ulachovic, 2004: p. 213).

Despite the fact that the concept of spheres of influence has come to be considered as somewhat archaic, it is clear that in Russian foreign political thinking the notion is far from obsolete. Russia's Mid-term strategy towards the EU clearly states under 1.6. that, "efforts will continue to be made for [...] the protection of Russia's legitimate interests" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, 1999). Furthermore, it claims that Russia will oppose "possible attempts to hamper the economic integration in the CIS, in particular, through maintaining "special relations" with individual countries of the Commonwealth to the detriment of Russia's interests" (ibid). Although Russia's economic interests in Belarus are undeniable, there are a number of security reasons, which contribute to Russia's rejection of potential EU engagement in Belarus. The influential Council on Foreign and Defence Policy states that Belarus' geopolitical position is of central importance to counter the threat of a "Baltic-Black Sea belt isolating Russia" and of the "Kaliningrad special defence region" (Main, 2002: p. 2). Russia has a strong interest in maintaining a number of military sites including a missile warning system and a nuclear submarine command centre. Furthermore, despite the recent cooling down of mutual relations and the fact that the union state has largely remained a paper tiger, Belarus is still one of Russia's last loyal allies in the CIS. Despite the recent emphasis on its geo-economic strategy, Russia perceives the control of its "near abroad" as a steppingstone in the return to Great Power status and has thus rejected the Union's cautious attempt to place Belarus on the common agenda (Davidonis, 2001: p. 26). Whilst it is clear that Russia does not wish the European Union to engage in Belarus, it must be established that the European Union has actually respected the Russian sphere of influence and thus acted according to a Westphalian agenda.

Despite the fact that Javier Solana recently negated the Russia factor in an interview shortly before the 2006 presidential elections in Belarus, the so-called Solana-Patten Paper of August 2002, which served as a sketch of what was later to become the European Neighbourhood Policy, contradicts his latest statements (Solana, 2006). By declaring that "Russia is an indivisible part of the region", the papers tacitly acknowledges Russia's power over the WNIS and thus concludes that it is "difficult to imagine regional co-operation without Russia" (Patten & Solana, 2002). At a conference on the EU's new neighbours in Lviv in the year 2004 initiated by the Körber Stiftung, Wolfgang Schäuble, then Deputy Chairman for Foreign, Security and European Policy of the German Christian Democrats, reiterated the importance of stability promotion. Furthermore, he argued that "[f]or the eastward enlargement and the EU's eastern neighbourhood", that mainly meant "taking Russia into consideration". Schäuble warned that the EU "must strictly avoid giving the impression in Moscow that these processes are directed against Russian interests" (Bergdorfer Gesprächskreis, 2004: p. 72). Schäuble's argument however was not new, it was congruent to the unpublished Franco-German strategy paper of the year 2000 mentioned above. At the same conference in Lviv, MEP Toomas Ilves expressed his

anger at European foreign ministers, in this case Italy's Frattini, who he claimed to have a tendency of consulting the Russians before they allowed for any actions to be taken in the CIS (ibid, p. 52). Even Commission official Danuta Hübner sounded surprisingly realist when she exclaimed that the European Neighbourhood Policy should take into account the "balance of power between the Russian giant and Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova" (ibid., p. 89). All this indicates that the Russia factor has impacted on the EU's policy in the WNIS in general and towards Belarus in particular. It is noteworthy that this "enduring obsolete mindset", as critics have coined the Russia factor, is not merely present in the realist discourse surrounding NATO, but also amongst EU decision-makers (Zurawski, 2005: p. 91). The reasons, for the EU's fear of endangering its relations with Russia are multiple and have been discussed at length elsewhere. The Russia factor significantly hampers if not rules out value diffusion in Belarus.

Explaining why there have been limited and sporadic actions

It would, however, be somewhat careless not to briefly touch upon the second model's key deficiency – the problem of how to explain the EU's limited actions, however sporadic they may have been. A Machiavellian line of argument might hold that whilst it is of little significance whether a state acts according to moral virtues, it is important that it seems as if it acts according to them. A more sophisticated approach could however make use of Frank Schimmelfennig's concept of a "community trap", which he uses to analyse the EU's expansion to East Central Europe (Schimmelfennig, 2005: p. 142).

According to Schimmelfennig's notion, norm-based actions are not a mere façade, but the consequence of a bargaining process, in which actors may reveal inconsistencies between a community's normative catalogue and its actions and use these contradictions to argue for more norm-based policies. As the European Union would lose its credibility if it allowed a considerable mismatch between its official declarations as a democratising force and its actual policies, there have been some limited actions towards Lukashenka's Belarus, enthusiastically pointed to by officials once critics question the Union's role. As in the case of Belarus, the proponents of a more active engagement have been few in the EU-15 and the EU's approach has been dominated by the Westphalian agenda, value-based actions have remained scarce. However, with the 2004 wave of accessions the European Union has become a direct neighbour of Belarus. As some of the new members are more active towards Belarus and critical towards Russia's presence, the turn towards value-diffusion is not impossible. However, as long as the big member states prioritise relations with Russia and the southern member states lobby for more engagement in the Mediterranean region, the chances look somewhat bleak.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Even if the observation that "Russia and the EU are fighting over spheres of influence" (Rahr, 2004: p. 5) is correct and the "shared neighbourhood" has indeed been turning into an "economic and diplomatic battlefield"

(Löwenhardt, 2005: p. 7), this does not seem to account for Belarus. The European Union seems to respect Russia's post-imperial orbit. Although there have been some limited punishments, combined with public denunciations, the EU has not opened its repertoire of incentives in order to induce Belarus nor has it consistently opted for a hard-line strategy of regime change. To put it bluntly, the EU has neither principally acted to promote its values, nor has it been toothless. The Union has achieved its goal of stability by means of inertia. Belarus and its population have not only fallen under authoritarian rule, but have additionally fallen hostage to the EU's Westphalian aspirations.

In the case of the EU's policies towards Belarus, the more realist-based second model seems more efficient at unearthing the underlying power-structures. The model of toothless value diffusion not only legitimates the EU's policies towards Belarus by excusing their "failure", but also lacks evidence for its underlying claims. Most importantly, it is incapable of explaining the lack of a clear involvement.

Critics are sure to respond that it was the EU's complexity and internal balance of power, not its Westphalian agenda that obstructed value diffusion towards the dictatorship in Minsk. Of course, particularistic interests of single Member States and even institutions have played a role in the defeat of those forces willing to proceed with a policy of engagement. Such developments are, however, central to any national foreign policy process and resemble the fights between various ministries and lobby groups over certain policy issues. They should not impede a sober view: the EU as a whole has not engaged in Belarus.

The EU's non-engagement is a disenchantment to those who had heralded the arrival of a primarily normative actor in international politics. The European Union, as this study has revealed, is guided by a set of interests somewhat comparable to those of Westphalian states. This is the case despite the EU's institutional structure *sui generis* and its continued existence as a military pigmy. This article urges academia to approach the EU with a more critical distance. Whilst it is not difficult to find a critical account of US, Chinese, British, or Russian foreign policy, the European Union seems to have been spared the discomfort of an academic cross-examination. If the ideal of a European Union as a diffuser of cosmopolitan values and prosperity is at all to be upheld, academia must systematically lay open the Union's contemporary attempts to acquire a Westphalian agenda. Such a step would provide the necessary foundation for an unadulterated normative foreign policy, one that engages in Europe's last dictatorship and beyond.

ENDNOTES

¹ An anonymous author coined Europe's new dividing line a "'golden curtain' because it separates the wealthier countries, or countries that are 'making it' into the ranks of the affluent [...] from those who are also-rans or mired in poverty and underdevelopment" (Anonymous, 2002, p. 175).

² The term is used here to denote the sum of the EU institutions' (in) actions in the areas of trade, aid and security policy, but also incorporates the foreign policies of the member states.

³ This article considers contributions written in English and in German on the EU's policies towards

Belarus and towards the Western Newly Independent States (WNIS).

- ⁴ This approach is marked by some overlap but not by congruence with Sandra Lavanex's "inclusion versus exclusion" distinction, she uses to position the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Lavanex, 2005.
- ⁵ Although this category could potentially include other European states that gained independence after the demise of Soviet communism, the term WNIS has become a label for the group consisting of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine.
- ⁶ Also known as the democratic peace theory. *For a realist critique see*: Layne, 1994.
- ⁷ Gromadzki, Silitiski and Vesely claim that the EU should coordinate its policies with those of the United States, as "both actors have as their final goal the democratisation of Belarus" (Gromadzki et al, 2005).
- ⁸ Translation by the author.
- ⁹ Some authors leave out the step of explicitly coining the EU's policy a failure, but proceed to explaining the Union's lack of success.
- ¹⁰ The Belarusian foreign ministry claims that Belarus' economic output has risen to 116% of the Soviet level, which would be a significant rise, given the numbers in Russia (85%) and Ukraine (60%). Data provided by Charles Grant and Mark Leonard, 2006.
- ¹¹ Such as Council official de Sousa (Development and Peace Foundation, 2005, p. 15),

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Conflict Transformation the Estonian Way: The Estonian-Russian Border Conflict, European Integration and Shifts in Discursive Representation of the “Other”

JEVGENIA VIKTOROVA

Abstract: This article explores the scope and character of the transformation of conflictive relations between Estonia and Russia that has taken place over the past decade in the context of the EU’s latest round of enlargement. Examining the allegation regarding the pacifying nature of European integration, I assess the contribution of various “pathways of EU influence” (Diez et al., 2004, 2006) to the shifts in the construction of identity and otherness in Estonian-Russian relations, based on the analysis of (de-) securitising moves as well as references to the EU as a legitimising factor of attitudinal change in elite and public discourses. Focusing primarily on Estonia as one of the new EU member states, I demonstrate that despite some evidence of de-securitisation of the Russian “other” in Estonian elite and public discourses, this transformation has remained limited and uneven and cannot be unequivocally attributed to the effects of European integration. While the construction of Estonia’s political identity is still heavily dependent upon a conflictive image of Russia, a large portion of public discourses advocating a more tolerant and secure identity construction vis-à-vis Russia “compensate” for this by a latent antagonism towards Estonian politics with an admixture of Euroscepticism.

Keywords: conflict transformation, security, (de-) securitisation, Estonian-Russian relations, Estonian-Russian border conflict, elite and societal discourses

INTRODUCTION

In this article,¹ I explore the scope and character of the transformation of conflictive relations between Estonia and Russia that has taken place over the past decade (1994–2005), and the extent to which it can be related to the influence of European integration.

Objectively, the relations between Estonia and Russia were seldom considered conflictive since they rarely threatened violent escalation (e.g. Maurer, 2005). However, if a discursive definition of conflict – as an articulation of incompatibility between subject positions – is adopted (see Diez et al., 2006), one’s attention is drawn away from the “objective”

indicators of a conflict to instances of discursive representation of the “other” as threatening. From this perspective, the conflict in Estonian-Russian relations is expressed through the advancement of antagonistic images of the respective “other”, widespread in both Estonian and Russian elite and public discourses (Shlosberg, 2001; Kuus, 2002a; Makarychev, 2004; Tüür, 2005a; Aalto, 2003: 587–588). This article is concerned with changes – both positive and negative – in the discursive securitisation of the ‘other’ as well as in the levels of societal acceptance of such securitisation (Diez et al., 2006; Wæver, 1995). Such changes are referred to as conflict transformation (Diez et al., 2006).

Given that the period under scrutiny coincides with the gradual realisation of Estonia’s aspirations for EU membership it is tempting to analyse this transformation in the context of EU enlargement, by engaging with arguments concerning the pacifying nature of European integration (ibid.; Cole, 2001; Wallensteen, 2002: 33; Higashino, 2004). By analysing discursive references to the EU as the legitimisation of change in the representation of the “other” (as compared to other factors), as well as the character of change (i.e. towards greater or lesser securitisation), it is possible to determine the extent and nature of the influence of European integration on the conflict in question (Diez et al., 2006).

The discursive dimension of conflict transformation was reconstructed on the basis of interviews conducted with societal actors in the Estonian-Russian border region in October 2005, and through the analyses of school textbooks, parliamentary debates, government documents, print media, and other relevant cultural material. Since Estonia, both as an aspiring candidate and as a member state, was more susceptible to the influence of European integration than Russia, this article focuses primarily on the Estonian side of the conflict. In addition, the construction of Estonian politics demonstrates a greater degree of dependence on the conflictive image of Russia than vice versa (among other reasons, because of the sheer scope of other problematic issues on Russia’s political agenda); and consequently, conflict transformation, where it occurred, is much more noticeable in Estonia.²

The first section of the article outlines various dimensions of the Estonian-Russian border conflict and the dynamics of its formation following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. The second section presents an analysis of various instances of conflict transformation that has taken place over the past decade and discusses the overall impact of European integration on this process. The following sections look more closely at particular types, or “pathways” of EU influence on conflict depending on whether the target of impact is policy sphere or the society at large, and whether the impact resulted from concrete measures taken by EU actors or, more indirectly, the integration process itself (Diez et al., 2006).

Based on this analysis, I demonstrate that although there have been important changes in the mutual construction of the “other” that can be described in terms of “indirect” effects of European integration, conflict transformation has had a very limited effect on the construction of Estonia’s political identity, since more tolerant discourses appear “invisible” from the position of power because of their largely a(anti)-political character.

THE BORDER CONFLICT

The most visible point of contention in Estonian-Russian relations is the border, as manifested in Estonia's long-standing territorial claims to Russia (which, although dropped from the official rhetoric, are still voiced by some political actors and population groups). The territorial claims are based on the discrepancy between the administrative boundary of the Soviet Republic of Estonia redrawn in the course of Stalin's 1944/45 reforms following Estonia's incorporation into the Soviet Union, which served as the basis for the current *de facto* control line, on the one hand, and the interwar state border located further east, on the other. The claims are legitimised by a restoration approach to Estonian statehood (i.e. the continuity of the present state from the interwar Republic of Estonia). However, it is the understanding of borders as social processes (Paasi 1999) rather than as political and territorial phenomena that offers a better insight into the conflict, especially since irreconcilable meanings invested in the border as well as controversial identity-building practices, are at the core of constructing Estonia's and Russia's subject positions as incompatible.

The enthusiasm and solidarity across ethnic and administrative divides that marked the break-up of the Soviet Union (Simonian, 2003; Adamson and Karjahärm, 2004: 276–279) proved to be short-lived. By 1992–1993, it gave way to more exclusive and antagonistic state- and identity-building both in Estonia and Russia. As the newly independent Estonia struggled to prove its economic and political viability in the face of Russia's attempts to secure influence over a former sister-republic (Laar, 2002), Estonia's interpretation of its relations with Russia acquired existential overtones. These objective pressures exacerbated the underlying historical construction of Russia as Estonia's "pre-eminent Other" (Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006), and of Estonian state- and nationhood as being maintained despite, and in opposition to, Russia's centuries-long imperial ambitions. The Soviet era was viewed as an unlawful occupation (e.g. Laar, 2002; Berg and Ehin, 2004) that denied Estonia the legitimate right to exercise its statehood for over half-a-century (Kononenko, 2006: 72). With the years of independence between 1920 and 1940 recast in a mythical light as an ultimate expression of Estonia's political and national identity, the period of Estonia's history under the Soviet rule was downplayed or presented as an existential threat to the survival of the Estonian nation (Laar, 2002). Accordingly, the struggle for decentralisation and reform in the Soviet Union during the late 1980s – early 1990s was reinterpreted as a struggle for Estonia's independence (Simonian, 2003: 48–66). The responsibility for the consequences of the Soviet rule (such as the drastically increased share of Russophone population – from 8% in 1939 to 31% in 1991 (*ibid.*: 95) was ascribed to Russia (Ilves, 1998a). The external opposition to Russia was thus replicated in an internal division of Estonia's politics and society. The external opposition to Russia was thus replicated in an internal division of Estonia's politics and society, whereby non-ethnic Estonians, of whom many welcomed (and in many instances helped achieve) Estonia's independence (Adamson and Karjahärm, 2004: 276–279), were pushed to the margins of

the political arena (cf. Aalto, 2003: 585), and inter-ethnic relations became securitised.

With half-a-century of Estonia's history denied legitimacy, the restoration of Estonia's independence was viewed as a return to the *status quo*, including the borders of inter-war Estonia as defined by the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty with Soviet Russia. Being the first international treaty negotiated by the newly independent state, the Tartu Treaty is often regarded as Estonia's "birth certificate" (Aalto, 2001: 48) and considered indispensable for Estonia's political and national identity (Lukas, 2005; Vahtre, 2005). But far more important to Estonia's identity than the territorial issue is the recognition of its political continuity from the interwar state embodied in the Tartu Treaty and the acknowledgement of the historical injustice that Estonia suffered at the hands of the Soviet Union.

Russia, on its part, views Estonia's portrayal of the Soviet era in indiscriminate black and the ensuing suspicions towards Russia's present-day foreign policy as deeply offending. Russia does not regard the incorporation of Estonia into the USSR as an "occupation" but rather as, a legitimate expansion to the former domain of the Russian empire necessitated by geopolitical and security considerations (Danilov et al., 2005). Both political and popular Russian discourses emphasise Estonia's gains from being part of the Soviet Union, such as infrastructure and industry development as well as greater, compared to other Union republics, economic wealth and ideological freedoms (Simonian, 2003). The discursive image of Estonia as an enemy turned upon its benefactor (Shlosberg, 2001) goes hand-in-hand with the perception (however inaccurate) that Estonia, together with other Baltic republics, is to blame for the dissolution of the Soviet Union (Simonian, 2003; Tüür, 2005a) that many Russians still recall with a degree of nostalgia as times of stability and peace. Reform-minded Russians, on the other hand, perceive Estonia's continued suspicions as unjustified, undifferentiating between the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia that, like Estonia, prides itself on parting with its Soviet past (Makarychev, 2004: 26). Estonia's grievances over another historical injustice, Stalin's deportations of the 1940s, are often countered by the argument that Russia's own losses and hardships in the "common tragedy" of Stalinism were significantly greater (Makarychev, 2004: 26; Simonian, 2003: 47).

For Russia, the full extent of Estonia's political insecurity is difficult to fathom (Zakharov, 2005), and yet Russia itself was drawn into the logic of "identity conflict" (Diez et al., 2006). Whereas the objective importance of the "Estonian issue" for Russia is relatively low, Estonia's nationalist rhetoric and behaviour often receives disproportionate attention in the Russian media, fuelling the feelings of offence among the population and sustaining the perception of inexplicable hostility that Estonia nurtures towards Russia (Zakharov, 2005; cf. Kononenko, 2006: 75). The closing of the border in 1994, despite being Russia's own President Yeltsin's initiative (Berg and Oras, 2003), caused immense irritation among the inhabitants of Russian regions adjacent to Estonia, which was actively stimulated by Russian federal and regional-level politicians (Shlosberg, 2001). Most

crucially, both public and political discourses in Russia indicate certain difficulties in accepting that a country of such insignificant size as Estonia can even begin to formulate a foreign policy divergent from Russia's interests (Tüür, 2005a). Although there are objective reasons for Russia's intransigence with regard to the issue of 1920 borders (such as setting a dangerous precedent for Russia's other unresolved border disputes, e. g. with Japan), they often become overshadowed by identity-driven reasoning.

Such reasoning underpins, for example, the framing of territorial claims in ethnic and historical terms. The southern stretch of the present border runs across an area populated by the Seto, a distinct Finno-Ugric ethnic group Estonia considers part of its nation (Nikiforova and Viktorova, 2001). Among Seto political activists, the Tartu Treaty border is narrated as the eastern border of Setomaa (Seto-land) (Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006) – a representation which contests the Estonian government's official policy regarding the border but resonates with the national sentiment underpinning the restoration approach to Estonian statehood. Countering this representation, Russia has claimed the Seto as part of its own cultural heritage and highlighted "the Russian-ness of the contested borderlands" by narrating Pskov region and the contested Pechory district as sites of crucial importance in Russian history (ibid.; Makarychev, 2004). However, the Seto "political narrative and enactment of Seto identity" align far better "with Estonian geopolitical interests" (Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006), and Estonia remains an uncontested gateway for Seto political activism, despite the critical attitude of its leaders towards the Estonian government's border policy (Vaidla, 2002). Instances of "re-nationalising" the contested territories through historical narratives also occurred at the northern part of the border, through representing Ivangorod (Narva's cross-border counterpart which also resides in the contested territories) as Russia's historical interface with the "outside world".³

As Estonia, in the climate of increasing antagonism with Russia, sought to re-orientate its identification from East to West, the Estonian-Russian border issue became drawn into a wider identity "contest". Estonian elites viewed restoration of Estonia's independence as coterminous with a "Return to the Western World" (Lauristin et al., 1997; Ilves, 1998b; Laar, 2002), and the closing of the eastern border was not, at the political level, perceived as a problem, since it was compensated by a simultaneous opening of the western one. Accession to the EU and NATO was also conceptualised as reaffirmation of Estonia's European/ Western identity and a guarantee of its security and sovereignty in the face of the tacit Russian "threat" (Berg, 2004). Although interpretations of the border as "a protective mechanism" both for Estonia and the EU at large (Boman and Berg, 2005) shifted from military to "soft" security terms (Estonian MFA, 2001; cf. Kuus, 2002a), "hard" security concerns were featured prominently in the debates surrounding the EU and NATO accession (e.g. *Postimees* 2. 02. 2001, 15. 05. 2001) and continued in the media (e.g. *Postimees* 25. 10. 2005).

Estonia's eagerness to redefine itself as belonging to the West elicited contradictory responses from Russia, exposing Russia's own identity

dilemmas. Perceiving itself as belonging in Europe and as the embodiment of “true” Europe yet not party to European institutional design and political culture (Neumann, 1996; Makarychev, 2004: 30–31; Prozorov, 2005), Russia found itself both longing for the “West” and determined to resist its enticement (Shlosberg, 2001). During the Soviet era, Estonia (alongside other Baltic republics) was perceived as different and almost “Western” (Zakharov, 2005, Anonymous university lecturer, 2005); yet, Estonia’s post-Soviet conscious “Europeanisation” was deemed superficial by the inhabitants of neighbouring Russia’s Pskov region (Boman and Berg, 2005). Russia’s perception of Estonia as different yet in many respects profoundly similar (Tüür, 2005a) generates a fear in Estonia that Russia does not view the Estonian-Russian border as reflecting a true difference and may one day decide to do away with this artificial divide (Tüür, 2005c). Fuelling this fear are Russia’s anxieties over the turning of the border into an exclusionary line. Having failed to use the unresolved border dispute as leverage against NATO enlargement, Russia resorted to rhetorical offensives (Laar, 2002; Adamson and Karjahärm, 2004: 285–286) aimed at exposing Estonia’s “false” European-ness and unworthiness to join the West on normative grounds (Makarychev, 2004: 12, 22–23).

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Following the mutual securitisation of Estonian-Russian relations around 1992–1993, the first significant instance of conflict transformation occurred in 1994, when Estonia announced a policy of “positive engagement” towards Russia (Luik, 1994) and began to air the possibility of dropping territorial claims in exchange for Russia’s recognition of the Tartu Treaty (Berg and Oras, 2003: 51–52). Although sometimes attributed to the EU’s pressure (e.g. Makarychev, 2004), the withdrawal of Estonia’s territorial claims was rather prompted by the general lack of support in the West as well as a stalemate in border negotiations with Russia that became apparent by 1994 (Berg and Oras, 2003: 51). Although the proposed trade-off had not met with Russia’s approval, Estonian Foreign Ministry continued to pursue a pragmatic foreign policy towards Russia and subsequently withdrew not only the territorial claims but also the demand that the Tartu Treaty be mentioned in the negotiated border agreement. Partly, this was due to the realisation that Estonia needed a border treaty with Russia more than the recognition of the Treaty, especially in light of EU accession which by then became a driving goal for Estonian foreign policy. In addition, it was discovered that from a legal perspective, whether it contained a reference to the Tartu Treaty or not, the new border treaty would not undermine the validity of the Tartu Treaty or the legal continuity of the Estonian state (*ibid.*: 53; Ilves, 1998a). Thus, Estonian policy-makers viewed the negotiated border agreement as purely technical in character, which allowed the negotiating team to concentrate on practical matters relevant for Estonia’s prospective EU membership (Kallas, 1996). By and large, this contributed to significant progress regarding the border

agreement, and by 1998 the treaty was essentially ready to be signed (Berg and Oras, 2003: 54–55).

In line with the argument regarding the pacifying nature of European integration, I suggest that Estonia's de-securitising stance was informed by the construction of its interests as a prospective member state. The EU thus served as a powerful legitimisation that "enabled" the Estonian elite into the described policy change (Diez et al., 2006). Estonia's integration into the EU helped alleviate one important aspect of the "identity conflict" by securing Estonia's belonging in Europe and the West (Mihkelson, 2003; Berg and Ehin, 2004; Kononenko, 2004: 23). It did not, however, address the second aspect of Estonia's identity quest, based on exclusively ethnic identification and often perceived as being at odds with the European/Western identity component (Kuus, 2002b: 92). This, perhaps, may explain why the "pragmatic" turn in Estonian foreign policy mostly remained limited to "European" issues and did little to de-legitimise the perpetuation of the identity conflict at the level of domestic politics, which is still largely preoccupied with securing Estonia's ethnic and political identity in exclusive terms.

Furthermore, these two conflicting aspects of identity appear to generate discursive "currents" that are thematically distinct, yet may overlap through common political agency. It appears that border negotiations for Estonia became largely dissociated from the underlying quest for identity recognition. Thus, talk of good relations with Russia, of progress with regard to the border treaty and optimism concerning the foreseeable conclusion of a trade agreement – that would abolish the double taxation of Estonian exports to Russia – seems to coexist comfortably with the language of identity conflict, often within the same speeches (Ilves, 1998a; cf. Ojuland, 2003). In parliamentary debates, accusations regarding Russia's unreliability and its domineering negotiating style alternate with reiterations of the importance of gaining recognition from Russia and the rest of the world about the historical injustice of the occupation (e.g. Ilves, 1998a; Ojuland, 2003; Privalova, 2004; Tulviste, 2004; Lukas, 2005; cf. Helme, 2005; Kononenko, 2006: 76–77). The majority of Estonian media analyses of Estonian-Russian relations or Russian foreign policy are preoccupied with drawing historical parallels, which, given the predisposition for a selective reading of mutual history provide a very mono-dimensional context for interpreting Russia's present intentions (Tüür, 2005b, 2005c; cf. Herd and Löfgren, 2001: 292). Some political parties and associations (such as the Seto Congress) adopted a position critical of the government's conciliatory approach to border negotiations, accusing it of treason with regard to Estonia's national interests. Although admittedly intended for domestic consumption and as a tool for inter-party rivalry (Muuli, 2005; Matsulevitch, 2000; Viktorova, 2001), pronouncements of this sort occasionally found their way into international and Russian media, fuelling Russia's perceptions of Estonia's inherent hostility (cf. Makarychev, 2004: 26). One of the most damaging repercussions of such inter-party squabbles was the withdrawal of Russia's signature from the

2005 border treaty after the Estonian Parliament adopted, as part of its ratification decision, a corollary statement reiterating a commitment to Estonia's independence through indirect references to the Tartu Treaty (Muuli, 2005; Ojuland, 2005; Kononenko, 2006: 79). Thus, although the prospect of EU accession contributed to the enhancement of practical cooperation between the two states, it did not dissipate the climate of emotional insecurity surrounding Estonia's relations with Russia.

Yet, despite the seeming ubiquity of securitising rhetoric, towards the beginning of the 2000s one can observe another curious divergence in the perception of the conflict and the "other" in Estonia. While the political elite are still preoccupied with the identity conflict (cf. *Postimees*, 24. 10. 2005), articulations of the conflict at the societal level appear to be on the decline (Melnikova, 2005; Melnikov, 2005; Zakharov, 2005; Tuubel, 2005). The growing alienation of parts of the electorate from politics⁴ and a degree of disillusionment with the state and its government (Aalto, 2003: 585) contributed to the perception that politicians were playing "games" of little relevance to their people (Melnikova, 2005, Kosk, 2005, Zakharov, 2005, Tuubel, 2005, Anonymous university lecturer, 2005) – a perception that extends to the elite articulations of the identity conflict. While some people maintain strong views about the conflict and Estonian-Russian relations,⁵ others express frustration with national politics and would like the government to exercise greater maturity in its dealings with Russia (Melnikova, 2005, Melnikov, 2005, Tuubel, 2005). Occasionally, similar arguments and calls for greater "general societal engagement" with Russia appear in the Estonian media (Bronstein, 2002; cf. Kuus, 2003). Thus, the present situation pertaining to the border conflict is characterised by ambiguity and diversity, with different accounts portraying contradicting realities of the Russian-Estonian relations (cf. Aalto, 2003).

Outwardly, the outlined conflict dynamic does not seem to correlate with the following turning points in Estonia's integration into the EU: The signing of the Europe Agreement and submission of a membership application in 1995; the start of accession negotiations in 1998 (based on the 1997 Luxembourg Summit decision); and finally its accession into the EU in May 2004. Still, the firm political course towards EU membership adopted by Estonia in the mid-1990s opened several avenues for a more or less direct influence of European integration on Estonia's policies, in general and on its relations with Russia, in particular. Yet, as will be shown in the following discussion, its effect on the conflict was not always positive, whereas de-securitisation of Estonian-Russian relations cannot always be associated with effects of European integration.

PATHWAYS OF EU INFLUENCE ON ESTONIAN–RUSSIAN CONFLICT

In the theoretical framework developed for the EUBorderConf project,⁶ Diez, Albert and Stetter (2004, 2006), they distinguish between four different types of influence that the EU can generate vis-à-vis parties in border conflicts. This distinction rests on two dimensions: Firstly, whether the impact is a result of "concrete measures" undertaken by EU actors or an indirect "effect of integration processes" at large, and secondly, "whether the

impact is on concrete policies or has wider social implications” (Diez et al., 2006). A combination of these dimensions produces four types of impact or “pathways of influence”:

Figure 1. Pathways of impact of European integration on border conflicts
(source: Diez et al., 2006: 572).

EU approach:

		Actor-driven	Integration process
Target of impact:	Policy	(1) compulsory impact	(2) enabling impact
	Society	(3) connective impact	(4) constructive impact

In the resulting framework, *compulsory impact* refers to instances where the EU, through “carrots” and “sticks” associated with integration,⁷ tries to compel the parties to change their policies vis-à-vis each other “towards conciliatory moves, rather than deepening securitization” (Diez et al., 2006). *Enabling impact* relies on the ability of “specific actors within conflict parties to link their political agendas with the EU and, through reference to integration, justify desecuritizing moves that may otherwise have not been considered legitimate” (ibid.). *Connective impact* operates through encouraging contact between conflicting parties, often via direct financial support of joint projects, which are supportive of the formation of societal networks across the borders (ibid.). And finally, *constructive impact* relies on “the assumption that EU impact can put in place completely new discursive frameworks for creating novel ways of constructing and expressing identities within conflict regions”, thus changing the underlying identity scripts and supporting a (re-)construction of identities that “sustains peaceful relations between conflict parties” (ibid.). The following four sections of this article analyse the impact of European integration on the Estonian-Russian conflict in terms of the outlined “pathways of influence”.

COMPULSORY INFLUENCE

Although, in the latest enlargement, the EU has played a significant role “in terms of steering the course of economic and political reforms in the applicant countries” and “setting the criteria for accession” (Kononenko 2004: 18), it is somewhat problematic to attribute the transformation of the Estonian-Russian border conflict unambiguously to the EU’s compulsory influence. Russia, a non-applicant and not even a prospective candidate, is not susceptible to the EU’s compulsory impact altogether; and when the EU did attempt to influence Russia (e.g. through such avenues as conditionality of WTO accession), it was concerning broader issues, such as democracy, human rights or the rule of law. Estonia, on the other hand, although subject to the compulsory adoption of the *acquis*, often behaved as a “model pupil”

of Europeanisation (Raik, 2003: 34) in its eagerness to fulfil EU membership criteria ahead of the set deadlines and so prove its belonging in Europe. Because of the largely voluntary character of policy change, it is difficult to view it strictly in terms of “compulsory” influence. However, the logic of “carrots” and “sticks” was more pronounced in the justifications of the government’s actions offered to the domestic audience, where the greater good of EU membership was often emphasised over temporary losses encountered on route to the EU (e.g. Ilves 1998a).

The removal of the greatest stumbling-block in the Estonian-Russian border negotiations, Estonia’s territorial claims, is sometimes attributed to the EU’s direct pressure (Makarychev, 2004), although this is doubtful given that the change came about before the lodging of membership application in 1995. Neither can “pragmatisation” of Estonia’s foreign policy towards Russia be viewed in the context of compulsory influence, since it was rather a result of the EU’s enabling impact, with the practical approach to border negotiations informed by the construction of Estonia’s interests as a prospective member state. The continuation of border negotiations beyond the point when the EU (as well as NATO) assured Estonia that the lack of a border treaty would not be viewed as an impediment to its accession also suggests that the compulsory impact was not the key factor in pushing Estonia towards a more forthcoming stance towards Russia.

Far more controversial with regard to compulsory influence was the issue of the Russophone minority. Because this issue lies at the heart of the identity conflict, the EU’s attempts to influence Estonian citizenship and language legislation (through avenues such as OSCE (Herd and Löfgren, 2001: 286)) were discursively presented in terms of a “double-edged threat” from both Russia and Europe (Kuus, 2002a). The EU, in this discourse, becomes an agent of Russia’s interests in destabilising the Estonian state and identity (ibid.; Aalto, 2003: 582–583). The perception of Estonian language and culture as being under threat, and statehood as the only means to protect them (Kuus, 2002a), necessitated restricted access of the Russophone minority with its “undetermined geopolitical orientations” (Aalto, 2003: 583) to political decision-making. Proponents of this discourse tend to regard the EU as an unfulfilled promise of salvation from Russia: Instead of escaping from Russia into the EU, Estonia found Russia already encroached in it (Tüür, 2005c; Kuus, 2002a).

In this instance, the EU’s impact – however insignificant in practice – invited conflict-enhancing interpretations, resulting in further securitisation of inter-ethnic relations and of the EU itself (cf. Herd and Löfgren, 2001: 288, 276). This had led some political actors in Estonia to question the rationale of EU membership, especially in the light of firmer prospects of NATO’s eastern enlargement that started to materialise in the early 2000s. The preference for the NATO component of the “dual enlargement” was emphasised on the traditional grounds of “hard” security, but also framed in terms of cultural and civilisational affinity (Williams and Neumann, 2000; Kuus, 2002a: 306). Unlike European integration with its emphasis on “soft” security (Herd and Löfgren 2001: 282), NATO was free from controversies associated with the EU’s supranationalism and its perceived negative

consequences for Estonian sovereignty (Kuus, 2002a). The development of ESDP – a “harder” security element on the Union – was also treated with reservation due to a perception that it weakened the transatlantic security provisions (Kasekamp et al., 2003). Even the economic benefits of EU accession, which Estonian politicians widely marketed to the domestic public (e.g. Ilves, 1998b; Herd and Löfgren, 2001), were sometimes questioned as undermining the advantage of Estonia’s ultra-liberal economy (Gräzin, 2002a, 2000b).

ENABLING IMPACT

As discussed above, the prospect of EU membership “enabled” the Estonian political elite shift from the restoration-informed foreign policy to a more pragmatic approach towards Russia in the mid-1990s, which led to a partial de-securitisation of high-level relations. However, the prospect of EU membership did little to de-legitimise the perpetuation of the conflict at the level of domestic politics, where articulations of insecurity with regard to the location of the border, inter-ethnic issues, and Russia’s attempts to influence minority-related decision-making continued to flourish.

The mechanism behind the enabling impact can be illuminated by Mikkel and Kasekamp’s findings: Mobility of Estonia’s political parties from the periphery to the political mainstream and from the opposition to a role in the government tends to correspond with the increase in Euro-optimism (2005). They suggest that as parties and politicians are socialised into the responsibilities of daily conduct of “European affairs”, based on previous governments’ commitments, they find themselves in a position of advocates of EU membership and integration (ibid.). From this perspective, Euro-sceptical sentiments, closely linked to the perception of endangered character of Estonia’s nation and state and incompatible with a conciliatory stance on Russia, are a “natural” province of government opposition. This, however, does not seem to cover the entire spectrum of conflict-perpetuating rhetoric, which is also abundant in speeches by members of the governing elite (e.g. Ilves, 1998a; Ojuland, 2003). It is possible to speculate that the position of responsibility for the state’s affairs also brings about socialisation of another kind, commanding an acute awareness of Estonia’s historical insecurities and the political aspirations they dictate.

In some instances, EU accession was used to legitimise policies and decisions with dis-connective effects. An example of this can be seen in the abolition of simplified border-crossing provisions for local inhabitants of the border areas in 2000, four years before the required deadline. Whereas the imposition of the Schengen border regime is often criticised in the context of EU-Russian relations at large, Estonia’s eagerness towards eliminating the ambiguity in, and enhancing control over, the border crossing procedures on its Eastern border (cf. Berg and Oras, 2003: 56) can be viewed in light of its identity quest: A desire simultaneously to affirm its status as a future EU member state and to distance itself from Russia. Apart from being detrimental to the interests of Estonia’s own borderland inhabitants (Nikiforova and Viktorova, 2001) and damaging to bilateral cooperation

projects (Vassilenko, 2005, Anonymous NGO director, 2005), this move was taken by the Russian side as yet another expression of Estonia's hostility, and Russian media lost no time in accusing Estonia of skilfully manipulating the EU to alienate Russia (Alekseeva, 2000).

Predictably, the influence of European integration on the Russian political elite has remained negligible. From Russia's perspective, whatever unresolved issues exist in its relations with Estonia are fairly marginal compared to the problems Russia faces on its other borders (cf. Tüür, 2005c). They are also marginal in the overall context of EU-Russian relations (Zakharov, 2005), despite Estonia's aspirations of becoming a "gateway" and a "bridge" in relations between Russia and the EU (Tüür, 2005c). Moreover, Russia generally prefers to address the countries it perceives to be the chief players in the Union – Germany, France, and the UK – directly rather than through the common EU facade (Zakharov, 2005; Kononenko, 2006: 73). This, quite apart from the modernist neglect for "post-sovereign" political configurations (Wæver, 2000), can be explained by the reluctance to become subject to common EU policies formulated with Estonia's input (Tüür, 2005a). Thus, the mutual jealousy that marks Estonia's and Russia's relations with the EU (Tüür, 2005c) limits the extent of the EU's enabling impact on the border conflict.

CONNECTIVE IMPACT

The impact of EU policies on societal actors in the Estonian-Russian border conflict is perhaps the most straightforward when compared to other pathways of EU influence, owing to an explicit cross-border orientation of many EU funding programmes. The EU has played an important role in intensifying and diversifying Estonian-Russian bilateral dialogue by involving different authority levels and non-governmental organisations in cross-border cooperation (Viktorova, 2001). Throughout the 1990s, many of the developing civil society actors, both in Estonia and Russia (such as Pskov-based NGO *Vozrozhdenie*, or the Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation/*Chudskoi Proyekt* with offices in both Tartu and Pskov) adopted the values promoted by the EU and other donors' funding programmes as their motivation and rationale for action (Anonymous NGO director, 2005, Zakharov, 2005). Although it is debatable whether this was initially the result of a genuine convergence of interests or a degree of financial opportunism, after a decade of socialisation in "EU speak" it is possible to note not only connective, but also some constructive impact of the EU on the civil society actors' perceptions of the Estonian-Russian relations. Most importantly, the experience of cross-border cooperation has contributed to a diversification of the image of the "other" (Viktorova 2001), and the Estonian-Russian border has become associated with opportunities rather than obstacles towards cooperation (Boman and Berg, 2005).

However, not all instances of the constructive impact served to diminish conflict. In Estonia, the EU cooperation programmes at times exacerbated the identity conflict by pitting NGOs against the government, whose policy line was already under attack from the more radical nationalist voices. The EU also failed to create a viable counterpart for the Estonian NGOs in

Russia, where the funding programmes (such as TACIS) mainly focused on supporting government institutions (Shlosberg 2001). During the 1990s, many Estonian non-governmental actors saw the EU funding as an opportunity to bypass the state level in their cooperation with Russia. While they were often successful, the lack of state support (if not outright opposition) curtailed the initiatives; this damaged the sustainability as well, as the general credibility of the NGOs' efforts. Almost complete dependence, of the bulk of joint activities in the Estonian-Russian border area, on the availability of EU funds further endangers the sustainability of cooperation (Boman and Berg, 2005).

Since Estonia became an EU member state, the need to bypass the state level started to lose its relevance. Priority areas for EU funding have become increasingly formulated at the national level in consultation with civil society actors (Anonymous NGO director, 2005). Many cooperative projects (such as joint water management of the lake Peipsi on the Estonian-Russian border) run by NGOs also involve local authorities, government experts, and professionals. However, despite the considerable progress made by various bilateral commissions on issues of mutual concern, the real output of these cooperation projects seldom goes beyond communication and "networking". At the political level, each side still tends to block crucial decisions to demonstrate its power over the fortunes of the "other" (Kosk, 2005; cf. Shlosberg, 2001). In Russia, the authorities are often suspicious of NGOs, viewing them as the fifth column promoting Western interests (Vassilenko, 2005; cf. Makarychev, 2005), and the initiative of local authorities is often crippled due to insufficient legal competence for the conduct of foreign relations and lack of political will at the federal level (Shlosberg, 2001; Melnikov, 2005, Zakharov, 2005). Although in Estonia, the government became more relaxed in its attitudes towards civil society actors, NGOs' initiatives are still mostly viewed as "private" and somewhat lacking in relevance for the state as a whole, and certainly subordinate to the government's policies (e.g. Ojuland, 2003). Thus in general, although the EU's influence on the societal actors has been considerable, it remained limited by the framework of inter-governmental Estonian-Russian relations.

As for the incentives behind inter-governmental cooperation, the dealings of Estonia's national-level authorities with Russia were often motivated by the identity conflict rather than the desire to overcome it. Although this can be attributed to the downside of the EU's enabling impact on Estonia's government policy towards Russia rather than to its connective influence, the strife between various government agencies over the discursive delineation of the Estonian-Russian border inevitably affects the political environment in which societal actors operate. To give an example of contested motivation behind cooperation, the Petserimaa Department of Estonian Citizenship and Migration Board that managed the "simplified" border crossing regime⁸ between 1994 and 1999, was sometimes criticised by the Foreign Ministry for unauthorised conduct of foreign policy. An employee of the Board and a prominent Seto activist, Jüri Vaidla, claimed that the Department was preoccupied with an aspect of Estonia's internal affairs ignored by the government, i.e. maintaining relations with Estonia's own territories and

population beyond the present “control line” (Vaidla, 1999, 2002). The Foreign Ministry’s decision to abolish simplified border-crossing in 2000 can be explained by the desire not only to gain better control over actual border-crossing, but also to counter the interpretations of the current border as temporary and subject to future redrawing. This attempt to reduce the fuzziness of the border, however, was undermined by the Citizenship and Migration Board’s policy of issuing Estonian passports to those inhabitants of adjacent areas of Russia, whose ancestors were citizens of the interwar republic, with the effect of supporting the practice of double citizenship officially prohibited by Estonian laws (Nikiforova and Viktorova, 2001). Many of the Estonian government’s cooperative programmes with Russia, e.g. the support of the Estonian school in Pechory, also have an underlying motif of supporting Estonia’s ethnic claims to the lost territories. It is fitting that such government programmes are managed not by the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs but by the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Education (Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006).

More recent Estonian government’s cooperative initiatives are, however, less evidently self-interested. For instance, in 2003–2004 the Foreign Ministry funded a joint training programme for Southeast Estonian and Pskov region tourism entrepreneurs in order to work out a common strategy for developing tourism in an integrated border area (Made 2004). The fact that the funds came from the Estonian Development Aid Fund and in light of recent comparisons with other Fund’s activities in countries such as the Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, a new speculation can be made: The government’s rationale for supporting cooperation with Russia is increasingly shaped by the liberal ideology characteristic of the EU’s own neighbourhood and development aid policies (Smith, 2003; cf. Kasekamp and Pääbo, 2006). As areas of policy influenced by the EU-style approaches and rationale grow, the space for conflict articulation gradually diminishes and conflictive discourses become pushed out of the political mainstream. Not only societal or private sector actors but also state-funded institutions, such as the Estonian National Museum, are becoming more relaxed about their relations with Russia and are beginning to re-establish contacts with their Russian counterparts (Tuubel, 2005).

CONSTRUCTIVE IMPACT

This section of the article focuses on changes in identity scripts visible in the Estonian (and, to a lesser extent, Russian) society at large, based on insights gained from interviews, school textbooks, media, parliamentary debates, and other cultural and educational material. Since constructive change is, by definition, the slowest to take shape (Diez et al., 2006), the findings presented here do not aspire to be conclusive, but rather aim to draw attention to some emergent trends in the discourses of identification.

Previous sections already noted a divergence between the discourses preoccupied with two aspects of the Estonian identity puzzle as outlined by Kuus (2002b) – identification based on broader European/Western commonalities and identity-construction in exclusively ethnic terms. This section focuses on another divergence rooted in the dissociation of Estonia’s

ethnic and political identity in some strands of societal discourse (see Aalto, 2003) that are largely invisible in official political rhetoric (Herd and Löfgren, 2001; cf. Kuus, 2002a). I argue, moreover, that this instance of discursive change does not stem from the conflict-diminishing impact of the EU-inspired “pragmatic” approach, since the latter was seldom conceptualised as genuine “politics”. Rather, by its many proponents and opponents alike, the pragmatic stance in relations with Russia – and, to a great extent, with the EU itself (Ilves, 1998a) – was perceived as purely instrumental: A temporary step back from Estonia’s genuine political interests with the aim of gaining a better ground for pursuing them in the future (cf. Ágh, 2004: 5–6). The essence of Estonia’s “political” interests and identity is still greatly represented by the conflict-generating discourses of historical injustice and confrontational identity-building despite of the Russian “other”. An important consequence of this association of politics with the conflictive construction of Estonia’s identity is that people interested in Estonian politics and especially in Estonian-Russian relations become inevitably affected by it, if not through partaking in the logic of identity conflict then through an acute awareness of the way in which identity issues are framed in the domestic discourse (Tüür, 2005c). Since academic, political and public debates on Estonia’s statehood and security are to a large extent conflated (see Kuus, 2002b: 95), the more liberal sentiments of the domestic public (see Aalto, 2003: 584–586) remain effectively invisible.

Yet, there is some evidence of popular de-securitisation of the Russian “other”, both in the context of Estonian-Russian relations and with regard to Estonia’s Russophone population. On both sides of the border, people note positive changes in mutual attitudes and perceptions and a growing interest towards the “other”, manifested in increasingly frequent contacts and communication, including mutual business interests (Melnikova, 2005; Melnikov, 2005; Zakharov, 2005; Vassilenko, 2005; Tuubel, 2005; Anonymous university lecturer, 2005; cf. Kuus, 2003). This tallies well with Aalto’s (2003) observation that securitisation of identity in Estonia is losing its ubiquity. For many “ordinary” Estonians, the precondition for friendly relations is not so much Russia’s recognition of the 1920 border but the acknowledgement of Estonia’s distinct culture and identity, which the majority of Russians are quite willing to accept (Tüür, 2005c, Zakharov, 2005, Tuubel, 2005, Anonymous university lecturer, 2005). Once this fundamental difference is acknowledged, commonalities between Estonians and Russians become more obvious and the differences appear less threatening as they become a source of mutual enrichment rather than estrangement (Tuubel, 2005). This is true of both interpersonal communication and collective perceptions (Valk and Realo, 2004).

De-securitisation of ethnic identity is also evidenced by the growing interest of Estonians and Russians towards each other’s language and culture since the early 2000s. Examples range from increased interest in language training (e.g. children’s integration camps in Estonia, Russian language courses at Estonian enterprises and Estonian classes at Russia’s Pskov Free University) to cultural festivals (such as “Pskov Days in Tartu”) and

television projects (e.g. Pskov television's series "Estonia That We Do Not Know") to culinary experiences: An Estonian restaurant "Vana Tallinn" was opened in Pskov in 2005 as a counterpart to a Russian restaurant "Rasputin" in Tartu (Anonymous university lecturer, 2005; Melnikov, 2005; Melnikova, 2005; Vassilenko, 2005; Tuubel, 2002, 2005; Zakharov, 2005).⁹

Although Huntington's civilisations theory is traditionally popular in Estonia (Makarychev, 2004; *Eesti Päevaleht*, 27. 11. 1999), since it substantiates Estonia's desire to differentiate itself from Russia, its political resonance (Kuus, 2002b: 97) does not seem to be matched in the educational sphere. For instance, a human geography textbook (Raagmaa, 2003) that uses the theory to describe idiosyncrasies of different parts of the world also highlights the changeable character of civilisations and permeability of their borders. It argues that Orthodox and Western civilisations are similar in their main characteristics. Geographical representations of the Estonian-Russian border have also undergone a transformation: While the 1996 Estonian Atlas depicts both the 1920 border with Russia and the present "control line" (*Eesti Atlas*, 1996; Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006), the 2005 World Atlas shows the border as was agreed in the new border treaty that the Estonian Parliament ratified in 2005 (*Suur Maaailma Atlas*, 2005).

Estonian history textbooks, while preserving references to Soviet occupation, tone down the issue of the Russian "threat" in the post-Soviet era, providing only brief schematic accounts of events following the break-up of the Soviet Union and little opinion or interpretation (e.g. Vahtré, 2004; Adamson and Valdmaa, 2001; Adamson et al., 2003). Adamson and Karjahärm (2004: 180) further note that history as a complex matter does not easily lend itself to simplistic nationalist interpretations. They remark that, although the historical importance of the Tartu Treaty is indisputable, it is not the only legitimisation of the Estonian state: True foundation lies in the right of self-determination of its people (ibid.: 197–198). In this respect, the textbook goes beyond the customary rhetoric of the majority of Estonian politicians who still brood over Estonia's insecurities (e.g. Lukas, 2005). In Russian history textbooks (e.g. Levandovsky and Shchetinov, 2005; Danilov et al., 2005), the mentions of Estonia are scant but not antagonistic. Furthermore, when describing the ethnic tensions and problems in political representation, that the national awakening of the early years of the Soviet regime brought about, the textbooks indirectly acknowledge that Estonia's post-independence exclusionary policies had a precedent in Russia's own twentieth-century history.

All these examples, to varying extent, indicate a change in the articulation of identities – from essentialist and mutually exclusive to relative and more tolerant – among parts of both Estonian and Russian societies. However, it is questionable to what extent the EU can be credited for this transformation. Although EU support was mentioned in connection with some of the described cooperative initiatives, interviewees explained their conflict-mitigating stance with negative, rather than positive, factors. Thus, respondents noted an increasing divergence between state-level policies and attitudes on the one hand, and the concerns and interests of "ordinary people", on the other (Melnikova, 2005; Melnikov, 2005; Kosk, 2005;

Zakharov, 2005; Tuubel, 2005; Anonymous university lecturer, 2005). While Estonian Foreign Ministry claims exclusive discursive competence over Estonian-Russian relations, denying the role of “popular diplomacy” (Ojuland, 2003), the interviewees criticised the government’s representation of Estonian-Russian relations as grounded in narrow political interests divorced from the that were actual situation. They also characterised Estonian politics as immature, referring to it as “sandbox games” for politicians (Melnikova, 2005, Melnikov, 2005, Kosk, 2005, Tuubel, 2005) or “children’s politics” (Zakharov, 2005, Anonymous university lecturer, 2005) because an uncompromising stance towards Russia is viewed as a manifestation of power (Kosk, 2005). The people’s criticism of the attempts of Estonian politicians to make political capital through constant discursive perusal of the Russian “threat” thus seems to be part of their general disillusionment with Estonian politics, which was unable to fulfil its promise of “politics for the people” (cf. Aalto, 2003: 585).

The EU rarely features people’s accounts as an inspiration for societal change, which is consistent with Vetik’s observation that Euroscepticism among Estonians is commensurate with general mistrust towards domestic political institutions and actors (2003; Ehin, 2001; Sikk and Ehin, 2005: 30–31; Mikkil and Kasekamp, 2005: 104). When pried about the role of the EU one of the respondents, being aware that this study was conducted with EU funds, asked, “How do *you* need to put it?” (Melnikova, 2005). Mostly, people explained the change in their perceptions of the “other” with the internal logic of societal development in Estonia. At the beginning of 1990s, people in Estonia savoured the newly gained independence and opportunities of political participation in what the majority perceived as their own state. By the 2000s, as that initial thirst was quelled (partly because of the disillusionment with the state that did a poor job representing the interests of its populace) and affairs were set in order. The attention started to turn outward, to the more and less proximate neighbours, including the eastern one (i.e. Russia) (e.g. Tuubel, 2005; Melnikova, 2005). Indirectly, however, the mentioned “setting of affairs in order” can be associated with the EU’s stabilising influence on Estonia’s economy and society. While individual assessments of this influence range from positive to strongly negative (cf. Aalto, 2003: 585), it is doubtless that Estonia’s EU accession eased people’s fixation on the woes of their own state due to the opening of horizons for education and employment.

While it is difficult to estimate the reach of this de-securitising trend because of its largely anti-political character,¹⁰ it seems clear that the two described trends of de-securitisation – EU-inspired and society-based – are separate and almost mutually exclusive. From the perspective of the latter, the EU’s enabling impact on the Estonian elite is easily subsumed by the “conflictive” image of politics, while European ideals of political participation are at odds with the stance of passive apolitical opposition apparently endorsed by Estonia’s de-securitising societal actors. It seems that the association of Estonian politics to the discourse of identity conflict not only discourages political avenues for alternative representations of

Estonian-Russian relations, but also limits the effects of other de-securitizing influences on the Estonian society.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This article offers an analysis of the dynamics of Estonian-Russian border conflict in the context of European integration and focuses on both state and societal-level perceptions of the “other” and of the conflict itself. Since the bulk of both empirical and secondary material appeared to advance contradictory arguments regarding the (de-)securitization of the conflict, Diez, Albert and Stetter’s (2004, 2006) theoretical framework provided a helpful tool for separating various “currents” of positive and negative transformation, whether effected by the EU’s impact or not.

While the impact of European integration remained marginal in some instances of Estonian-Russian relations and in the articulation of the conflict, in others it helped trigger important dynamics that subsequently affected other pathways of the EU’s influence. Thus, the process of *compulsory* harmonisation of Estonia’s legislation with the *acquis* doubtlessly contributed to a reformulation of Estonia’s foreign policy interests, especially in the context of its future EU membership. Thus a policy change in Estonia’s border negotiations was enabled with Russia. At the same time, the EU’s attempts at *compulsory* influence with regard to Russophone minority-related legislation had *disabling* consequences, since the EU itself was occasionally re-constructed as a threat to Estonia’s security and identity (Kuus, 2002a, 2003: 15; Herd and Löfgren, 2001: 288). The *enabling* effect of Estonia’s foreign policy change also had a *disabling* counterpart in empowering conflictive domestic political rhetoric and substantiating the hard-liners’ claims that the government’s accommodating stance to Russia betrayed Estonia’s national interests. Whereas the EU had a significant *connective* impact in promoting societal-level cooperation between Estonia and Russia, the *disconnective* effect of the EU’s own external border policy with Russia was amplified by Estonia’s somewhat premature endorsement of the Schengen regime, which had a *disabling* influence on Russia’s political elite and local actors. In addition, the development of civil society encouraged by the EU and other Western donors did not always imply increased levels of cooperation. As with the spread of pragmatic EU-inspired policies among the political elite, some societal actors have taken over the representation of hard-line positions on the Estonian-Russian border conflict. Yet, improved high-level relations and increasing levels of communication between Estonian and Russian societal and private actors, on the one hand, and decreasing societal reach of securitisation of the border conflict, on the other, have produced some change in the identity scripts of the Estonian society in support of a *constructive* aspect of conflict transformation. However, despite its support of many societal-level conciliatory initiatives, the EU as a source of *constructive* impact is not widely acknowledged. Instead, the reduction in societal-level tensions is mostly attributed to the popular distrust towards Estonia’s domestic politics and increasing dissociation with its conflict-perpetuating domestic discourses.

In light of this analysis, it is likely that in the future, the scope of EU-inspired pragmatic policy-making will continue to expand, especially as the Estonian political elite undergoes a further socialisation into the EU's political and decision-making culture. However, the disappearance of the domestic association of "politics" with the conflict-generating identity discourses is conditional upon a different construction of pragmatic issues by the Estonian political elite. Instead of being presented as purely instrumental and temporary, this sphere of mere "policy" needs to be reconceptualised as politics, open to debate and public consultation. It is obvious, however, that whether as a result of the long-term impact of European integration, or as an effect of maturing political culture, such a *constructive* change will need a long time to take root. Regarding Estonia's approach to its relations with Russia, as it becomes increasingly influenced by the EU's liberal policies, it will inevitably partake not only of their strengths but also of their weaknesses. There are a number of analyses concerned with the reasons behind the low efficiency of the EU's cooperative initiatives with Russia and their poor reception by the Russian public, such as excessively bureaucratic orientation of cooperation projects and their limited tangible output (e.g. Kononenko, 2004, 2006; Makarychev, 2004; Zakharov, 2005). In this respect, Estonia could anticipate the risks of expanding its development aid policy by analysing the EU's successes and failures in its dealings with Russia. This may have a dual effect: To gain a better understanding of Russia as a cooperation partner on a variety of different levels and to potentially contribute to a more informed EU-wide approach especially in the area of neighbourhood policies.

ENDNOTES

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² Space limitations of this article preclude a full analysis of the transformation of Russia's subject-position in this conflict, especially considering a significant discrepancy between regional- and federal-level constructions of Russia's relations with Estonia. See Makarychev (2004) for an analysis of Russian-side discourses on the border conflict.

³ See www.ivangorod.narod.ru, accessed in June 2002.

⁴ While it is difficult to outline this trend numerically, one of the leading pollsters in Estonia notes that the levels of trust in state institutions that are not associated with politics are consistently higher than trust ratings of political institutions (Saar Poll, 2003). A useful indicator in this regard is the consistently low (20 to 30 per cent) trust rating of political parties in the recent years (EMOR/Riigikantselei s.a.; Saar Poll, 2003; cf. Raik, 2005: 125), which in Estonia's electoral system are the chief gateway for democratic participation. The issue of apparent faultiness of this mechanism of representation generates surprisingly little debate in Estonia, partly because low voters' turnout at elections seems consistent with trends elsewhere in Europe. One debate that captures a growing gap between the dominant political discourse and attitudes of those who feel excluded from it refers to the emergence of a "second Estonia" (Vetik, 2002) which is mostly conceptualised as the Estonia of the poor and the "ordinary" as opposed to the financially and politically influential people (Saarts, 2002).

⁵ This is evident in the heated debates that surrounded the fate of the "Bronze Soldier" monument in Tallinn in the summer and fall of 2006. The monument, a legacy of the Soviet era, commemorates

Soviet soldiers who perished in WWII and as such invokes the opposing interpretations in terms of occupation vs. liberation associated with the outcome of the war and implications for Estonia's statehood.

⁶ See: www.euborderconf.bham.ac.uk; last accessed in November 2006.

⁷ The most significant “carrot” the EU wields vis-à-vis conflict parties is EU membership (as opposed to the “stick” of its denial/withholding), which largely limits the EU’s compulsory impact to prospective member-states. Association agreements, as opposed to the prospect of EU accession, lack a comparable leverage (e.g. in the case of Israel-Palestine); the actual accession into the EU also diminishes the EU impact (e.g. Greece in the case of Turkish-Greek border conflict) (Diez et al., 2006).

⁸ The “simplified” border crossing regime extended to local inhabitants of the border areas on special occasions (such as state and religious holidays, which the locals often referred to as “simplified days”) and operated on the basis of lists rather than visas.

⁹ Although most examples of positive change refer to the southern stretch of the Estonian-Russian border, the northern Narva-Ivangorod area never experienced a comparable cultural separation along the border, with the division running rather between the Russophone Northeast of Estonia and the rest of the country.

¹⁰ See note 4 above.

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Legitimisation Struggles in Hungarian Politics The Contours of Competing Foreign Policies in Prime Ministers' Speeches

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Abstract: Identity and foreign policy are posited as mutually determining one another in Constructivist theories of International Relations. The present paper focuses on the analysis of Hungarian foreign policy emanating from the identities of the political right and the left. The purpose is to collect the arguments legitimizing the foreign policies pursued by the two sides and see to what extent they add up to a coherent foreign policy, which the country will follow. Despite the rather tense relationship between the two dominant parties, the analysis arrives to the surprising coherence of foreign policy. The paper uses the discourse analysis method to focus on the Prime Ministers' speeches, of the two sides, as the main spokesmen of the dominant parties' foreign policy lines.

Keywords: constructivism, identity, Hungarian foreign policy, regional policy, relationship to the EU, relationship to NATO, Fidesz (Association of Young Democrats), MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party)

INTRODUCTION

The undertaking of this paper began during the 2006 campaign for the parliamentary elections. It grew out of an “empirical” interest to collect the arguments, which appeared in the prime ministers' speeches,¹ in order to see whether they made up a “coherent” foreign policy plan, for the country to follow. Hungarian foreign policy seems to have a difficult time communicating abroad, as it is the site of fierce competition between the political right and left.

Two theoretical approaches to International Relations (IR), which value the role of language, are Constructivism and Discourse Analysis (DA).² The relationship between identity and foreign policy however, is often taken for granted in both approaches.³ Both approaches draw attention to the interpretative nature, which underlies all language use, beyond mere description. From this perspective a valid analysis is neither the comparison with “asocial” concepts,⁴ nor the comparison with an independently existing reality.⁵ That different facts count as relevant in competing narratives,⁶ is the underlying Constructivist recognition. What is relevant for a Constructivist analysis is the illumination of context, so that competing interpretations of

events may unfold and meaning may be recovered within this context. This can be done by recording the language usage of the parties involved and taking into account the influence that their speech had on their audiences. Thus, this should explain the focus of this paper.

The influence that speech has over its audience expresses the persuasive intentions underlying language usage. It can express one's attempts at legitimisation, or it can demand the audience's support for a specific policy from party-members, the political elite, or the electorate. The support/critique of the party, the support/critique of the opposition and ultimately the support/sanction of voters during elections can measure the success of such acts of speech; hence, the time of the analysis was set during the 2006 local elections.

Interpreting speeches as an act of legitimisation implies that "consistency" is less important than the arguments presented for changes in behaviour, as demonstrated by Kratochwil and Ruggie (1986). Therefore, changes in policy need to be explained. Whether this implies change in comparison with the policies of the previous government or simply the inability to fulfil obligations (*vis-à-vis* regional or global actors such as Europe or the US); such explanations are often met with opposition because the audience is not convinced by the arguments presented for change. "Consistency", therefore, may be better expressed as an overlap or an agreement between both sides regarding certain lines of foreign policy. In the case of individual players, consistency can mean either the absence of contradictions between different foreign policy goals/values or the non-existence of a discrepancy between foreign policy lines communicated to different audiences.

The context of the present paper is regarding the debate over the priorities of the Hungarian foreign policy since the regime change, i.e., the moment which establishes the reference point for the identity of major players, as well the dividing line in foreign policy compared to the Communist regime. The contest between the two prime ministers can even be seen as symbolic if we delineate the two radically different situations the regime change found them in and their different answers to it. It can also be seen as symbolic because of the time frame in which it takes place: Two men in their forties starting their political competition at the end of the Cold War. Ferenc Gyurcsány, who first became prime minister in 2004, had been affiliated with politics before the regime change, within the confines of the Communist Youth Organisation (KISZ). The regime change pushed him to found the Democratic Youth Organisation (DEMISZ) in April 1989 and to lobby unsuccessfully for the participation of this organisation on the third side of the National Roundtable Talks (Romsics, 2003: 140). This third side consisted of what we would like to call, civil society organisations in a democratic society. They were the satellite organisations of the former Communist regime. Most of these organisations (except some trade unions) disappeared from the political scene after the first free elections. This applies to DEMISZ as well, which was discouraged from participating in the roundtable talks by the opposition. This decision broke the political career of Ferenc Gyurcsány for more than a decade, until he returned to politics as an adviser to Prime Minister, Péter Medgyessy during the 2002 election

campaign. From 2004 he succeeded Medgyessy as Prime Minister. Gyurcsány remembers this forced break in his political career as: “a blow which had him on the ground for 6 months”. During these interim years he was invited to work for a business. Here he proved to be a successful businessman, becoming a millionaire sometimes with dubious transactions; transactions which he described recently as “acceptable in an emerging democracy” (HVG interview, 30. 03. 2006).

By contrast, the regime change found Viktor Orbán, the present head of the most important opposition party, FIDESZ, and Prime Minister from 1998 until 2002, on a scholarship in Oxford. After 8 months (1989–1990) Orbán interrupted his scholarship and decided to run for candidacy in the first free elections.⁷ The participation of FIDESZ and of the Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions as independent organisations⁸ was extricated from the Party as one of the first successes and signs of unity for the Opposition Round Table (EKA).⁹ The position of FIDESZ during this time was described as radically anticommunist. In one of his first speeches at Imre Nagy’s¹⁰ funeral, one of the few occasions where the Hungarian opposition has the opportunity to “test” its power,¹¹ Orbán expressed himself with astonishing frankness and called for the total withdrawal of the Russian army and the uncompromising condemnation of the Communist leaders. Romsics, remarked that Orbán’s speech stood out from the other five because it compelled his audience to take an unambiguous stance with respect to the communist period:

“We stand unable to comprehend the fact that those who humiliated the revolution and its prime minister in chorus not so long ago, have today suddenly realized that they are the continuers of Imre Nagy’s reform politics. Similarly, we do not understand how the party and state leaders who ordered that we be taught from books that distorted the revolution, today scramble for touching these coffins, as if they were ‘talismans bringing good luck.’ ... We are not satisfied with the empty promises of communist politicians, which mean nothing to them. What we need to achieve is that the party in power, even if it wanted to, could not use force against us. Only then can we avoid coffins and delayed funerals, comparable to the one we are witnessing today.” (Romsics, 2003: 155–156)¹²

This speech foreshadowed the struggles both sides would face in order to appropriate the heritage of the Revolution as an important source of legitimisation and identity. It also shows that the left-right divide in Hungary is historically loaded, due to the former Communist dictatorship¹³ and the complicated nature of the regime change. According to Fidesz, the regime change called for the integration of such conservative values, as the family or national identity, alongside values that were often associated with the left, such as equal opportunity (20. 04. 1995; 23. 05. 2004). Furthermore, it is worth noting that the former Communist parties did not want a regime change but were forced to accept it by external and internal circumstances. The reforms initiated by Gorbachev, and the changes these reforms brought about, culminated into the so called “round-table talks”. That the sharing of power took place; and that Hungary had unconstrained

and free elections as early as 1990 (Stark and Bruszt, 1992 [1991]) was, next to Gorbachev's non-intervention policy, the success of the opposition (Sajó, in Elster 1996: 69–98).

An additional influence on Hungarian party politics was the transformation of Western European political parties. The European tendency towards the redefinition of parties, not as ideological but as centrist people's parties, is happening partly in response to a competitive demand but also in response to the changes in the organisation of labour and economy. As a consequence, Hungary finds herself today, like many other European parties, trying to define and cope with the changes that are taking place around her. Such changes can be interpreted as the beginning of a new period, when it is no longer traditional "ideologies, but visions about the future that compete" (Fidesz, 08. 06. 1996). This makes Hungarian answers potentially interesting from a European point of view.

If we assume that "the present", starting with the end of the Cold War, raises many particular questions about the future, we can structure our argument to focus on the answers to such problems by the two major parties: i.e. the Socialists and Fidesz. And so, I turn to the analysis of foreign policy with a focus on: 1) identity, 2) foreign policy emanating from identity, 3) tensions within Europe, 4) visions for the future of Europe, 5) the constitutive role of Hungary in Europe, and finally, 6) tensions among trans-Atlantic relations. This paper confirms the theoretical assumption about the link between identity and foreign policy. The foreign policy line pursued by the two sides is deducible from identity. These add up to a surprisingly coherent foreign policy that the country follows, despite fierce competition between both sides. Similarly, the paper confirms that the priorities of foreign policy, such as the insistence of an American presence in Europe despite the internal tensions this entails, are incomprehensible without presenting the security concerns that Central and Eastern European states (CEE) faced during the post-Cold War years.¹⁴ The sections address each problem presenting the ideas of the right and the left respectively. A concluding chapter focuses on the problem of creating a coherent foreign policy, which emanates from the two sides.

1. IDENTITY

1. 1 FIDESZ – Orbán-freedom

"Western", in the sense of "European", "free" and "democratic" has been central to the identity-building of the Fidesz party since the regime change. However, following the end of the Cold War, the tying of Hungarian identity to freedom and democracy was problematic. In a speech delivered before the upcoming European Parliamentary elections, Orbán addressed this challenge by focusing his attention on Europe's many problems with freedom over the 20th century, thus casting some doubt on the automatic association of the West and Europe with freedom. The steps of his argument are as follows: 1) historically the West did not hold the position of freedom for Hungarians, 2) the place of freedom was not necessarily in Europe either, 3) during the greater part of the 20th century Europe was not free because it was ruled by

one dictatorship or another, 4) between the two World Wars the dictatorships came from the Western part of Europe, 5) freedom is neither synonymous with Europe nor is it an automatic factor, 6) In the Yalta Agreement there was no talk of a free Europe, only a liberated Europe, 7) The Western part of Europe was free only because (unlike Eastern Europe) it was liberated by a free country, 8) a liberated Europe can only become truly free when it is fully unified, which can be seen as the “true end” of the Cold War (05. 03. 2004) see also (06. 12. 2003, 12. 12. 2003).

As in the past the threat to Europe’s freedom does not necessarily come from new or future member states. In his response to questions concerned with the potential threat of a move to the extreme right in Hungary, Orbán answers:

“The dilemma is as old as democracy. How can democracy guard itself from non-democratic forces? It is not in Brussels that the solution to this question lies, but in the constitution of member states. When it comes to the advance of populism today, this is the problem of Western- and not of Central Europe. ... Here freedom is what is attractive” (17. 06. 2000).

Similar, arguments that call for qualifications of the meaning of Europe appear in earlier speeches as well. Belonging to Europe is a question of identity for Hungarians. It is a loss that we remember and mourn, like: “our grandfather’s watch, lost at the time of the occupation, or the grocery store, lost at nationalisation, or the family land forced into the cooperative;” but less in terms of a cost and benefit calculation. However, “the commitment that we have a place at the table of Europe where decisions that have an effect on Europe, in the broadest sense, are made – well this feeling is strong” (19. 05. 2000).

When it comes to the definition of Europe as a geographical and cultural space, it is even more “difficult for a Hungarian to accept the idea that now, we have to join Europe” given that Hungary is “in the very centre of Europe” and that in “our cultural aspirations, we have always thought of ourselves as a Western country”. Our European membership is not a question of trade and economy since in these respects: “Hungary is already part of the European Union”. Many arguments which surface at the top of such critiques state that: “the obstacle to Hungary’s EU membership is not Hungary’s un-preparedness”, but rather the indecision of the European Union itself, the absence of “a clear, determinate strategy, that would include both substantive elements and a time horizon” (06. 04. 2000).

The underlying position is that “we are Europeans and we can become a member of the European Union, because we are Hungarians”: i.e. “[w]e are and can remain Europeans by remaining ourselves”. In other words, there is no contradiction between “our EU membership and the passing on of our national values and traditions” (30. 11. 2000). Equally, this implies a rejection of the idea of old and new Europe (12. 12. 2003) and an interpretation of our EU membership as the reunification of Europe, for: “...Hungary never left the community of Western European people; it has always been the agreements by great powers that have torn us out from this community” (26. 03. 2002).

Other speeches attempted to support the identification of “Hungarian” and “European” identities with arguments derived from the Hungarian society and the Hungarian people who see their interests in peace and stability. These were described as, two additional elements of the Hungarian identity. When given the freedom to choose, Hungarian society unhesitatingly chose a democratic form of rule in 1990, and undertook the huge sacrifices related to the creation of a market economy without organising strikes or protests against the painful steps towards transition. Accordingly, Hungarian governments could work out their full terms, thereby contributing to the political stability of the region. Externally, this stabilising role was realised by Hungary’s NATO and EU membership and paradoxically, by the presence of Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring countries:

“We see with satisfaction that the legitimate organisations of Hungarian minorities in their own countries – are reliable coalition partners to the political forces committed to democracy, the market economy and the Euro-Atlantic integration – whether they are in the government or in the opposition” (20. 02. 1999) and also (27. 07. 2002).

...

“...since 1990 (i.e. the moment of freedom) Hungarians across the borders, living within the area of whichever succession state, have not only not used violence to reach their goals but have not even mentioned the possibility of using force. It has become clear that there is such an ability or skill, that we call constitutional skill. It manifests itself in such a way that when an opportunity arrives, members of the Hungarian minorities do not “grasp arms” but rather they come together and formulate party manifestos, draft constitutions, find out new procedures, and new forms of internal electoral rules and so on” (19. 05. 2000) and also (31. 05. 2001).

An explanation to this could be found in the third component of the Hungarian identity, which has historical, cultural and psychological roots in Central Europe. The Central European component of the Hungarian identity is strengthened by the presence of the Hungarian minorities in the surrounding countries.

Consistent with the above mentioned elements of identity, Fidesz rejected the possibility of mid-term elections because of the Socialist government’s low expectations for his party’s performance during the 2004 European Parliamentary elections as well as “the leaking scandal”, which followed shortly after the elections in 2006 (see below). Each time Orbán appealed to the country’s need for stability:

“In Hungary it is a question of honour for the actual governing forces to be able to govern through the four years. It is interesting that this is not the case everywhere. It turned out to be so in Hungary. Since 1990 everyone – perhaps even the voters, but the media surely – thought about stability as the most important factor. Thus all forces, who undertook the responsibility of government, had equally convinced themselves, as they had convinced public opinion, that they were able to provide predictability and stability for the country, and that they would be able to govern for four years. Therefore the idea of a governing party today to

want to hold mid-term elections, I think can be no more than silly guesswork or gossip” (28. 03. 2003).

Following “the leaking scandal”, Orbán suggested that an interim government be set up. It would be made up of experts chosen by the Socialists and contain a limited mandate and office term, in order to lead the country out of the present economic/moral crisis. This suggestion was expected to help avoid the costs and delays associated with organising new elections while solving the problem of legitimacy in the new government.

1.2 MSZP – Gyurcsány – progress

The Socialist Party’s servicing of a foreign totalitarian power, acknowledged in 1990, posed an identity crisis for the left. It didn’t affect the left in terms of national identity but rather in terms of the party’s identity and its continuity and broke with the previous regime. In principle it was not inconceivable that the Hungarian left be reorganized by a party other than the Socialists, a party without a Communist past¹⁵ (e.g. the Social Democratic Party of Hungary (MSZDP), that held a long tradition that was forced into exile following the Communist takeover in 1948–1949). MSZDP was a member of the Socialist International without interruption until 1990, and it held veto power on the Socialist Party’s membership. That a strong alternative party to the Socialists did not emerge is a testimony to the power of the party and its ability to prevent such reorientation of the left-leaning electorate.¹⁶

In 2004, following the European parliamentary elections, Prime Minister Medgyessy was removed and replaced by Ferenc Gyurcsány as the new head of government. Gyurcsány parachuted into the party as an outsider due to the help of Medgyessy. He was an independent consultant – and later Sports Minister to Medgyessy. His wife also had a close relationship to the party.¹⁷ Gyurcsány followed the identity crisis of the party closely and contributed to its resolution both ideologically and personally through his appointment to office. In an article dated from 1999 he states that the non-existence of a political program is merely the symptom; but the solution lies in the reorganisation of the party, which in turn requires overcoming the identity crisis of the left. His answer to the latter problem was not to cut its ties with the Communist past, as otherwise suggested publicly, but as Orbán foresaw some years earlier, the appropriation of 1956 and 1989.

“There is only one thing that is worthless to do: it is to write a program. The organisation, the communication, and the leadership of the party have to be transformed and only these changes can create the basis for reformulation and representation of a new political message. This does not mean that the organisation would be more important than the political program, but it does mean that in the present situation, without changing the functioning of MSZP [the Hungarian Socialist Party]; even the most advanced program would sound empty.

...

An important part of the membership and leadership of MSZP suffers from an identity crisis. Uncertainty is caused by at least five factors: 1) a lurking shame, only partly overcome by the unlawful actions committed a

long time ago in the name of the Hungarian left 2) the early electoral victory of 1994, which has impeded the inner transformation of the party 3) until recently the half-hearted support of the social and economic policy of the 1994–1998 government 4) the fear of having lost the confidence of the society as a result of dubious business transactions by some of the party elite and 5) the sincere but publicly unacknowledged fear that modern answers are not being offered and the interest in returning to power is the only thing which holds the party together.

...

It is easier to be a member of a party that has no past. Whether we avow it or not, we are all heirs. Most of us did not ask for it but simply received it. It would be good if at least the socialists were able to believe: The one-and-a-half-century-old heritage of the left offers ample possibilities, in terms of models, ideals and integrity that can be proudly represented by the political heirs. Only referring to the most recent examples: The endeavours by the Reform Communists of the 1950s towards freedom culminating in the 1956 revolution; the breath of fresh air brought by the new economic mechanism of 1968; the renewed social and political opening of the 1980s; our role in the preparation of the political, legal and economic conditions of the regime change. Should we be ashamed of all of this? Not only would we, but the whole country as well, would be poorer without them. Many politicians and intellectuals belonging to MSZP want to testify to its democratic commitment and “market party” convictions, and as a consequence behave as if they forgot the traditional content of the left, the ideals of freedom, equality and solidarity” (28. 05. 1999).

The second strategy was to link the Hungarian left with the progressive “tradition” in Europe, and label its opposition “un-progressive”.¹⁸ In a conference entitled, “Progressive thoughts about Europe” jointly organized by Tony Blair, Gyurcsány refers to the left as: “We, the European progressive” or “the progressive governments.”

“History and progress stood on the side of Europe in its victory over the Nazi tyranny, it stood on our side in the defeat of Communism, and it stands on our side today as we create a prescient program for the Union.” (15. 10. 2004)

Linking the Hungarian left with the European left and the New Left in particular meant that the identity crisis of the MSZP was thereby dissolved into the general uncertainty of the political left worldwide, due to globalization (28. 05. 1999; 23. 09. 2002; 20. 01. 2004) and the transformation of traditional class-structure. The suggested remedy – the need for the synthesis of the traditional programs of the left and the right (05. 02. 2003; 20. 01. 2004) – allowed Gyurcsány to appropriate the more successful elements of the opposition into his own program. After 40 years of Communism, the initiation of the words “bourgeois” and “civilian” (we have an identical term for the two words) has to be credited to Fidesz. Fidesz chose a strategy to markedly differentiate his party from the left and provide a real alternative during the 1998 electoral campaign. This was a rather risky enterprise in a society that had heard of nothing else than the vices

committed by the “bourgeois traitor”. The use of these words from the Socialist Party can be read as an attempt by the Hungarian left to reconcile its identity with the bourgeois basis of democracy, which was deemed “underdeveloped” within the country. “A strong civilian” attitude, i.e. “wealthy citizens in the financial, moral and intellectual sense” would be necessary. “This is the foundation of autonomy and the guarantee that he [voters]” will not “be bought or intimidated”, essentially, the view that “bourgeois society” in Hungary “is necessary because democracy is underdeveloped”:

“The left-liberal [reference to the coalition of MSZP and SZDSZ] side fears unjustifiably to be disadvantaged if it is not like the political right. It should not want to be like that! ...

...

One of Fidesz’s biggest lies is that he proclaims Hungary to be bourgeois when it explicitly builds on the attitudes of subjects: The only one amongst us who does bourgeois politics is ourselves” (29. 07. 2005).

For the same reasons, the Socialists see in “bourgeois modernization that big national issue which can bind the party forces of the democratic centre together” and transcend party lines. However, since what makes people into a nation is also solidarity towards those who cannot follow, the interpretation of solidarity is where liberals, conservatives and social democrats differ (19. 09. 2005).

The third element of Gyurcsány’s strategy consisted of de-linking the Socialist Party from the past; this included the Communist past and the regime change:

“We would like to do a new kind of politics, which is not occupied with the problems of regime change; it is not from there that it derives its own identity. I would like MSZP to be the representative of a broad, left-wing political tradition, ... which makes proud patriotism its centre [of politics], is able to embrace such conservative ideals as respect for the strengthening of family, acceptance of the positive social role of faith, and that bravely addresses questions that its predecessors did not, such as the question of lustration, that we have addressed.”

In response to having recently been called a “Communist politician turned down at the age of 28”, by a minister of his own government, he answered:

“The country is not interested in that. All Hungarian politicians including the leader of the opposition were held hostage to all the conflicts of regime change and of the political world they have created. Today I do not remind people of the past. Rather what comes to people’s minds is that he is too daring, very civilian, and sometimes, perhaps that he even talks nonsense” (16. 02. 2005).

Tying the left to the progressive tradition of Europe has had many consequences for the definition of the identity of the country. While Orbán regarded it as important to emphasise that “we are Europeans because we are Hungarians”, the main point of emphasis by the left is the shared European culture and identity. National identities depend on European identities. While this is more often the view of the Socialists and the Liberals within the European Parliament, it undoubtedly delineates much of the expected

progress for the future development of the European Union as it describes the present situation. (See the speech: “We have to urge the enlargement of Europe”.¹⁹

2. FOREIGN POLICY

2.1 FIDESZ – Orbán

Fidesz derives the three pillars of the Hungarian foreign policy from the three components of the Hungarian identity. “Hungarian diplomacy has to focus primarily on a Western orientation: First of all, on NATO and then the European Union”. But as a Central European country we should be “working towards a Central European construction” (31. 07. 2000). Finally our accession to NATO and the European Union raises many questions about how the benefits of membership can be turned into benefits for the Hungarian minorities who will not become members with us (20. 02. 1999; 07. 06. 2000). In order to answer these questions, the Orbán government set up a permanent consultative body, MÁÉRT (Hungarian Standing Conference) in March, 1999. MÁÉRT cooperated with some of the leading Hungarian politicians from surrounding countries, in order to find common solutions to pressing matters in which the government’s decisions would have an effect on minorities (07. 06. 2000).

Both the status law,²⁰ influenced by the policies of countries having members living outside the EU, (e.g. England, Portugal, Spain and Italy (31. 07. 2000) and later the idea of dual citizenship emerged as a result of these joint consultations.

MÁÉRT was not created to influence the politics of the neighbouring countries. Regarding the difficulties faced by Hungarian minority communities to act in unity, Orbán declines to answer whether the government can help create this unity. The dual challenge for Hungarian minorities “to maintain their diversity and, at the same time, be able to create and exert a common political will” (26. 07. 2000) is not dissimilar from the position of the political right in Hungary, where effective political influence requires the organised cooperation instead of the competition among political parties²¹. The question comes up equally with regard to the best form of minority protection. In this connection the government does not go beyond noting that: “In Western Europe the minority question has been settled by the existence of some kind of autonomy” (19. 10. 2000).

Furthermore, the awareness that: prospects for the improvement of the quality of life exceed the activity of political parties in Hungary, leads to the recognition that the quality of life for Hungarians living in Romania also depends on civil society. For this reason what is important is not that parties form governments but that:

“we build our small Hungarian civic world, which is strong enough irrespective of the actual constitution of the government; ...through the creation and the strengthening of the institutions of a civic Hungary, a world as we would like it to be, in which we would feel well and could call our own, one that no government can disregard in the future”.
(27.07.2002)²²

The translation of the rhetoric above into a political action, leads to the launching of the “civil circles movement”. This, with the participation of sympathizers, is expected to meet the Hungarian Socialist Party’s capacity by the time of the 2006 elections and counterbalance its dominance over the media and cultural life in Hungary. (18. 10. 2002) It is also a form of direct democracy. (See section below on the future of Europe.)

The real long term solution for Hungary regarding the minority question is to bring the surrounding countries into the EU and NATO, a solution which is of joint interest for Hungary and its neighbouring states, as well as a guarantee for peace and stability within the region. It could equally prevent the emergence of a new iron curtain (20. 02. 1999). When Fidesz was in government, this led to more active regional politics than during the time of Socialist politicians. The intent being to:

“... [Seal] the three pillars of the Hungarian foreign policy: Euro-Atlantic integration, the nurturing of the Good Neighbour Policy and the national policy for the support of Hungarian minorities abroad” into one coherent foreign policy, in such a way that: the three “are not mutually exclusive but mutually supportive goals” (20.02.1999). See also (06. 04. 2000, 19. 10. 2000.)

Orbán rejects the accusations by the Socialists that Hungary would have the ambitions of a middle power:

“I am speaking of a partnership and not of power. Middle-power thoughts were views from fifty years ago. They have been swept away by the wind. Not only because Hungary cannot successfully aspire to such a role, but because such roles no longer exist” (31. 07. 2000).

With the passing of time and the realization of our NATO membership, it is possible to extend the “Central European region” and to sincerely identify with the Balkans (i.e., Romania, 24. 07. 2004 as well Serbia, (3. 11. 2004), something, which was not advisable to do at the time of the regime change or the Balkan War. The different national strategies of Hungary and Romania can be seen in the expenditure figures, e.g., Romania has a higher military expenditure. This was another reason for Hungary’s support of Romania’s membership into the EU. Being in the same alliance, “allows us to continue to spend the larger part of our resources for the development of trade and our economy and limit our military expenditures to the ones required by our NATO obligations” (27. 07. 2002). Since an EU accession means an accession in the legal sense: “to catch up with the developed European countries within three decades” and achieve “the parallel rise of society on a mass scale” is the long-term goal of the 1998–2000 government (18. 10. 2002; 19. 05. 2000). This is facilitated by the emergence of “a new zone of economic growth in Europe, stretching from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea”, i.e., the area of a largely interpreted Central European region (19. 05. 2000).

“The re-unification, without the modification of borders, of the Hungarian nation” coincides with “the current fashion in Europe, [and] the main direction of European development” towards “greater unity lifting frontiers” (30. 11. 2000). Thus, Hungarians living beyond the borders can help ease the economy’s demand for labour, in a country where birth and mortality rates are some of the worst in Europe.

“Therefore it is in the last but still acceptable moment that we are creating the status law, which is the first step among others towards the creation of this “freedom of movement” or “communicating vessel” so that the labour force, within the Hungarian cultural region of the Carpathian Basin, can function according to the interests of the Hungarian economy and the individual interests of the persons involved” (31. 05. 2001).

Where there was tension regarding the fore mentioned three goals, the Orbán government was willing to incur some conflicts with the European Union, as was a similar case with both Croatia and Austria. Orbán repeated his position that: “the way to the pacification of the South Slavic region and the creation of a stable peace is by inviting the suitable countries to participate in international life”. He discouraged criticism from the European Union by making an appeal under the special status of neighbours and asking that Hungary be allowed to act according to her own neighbourhood policy (14. 11. 1999).

In connection with Austria similar arguments emerged. Hungary was the first to invite Austria after the EU had isolated her, i.e. following the 2000 election’s results. The justifications for its actions were not unlike those it used for Croatia. The driving principle for government policy being that newly formed governments should first be given confidence and should be “judged” only on the basis of their political deeds (02. 06. 2000). Furthermore, one sees a neighbouring country about to rediscover her Central-European identity (19. 04. 2000) also (02. 06. 2000). The Austrian case also led to the criticism that, the EU’s position was not the result of a constitutionally grounded procedure because it should have based its judgment on either the principle of subsidiarity (i.e. and say that the EU accepts the opinion of the Austrian constitutional court on the democratic nature of the government) or on a supranational procedure (17. 06. 2000).

In other words, the prospect of EU membership and an independent foreign policy are not a contradiction in terms:

“EU politics can never be the only important direction for Hungary. Our joining of the European Union does not mean that we will move geographically away from the Carpathian Basin. Since many of the neighbouring countries will not join the European Union with us, it is necessary that we continue to have a strong regional policy. One step into this direction was an invitation for the cooperation of the Visegrad four” (23. 07. 2001).

2.2 MSZP–Gyurcsány

The Socialist government chose a more ambitious foreign policy that “dealt less with the past and more with the present and future, less with ideology and more with practical questions, i.e. it [intended to]follows a realpolitik”. This statement expresses a critique of, and break with, the Orbán government’s foreign policy line. Hungary’s “EU membership should not mean that it is locked into the European Union since the potential for growth within the European Union in these years is far below growth rates in other regions”. The answer, however, is not to tie the country’s economic growth to the more dynamic growth of a widely interpreted Central European region,

encompassing the Balkans, but “to look for developing dynamic markets” like: Russia, South-East Asia and the US. (“The American visit was a breakthrough”.) The consolidation of relations in these four directions, i.e. the US, the European Union, Russia, and China was considered to be the success of the Medgyessy-Gyurcsány government (02. 03. 2006).

The most important difference is in regional policy. The key words for regional policy are *stability* and *responsibility*, which are not interpreted “as givens” and parts of the national identity but as goals to strive for. In his definition of the relationship between Hungary and her neighbours, Gyurcsány speaks less about the country’s Central European identity, rooted in shared experiences, and more about the unacknowledged difficulties of Hungary’s neighbours, who also struggle towards building a state.

“We Hungarians ... sometimes believe that in the previous centuries our challenge was the greatest challenge a nation has had to face. And then if we open the chronicles we can see that in this region ...almost all peoples and states had to face the same challenge. Poles, Czechs, Lithuanians, Estonians, Hungarians, Serbians, and Romanians have all fought through the last centuries in order to preserve, strengthen, and create their own statehood.”

Over the course of the 20th century, Hungary gave two unfortunate answers to this “dual challenge” to create stability and act responsibly towards the Hungarian nation as a whole. In the interwar period, stability was given up in exchange for responsibility and politics aimed at the revision of the borders. Following the Second World War, the responsibility for Hungarians living beyond the borders was given up for stability. (“Hungary wants to live in peace and security with her neighbours”).

The most important means of stability is economic prosperity, which can be achieved within Europe through the analogous concerns for the open market and solidarity. For the same reason EU membership can be the best solution for minority protection:

“[I]t is prosperity that facilitates the living together of cultures; it is through prosperity that the shadow of incomprehension between different nations fade out” (“We have to urge the enlargement of Europe”) (21. 01. 2005).

While both governments see a resolution to the problem of Hungarian minorities in the enlargement of the EU, the Gyurcsány government wants “minority protection to be embedded in a common European identity and grounded on an enlightened, civic and liberal human rights foundation”, one that links the protection of individual rights to “the protection of cultural, religious and other types of identities” (20. 01. 2004). According to this position, the protection of individual rights presupposes some form of protection of collective rights. (“At the distribution of Awards for Minorities”.)

“We should protect the rights of every one, so to the question: who am I, one can answer freely. ... [If] this is an inalienable right of man. then this is not merely the right of one man, but the right of a community of men who answer identically to the same question. In other words these rights are not merely individual rights, but collective rights as well.”

Consistent with this approach, Gyurcsány speaks of multiple identities, which he describes as complementary rather than competitive (“At the distribution of Awards for Minorities”). If it is true that multiple identities are not competitive, but complementary, then autonomy or any other institutional development for the protection of collective identities, should be regarded as a source of stability rather than instability (21. 01. 2005; 16. 02. 2005).

At the same time, the government lays great emphasis on the prosperity of Hungarians in their homeland, a position that does not necessarily follow the human rights/progressive left approach. Furthermore, it does not follow the government’s interpretation of the broader European goals towards competitiveness and solidarity or the free movement of labour within the European Union (Talk delivered in the debate of the new government’s program) (09. 01. 2005).

To accomplish these goals, a rather complicated five-point program was suggested by the government (09. 01. 2005). This implied the abolition of institutions created by the Orbán governments, including MÁÉRT and the status law. In his explanation Gyurcsány accused Fidesz of stepping symbolically, by making “a law that caused only problems, one that the neighbouring countries refused to apply” (21. 01. 2005). In contradiction to this he argues that the minority policy:

“[Is a policy] that the [Fidesz] government in power until 2002 has officially announced to the Venice Commission, and it has enjoyed a consensus until 2002 to 2003 ... The referendum organized for the automatic extension of dual citizenship has unfairly broken the agreements already existing in the Parliament majority, with respect to this question.” (“The government is committed to weighing the advantages and disadvantages”²³)

The government’s policy, vis-à-vis Hungarian minorities, might be hostage to the previously voiced threat, which states: The extension of Hungarian citizenship would automatically mean the migration of 23 million Romanians into the country.²⁴ The recently leaked scandal also brought attention to an earlier acknowledgment by Ferenc Gyurcsány that, the government’s argument against both the status law and the referendum was built on his construction of the threat, which was obviously false (József Debreczeni, 2006: 208–209).²⁵ While this certainly helped the left win the 2002 elections (Debreczeni, 2006: 210), it also signalled the end of a period when foreign policy was spared from domestic power struggles between both sides.

3. INTRA – EUROPEAN TENSIONS

3.1 FIDESZ – Orbán

It is not surprising that with the EU enlargement new member states have an influence on EU politics and engage in the self-definition of Europe. It is precisely the reason why some countries urged for an early accession. The questions to be answered are: Do the new member states define themselves as *Euroskeptics* regarding the common European foreign and security policy and if so, why? Here, the speeches point to two possible suggestions: First,

the disappointment at the end of the Cold War that Hungary would “soon” belong to the Western security system and second, the experience of the war in Yugoslavia.

To better understand the security concerns of the country it is worth mentioning the two dates of Hungary’s NATO and EU accession. Hungary joined NATO in March 1999 and the EU on May 1, 2004. This meant that during its most vulnerable period as a weak and nascent democracy, the “power vacuum” reigned in the region and the security of the country was in doubt. For over a decade, former Socialist countries belonged neither to the Warsaw Pact nor to the Western Alliance. The last units of the Soviet army left the country on March 10, 1990. The Warsaw Pact was dissolved almost a year later on the 25th of February in 1991. In 1991 on August 19th and 21st, Soviet tanks appeared in Moscow to attempt a coup d’état against Gorbachev. The Soviet Union was dissolved on the 6th and 7th of December in 1991 and Gorbachev announced his resignation on the 25th of December that same year. Given the well-known difficulties of succession within Communist countries, Gorbachev’s resignation was far from reassuring regarding the future.

Other external events took place during this “long” decade. Czechoslovakia dissolved peacefully in 1993, whereas the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia overshadowed the whole decade. The fate of Hungarian minorities living in both dissolving federations was uncertain. Within these circumstances, Hungary’s accession into the Euro-Atlantic security community was of the utmost importance. In an interview given to the Polish weekly, *Wprost*, on the occasion of Hungary’s accession into NATO, Orbán voiced his disappointment:

“... [L]et us speak straightforwardly, the reintegration of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary into the Euro-Atlantic alliance where, by the way, we have always belonged, is not the merit of Europe. ...In 1990 the Soviet Empire collapsed, the iron curtain was demolished – and in the following nine years, Europe was unable to guarantee acceptable and equal rights to Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary” (12. 08. 1999).

According to Orbán, Hungarians were protected from the Milosevic regime because Hungary was a NATO member. Regarding the: “Hungarian minorities of Voivodina (we are here speaking of a group of more than 300 000 people) they are not simply a Hungarian minority but a NATO minority” (14. 11. 1999). NATO’s intervention “in the protection of a minority group” was interpreted as symbolic (12. 04. 1999). The inefficiency of Western states in the management of the Balkan War only reinforced the experience of the Cold War (that NATO and America’s presence in Europe is a precondition for European security).

This does not mean that the Orbán government did not recognize the potential benefits for security through EU membership. On the contrary, his disappointment stemmed from the view that not only EU membership, but also “the integration process itself was an important tool for the consolidation of problematic areas” (27. 05. 2000). This and the continuous postponement of Europe to establish a clear timetable for accession made him sceptical. In May 2000, Orbán noted with regret that: “[w]e are close to

joining the European Union, although I have to note with sorrow, that since 1990 we are still five years from accession" (19.05.2000). Similarly: (17. 06. 2000): "By the mid-1990's, a smaller group could have been prepared for accession. They could have made enlargement a priority. This was not the way it happened and we are continuously paying the price" (and also 11. 02. 2002).

The status law and the negotiations of enlargement were additional sources of tension. Departing from the view that: "Brussels is not Moscow and that the EU is not identical with the COMECON" and: "[thus] it is not possible to relate uncritically to the EU"; Orbán blamed the EU "for being ungenerous and tight-fisted in the course of negotiations over the conditions of the accession", as well as for the disregard of any procedure in the formulation of the claim by the EU Commission that the status law contradicts the EU law (25. 01. 2003). According to Orbán, the last 50 years did not prepare Hungary for these debates and as a consequence:

"[I]t is not only the government that sometimes shows the reactions of subjects, but from time to time the public opinion of the whole country. This manifests itself in the continuous fear over what they will say in Brussels, or if we [will] have debates with our neighbours or allied partners" (25. 01. 2003).

Orbán interprets the tensions in connection with Hungary's accession and the status law as emanating from the double standards, which the EU applies to the detriment of the new members. This he states: "go[es] against the principles of equal competition, common sense and impartiality" (06. 02. 2003; 23. 07. 2005). Despite these tensions, Orbán compares the significance of Hungary's entry into the European Union with the regime change (28. 03. 2003; 12. 12. 2003), and describes his position as sober and expressing a healthy amount of Euro-scepticism. It is this healthy scepticism: "which has separated the citizens of Western nations for decades from our world; a world, which expected the final solution from a perfect social system and unconditional loyalty to the party" (06. 02. 2003).

Our entry into the European Union was equally our first accomplishment of an important foreign policy goal and of the "old dream":

"... that Hungarians from both sides of the borders could choose representatives in the same parliament. ... [Furthermore] With our membership into the European Union, [the] Hungarian language has not simply become a protected language of Europe, but one of the official languages of Europe" (05. 03. 2004); for this reason, Orbán concludes "Hungarian national interests and the future of Europe are closely linked" (23. 07. 2005).

Orbán's criticism of the government's policy towards the EU, in connection with the Iraqi war, was not that the government followed an independent foreign policy line but rather that it did not contact the European states or the people responsible for European foreign policy (both internally and externally), before it decided to support the unilateral action of the US. Disagreements, which emerge from the wake of an exchange of views and the necessary collection of information, are different from disagreements, which emerge from hasty decisions (10. 02. 2003). This

reflects, equally, a break in common foreign policy lines between government and opposition.

3.2 MSZP – Gyurcsány

The Medgyessy-Gyurcsány government sought to weaken the unilateral action of those Central European states aspiring for EU membership, by appealing to the common interests of the US and the European Union. The government understood that membership into both the EU and NATO were closely tied and the end of the Cold War did not change this relationship. Conflicts between Europe and the US should be avoided:

“We need a Europe that is committed to the maintenance of the transatlantic alliance. Since our experiences are fresh and not easily forgettable, the relationship of the new Central and Eastern European member states with the alliance is particularly strong, and made stronger by their new EU membership. From the bottom of its heart [the] whole [of] Europe recognizes the importance of this: it is vital for all of us that Europe be not the enemy, nor the servant, but the partner of the U.S” (15. 10. 2004).

This is a different strategy than the one insisted on by the Orbán government. Hungary has special interests and susceptibilities, which can be translated more freely into an independent foreign policy, when Hungary becomes a full member of the European Union. It is, therefore, not so much the outcome of the decision (i.e. the disagreement) but its specific content²⁶ and the procedure leading to it that is the object of critique.

Similarly to the right, the left rejects the distinction between old and new Europe:

“We have to reject the idea of internal and external circles of Europe! The essence of enlargement is unity, not the creation of a new division in the place of an old one that has finally been overcome. [T]ogether [we], old and new member states, are all founding members: The founding members of new Europe, our future can only be a [unified] Europe, a Europe where each is an equal partner of the other” (15. 10. 2004).

Another tension is the criteria for convergence into the Euro-zone, and thus, the unfulfilled promises of the government to meet this criterion. This can be seen as the tension which exists between the dual goals of economic prosperity and solidarity:

“[T]he euro is an important tool for the improvement of economic stability, and the decrease of risks associated with the country. [However] if the intention of a quick introduction of the euro, i.e. the development of the country, comes into conflict with the desire to create a more equitable society – then we should weigh the advantages and disadvantages wisely.” (“The government is committed to the weighing of advantages and disadvantages”.)

The formulation of this problem depicts the Hungarian government as the protector of its citizens’ interests. It is however, questionable, whether the interests of the country are not served better by an early accession into the Euro-zone. This argument proved to be equally successful in diminishing the responsibility of the government for the country’s deteriorating economic

performance. The performance was manipulated for both the EU and Hungarian voters and was an additional source of conflict between Hungary and the EU. The 2006 parliamentary elections, which were held in May, reinstated Gyurcsány as Prime Minister. Political crisis emerged when parts of his speech, delivered at a party meeting a few days after the parliamentary victory, were leaked in September (two weeks preceding the local elections). In it, Gyurcsány acknowledges the responsibility of the coalition government for the catastrophic shape of the economy which, in sharp contrast to the program publicly acknowledged in the electoral campaign, calls for immediate restrictive measures. The speech also asks for the unconditional support of these measures by the party. Despite efforts by the government and media to extend blame to all governments (for lying since the regime change and presenting the speech and its dirty wording as a passionate and brave attempt to break with political lies) the coalition suffered a defeat at the local elections on October 1, 2006.

4. THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

4.1 FIDESZ – Orbán

Along with the immediate security benefits that membership within an organization comparable to the European Union promised; it also promised smaller states in the region a long-term prospect for participation in the shaping of Europe's future. How do these two sides imagine Europe's future? What role in the realization of this future, can Hungary potentially play? Fidesz has a vision for Europe's future as "a Europe of nations", and "a Europe of regional autonomies", which would require new forms of democracy.

4.1.1 A Europe of nations

This vision of European integration:

"... [G]oes together with the strengthening" rather than the weakening "of the national specificities of member states", which encompasses also the Hungarian communities beyond the borders of Hungary (20. 02. 1999, 30. 11. 2000). "[T]he threat of cultural homogenization" is another reason why "it is important, where possible, to protect both national cultures, and national consciousness" (19. 10. 2000).

This "national orientation does not intend to deny the fact – in the name of some false internationalism, that [t]en million Hungarians live in Hungary and three and a half million in neighbouring countries". Orbán is aware that this is a vulnerable position in the present political language (19. 10. 2000). However, while there is debate and disagreement amongst member states regarding the future of Europe, the position of the government is not incompatible with EU membership but representative of the view "that belongs to the core of Europe" (23. 07. 2001). The status law is the embodiment of the government's vision into a policy:

"De Gaulle thought or the French thought under De Gaulle, that the European Union has to be a union of the states belonging to Europe. And the Germans during the time of Chancellor Kohl imagined that the European Union should be a Europe of regions; and now, we Hungarians

have invited a debate over the idea that the future of Europe should be a Europe of communities, including national communities. This is what the status law is all about" (28. 07. 2001).

4.1.2 A Europe of regional autonomies

Regional policy in Europe means a policy of regional autonomies. It is a "fashion" in current European thinking which favours Hungarian communities divided by borders (26. 02. 2000).

[Regionalism] "is not merely an administrative category of rationalisation." [It is much more than] "a change in the course of which state administration ... is becoming rationalised on the basis of a more clever division of labour." For, regionalism means equally the "creat[ion] [of] elected bodies, small or regional parliaments, [and] bodies provided with resources and spheres of authority". In a country with minorities it requires far more "creativity" on the part of states. ..."While autonomy or the problem of regionalism is merely a question of government in Hungary, ... in Romania it is a more sensitive issue with an additional ethnic element" (27. 07. 2002).

For the majority in Romania, who fear that "giving autonomy can lead to the disintegration of the Romanian state", Orbán answers that, they misunderstand EU membership and the modern world. For: "Membership within the European Union means that the period of indivisible unity of the state, territory and citizen is over." It is, therefore, not Hungarian autonomy but EU membership which feeds the sense of disintegration or more exactly transformation, awaiting all states that join the European Union, where the former significance of political borders fade and cultural and linguistic borders become visible. "For this reason," Orbán concludes, "I do not believe that the Romanian majority would have the right to be hostile with respect to Hungarian autonomy. There is no justifiable reason for seeing in a potential Hungarian autonomy the weakening of its own state" (24. 07. 2004) also (23. 07. 2005).

This does not mean, however, that states would grow weaker within the EU. Their roles might diminish, but within more limited roles they remain indispensable players. Orbán rejects the view that states would represent "an obstacle to economic development" on grounds that "state property is always worse than private property." As he says:

"capitalism ... is no longer about the big fish eating the small fish," but "the fast fish eating the slow fish" and "[t]his rapidity ... does not depend on size, population or territory" but on competitiveness. In other words: "states and governments have become important factors of economic competition within the European Union" (24. 07. 2004).

4.1.3 New forms of democracy

Finally, European development invites new forms of democracy. The search for new forms of participation in Hungary is motivated by the 40-year advantage of the political left, "in terms of organization or social relations" (25. 01. 2003):

“If one does not have media support, moreover for different reasons its opponent uses the media more successfully for its political purposes, there is only one tool that remains – to reach as many people as possible personally” (11. 11. 2002).

This led to the launching of the “civic circles movement” following the unexpected defeat at the 2002 elections. According to Orbán,

“...the [Central right] parties were not suitable... for the reception of such great expectations or the huge support which manifested amidst the two rounds parliamentary elections in 2002 and has continued ever since. In other words, real political life, ... [i.e.] this strengthening, has not happened within the parties but outside of them” (25. 01. 2003).

The influences of these experiments, which will unfold over the next 20 to 30 years, require the transformation of Fidesz into a mass people’s party. Equally, they imply a strong criticism of Hungarian political life (27. 03. 2006). The underlying view being that, parliament is “the exclusive ground of power” but not of politics, which “happens in all places where people live. ... Politics is a world of competition, in order to compete everyone has to be where the other is” (25. 01. 2003). Like European democracy, Hungarian democracy suffers from a shortage of legitimacy so much so, that voters cannot influence politics between elections; and elites shirk their responsibilities for pursuing policies in breach of their programs and thus without a mandate from the electorate. In Orbán’s evaluation, the future depends on whether democracy: “will be the program of the demos (the people) or it will remain an elite project” (23. 07. 2005).

4.2 MSZP – Gyurcsány

The Gyurcsány government identified the challenges which face Europe’s future with that of the challenges which face the New Left, i.e. the need for reconciliation between market and state or competition and solidarity and justice. This vision remains unclear as to exactly what the nature of transformation amongst the state and nation is. Integration is deemed desirable for efficiency and competitiveness, but Europe should remain a community based on “the unity of nations and not the United States of Europe” (15. 10. 2004). This requires more integration and efficiency in both the economic and bureaucratic spheres, and “the strengthening of European nations to maintain their cultures, languages and national identities” (At the “Our Europe-our constitution” conference).

The government envisions a competitive Europe and a Europe with a social dimension. A competitive Europe is the higher goal, for it can solve social problems by creating material benefits (tangible opportunities). Economic prosperity is expected to trickle down to the population through the creation of new jobs.

4.2.1 A competitive Europe

The arguments for increased competition come from the pressures of globalization, the welfare of EU citizens and the pressure to create new jobs.

“We need a Europe that is ready for economic reform in order to meet the challenge of globalization.

...

We have to be able to compete on the global market. We have to use our regulation capacity in order to ensure free and equal competition. We have to work for the fundamental reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), since in its present state it serves, inadequately, the interests of our tax-payers, farmers, and the environment as well as our partners in the developing world.

...

We have to do more to improve the inner market of the EU – in particular in the area of services. The creation of a really unified market can bring a growth as high as 1.8 percent of the EU GDP and as well as several million workplaces.

...

Enlargement embodies a huge potential: in terms not only of an enormous market, including 450 million Europeans, but equally in terms of providing a new impulse for the realization of Europe’s ambitious social and economic reform goals” (15. 10. 2004).

Competition is painful in the short term, especially for new member states. Nevertheless competition is rewarding for member states and the European community because “many of the problems among European nations are related to Europe increasingly losing its élan in the economic competition with Asia ... and the United States. ...The biggest challenge for Europe”, however, “is not the US or South-East Asia, but herself” – whether she has “the courage and the ability to start reforms and to create beyond a socially sensitive Europe, a Europe of development, competition, and openness.” (“We have to urge the enlargement of Europe”.)

4.2.2 A Europe with a social dimension

“Europe also needs a social dimension. It is not, however, unimportant, what this social dimension looks like. To the extent that common thinking on the social plane paralyses European economies, this can result in unemployment.” For this reason today “[t]he social dimension cannot merely mean the protection of those with employment, but has to imply training and re-training, the acquisition of skills as well as education ... throughout the life of the citizens” (15. 10. 2004).

As new states undertake the burden of competition, old members express solidarity in their support of EU’s cohesion programs. However, the future of Europe cannot be based merely on Europe’s past achievements and solutions. It also requires more than bold thinking about Europe. Europe “is not a geographical community”, since its future borders will differ from what we can imagine today.” As Gyurcsány remarks, “I know of no politician who thinks that Russia will become a member of the European Union.” Europe is not a “civilisation category” because Romania’s accession extends her borders beyond the birthplace of Western Christianity. For Europe to “be more than the object of a conference in the wonderful upper

house of parliament” it must first become a reality, equal in both the personal and private life of its citizens:

“...Europe will mean the opportunity of a new life for many, when the prosperity and the freedom of everyday will turn into tangible opportunities.” (At the “Our Europe-our constitution” conference.)

5. THE CONSTITUTIVE POWER OF SMALL STATES IN AGENDA SETTING

5.1. FIDESZ – Orbán

5.1.1. Minority protection

This constitutive power has become evident in Fidesz’s attempt to bring the minority issue to the attention of European politics as expressed, e.g. in connection with the justification of our participation in the Balkan War (8. 07. 1999). It appeared equally when Orbán, as Prime Minister, called for human rights protection to be extended to minorities as well. This occurred during the occasion of the internet debate initiated by the Swedish Prime Minister, Göran Persson, regarding “what Europe to build in the 21st century?” In his answer Orbán calls for the elaboration of the Charta of Fundamental Rights accepted at Nice: “An important constitutive element must be the restoration of respect to minority rights” (05. 06. 2001).

The need to play a constitutive role follows from the incredulousness of the Fidesz government’s foreign policy abroad:

“...we have created the status law and in connection with this we have had to follow debates from time to time with our neighbours; we have had to protect Hungarian views and interests not only vis-à-vis our neighbours, but also with the West. Sometimes, we met with complete incomprehension on the part of the Western world and we had to explain from scratch that: ...there is a Hungarian question, whether one likes it or not, because Hungary will become a member of the EU with the largest minorities outside her borders, this needs to be dealt with” (25. 01. 2003).

...

“...the European Union shows an attitude rather reserved with respect to the rights of minorities. Well ladies and gentlemen ... in my opinion this is what is going to have to change soon. Perhaps the states of the European Union were not aware when they accepted us that this will change, but if from nowhere else than from the Cyprian question they should know that this is changing. And if they take a look towards the direction of Poland or the Ukraine ..., ...at the minorities living there, or we remind them of the case of the Hungarian minorities, then it is immediately visible that from now on we also belong to the European Union. Starting now, the Union can longer hold off placing the dilemmas related to the future of minorities first among the most important questions, or at least making it into a question of democracy” (19. 05. 2004).

One can interpret the delegation of the first Roma representative into the European Parliament as part of the same policy towards the protection of minorities, which in turn, is meant to delegate the Roma question to a level where it is given European attention.

5.1.2 An Eastern dimension in Europe

Finally the constitutive role of small states requires the creation of an Eastern dimension to the European Union that would ensure “special legal forms, institutions and rules”. The function of these institutions is to solve:

“[T]he most important questions related to the fate of Hungarian communities: whether these communities living outside Hungary would be able to sustain, multiply, and strengthen themselves” is a question that will “not be answered automatically by a common EU membership” (28. 07. 2001).

5.2 MSZP–SZDSZ: Gyurcsány

5.2.1 Enlarging Europe

Like the opposition, the Gyurcsány government recognises that EU membership offers the opportunity to shape the European Union. Compared to the Orbán government however, it is more cautious in its regional policy, where it limits its policy to the application of EU norms. Thus while “[t]he government is sympathetic to the endeavours of Hungarians beyond borders towards autonomy” it emphasizes that [t]hese “endeavours have to fit into the European normative system as well” (06. 01. 2005).

For its enlargement policy, on the other hand, the government may be willing to go further than its opposition (as the allusions to the Union’s unknown borders in the future, suggested in the previous section, where even the membership of Russia is not excluded).

5.2.2 New forms of citizenship

In the long term, the reorientation of national to European politics might mean the emergence of new forms of citizenship. This may also include the gradual de-politisation and corresponding professionalisation of minority protection, so that it will be seen as a problem which is no longer represented as a political and emotional question but a legal and rational one. If this describes “the progressive way” in Europe, its’ self-appointed representative in Hungary will be the progressive left:

“What happens, if as a result of all of this [the free movement of persons] a common European citizenship emerges as a broad framework of the national citizenship, and we could practice our rights and obligations in the places where we live over a certain period of time? In other words, the right to vote would belong not to those with Hungarian citizenship, but to those who have been living in Hungary for at least ten years, i.e. to the persons who pay taxes, are registered here, and want to join the community.

...

Thus it is a common European identity; and the related permanent residence that becomes the basis of rights and obligations, and national citizenship would become the form of expression of one or several national identities” (At the “Dialogue about a nation without borders” conference).

Gyurcsány also notes the incomprehension of our national policy in Western Europe, which he argues stems from the different approaches of the major political parties:

“The Hungarian right can be accused of being oversensitive about national questions and inclined to nationalism in its solutions. The left, on the other hand, might not show enough sensitivity to national questions and might be too rational in its solutions.

...

We should find a balance here. We have to find common points in [our] national policy. Our decisions are difficult to understand outside the country. Anyone from Western Europe who looks at our politics, most likely will not understand. It appears old and poor because we spent forty years unable to talk over these questions properly and this has resulted in two kinds of negative effects: oversensitivity on the right and slow reaction time on the left.”

To create a solution he attempts to depoliticise the problem: “I suggested” (to the representatives of Hungarian communities outside the country) “let’s abandon politics, they should send their experts here, and let’s abandon publicity as well, because this will only lead to empty chattering” (16. 02. 2005).

6. THE FUTURE OF TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS: TENSIONS IN THE ALLIANCE

6.1 FIDESZ – Orbán

The above paragraphs forecast the position of Fidesz with respect to transatlantic relations. To the prospect of a Common Foreign and Security Policy, Orbán answers, that while: “Hungary supports that Europe has such a capacity, this cannot lead to the weakening of NATO; and cannot mean for the moment that the United States, as a consequence of the European steps taken, would relegate its European obligations to a secondary place.” This position is: “dictated mainly by a geopolitical consideration”. Similarly the government prefers “not to participate in any international action that would unnecessarily double already existing NATO capabilities and would thereby decrease the capacity of the world’s most integrated and efficient military and security organization.” The Yugoslavian crisis is the recurrent point of reference (23. 07. 2001, 30. 11. 2000).

The answer to the question: “why is it that the most resolute and enthusiastic members of the [Transatlantic] Alliance are the new Central European states?” can be found in “the geopolitical dilemma of Central Europe”, a dilemma as old as Europe.

“Since that time, Central Europe suffered because it was in the zone of influence from outside geopolitical forces. During the Cold War this dilemma manifested itself in the East-West confrontation, but it existed equally between the two world wars in the form of the German-Entente confrontation. Central Europeans have fought through the last century to overcome this dilemma.”

Two possible solutions to this dilemma are EU integration and “the building of strong transatlantic relations” which will, according to the speaker, “mutually support each other”.

Furthermore, NATO cannot be replaced by the “new anti-terrorist alliance” since the latter is “intended to ... find solutions for a specific

problem. It is not a comprehensive, general form of cooperation based on common values and political practices comparable to the Trans-Atlantic Alliance.” As Orbán remarks, “perhaps the only positive development of September 11th is that the new international situation has strengthened the relations between Russia and the Western world” (11. 02. 2002).

This does not mean that there would no longer be tensions with the US. One of the tensions has already been stated relating to the composition of military expenditure agreed upon for our NATO membership. Such actions by the government entailed spending this money to make military services more attractive and then to begin the technical modernisation of the army a year later. Both decisions were a source of tension. This policy was intended to “re-establish the self-esteem of the soldiers” and the army after 50 years of occupation. Next to a significant pay raise, it implied the creation of a “career path for military officials”, which expressed the government’s intention to go beyond the economic aspects of defence and to emphasise its “mental, spiritual, and human aspects” as well (11. 11. 2002).

The tension related to our participation in the Iraqi war finds Orbán in opposition. As the vice president of the European People’s Party (which he was elected to in October 2002) he formulated his first criticism. The joint statement called for “a wide coalition”, and argued that “the resolution of the Security Council was necessary for the commencement of military action” (18. 10. 2002). It stated that, only “a broad coalition” could prevent “losing sight of the right direction.” For the “participation in such an action is morally easier and more acceptable, than the support of a unilateral American move” (11. 11. 2002). See also (10. 02. 2003).

Our experience in 1956 offers additional guidance towards the position that “without the decision and the authorisation of the international community, military action against any independent state is unacceptable to us” (6. 02. 2003).

At the Brussels summit of the European People’s Party, Orbán argued that only public opinion could stop “the unilateral offensive operation, launched by the United States”. The outcome of this action is uncertain since:

“[W]e have here a war that has disregarded all written and unwritten rules; a war that has broken NATO’s customary system, thus creating the emergence of a completely new system. We do not know what new world order the present situation will lead to and where Europe’s place will be in this new world order. ... and since the United States is acting unilaterally, we do not know where this action will end, we do not know about America’s plans, we do not know how long this war will last, nor do we know the aim of this war, but this is not the problem of the European Council, it is the problem of Hungary” (21. 03. 2003).

That this might be a sign that a new world order is emerging will come later, as well as the concept that participation in this pre-emptive war, without a firm moral base or broad authorization, may cause a serious dilemma for the Christian Democratic parties, diminishing the quality of the alliance. (12. 12. 2003) However, the disagreement over participation in the Iraqi war does not mean a change in the division of labour between the transatlantic relationship of the US and Europe:

“[W]e need freedom and security not a new European global superpower. Europe can fulfil its fate ... if it keeps the friendship of the United States and thereby strengthens European security and freedom.” Europe, on the other hand, can also help protect the United States by discouraging it to “yield to its bad instincts, because a state that is stronger, moreover much stronger than others can become defenceless against its own excesses” (02. 05. 2004).

6.2 MSZP–SZDSZ: Gyurcsány

In transatlantic relations, the ultimate position of the left is similar to that of the right. The left, however, is less critical of the circumvention of normal procedure within NATO. The new government uncritically takes over the rhetoric of the US administration on the war on terror:

“The existing global order, whose institutions were created after the Second World War is being challenged. These institutions: the UN and the Security Council, etc. – are obviously in need of significant reform. A new challenge is global terrorism, but I do not see this as a conflict between civilizations in the ‘Huntingtonian’ sense. ... Conflict happens not between cultures, but between terrorists and democrats.

...

[The only reason that can give a moral justification to war] is self-protection. ... We believe – I think, correctly – that the Iraqi intervention was started as a just and rightful war for self-protection.

...A collective NATO decision is not a condition of the existence of the alliance” (29. 07. 2005).

A potential source of tension is our unfulfilled NATO obligations especially, regarding the amount of money which should have been spent on modernising the Hungarian military, approximately 1.8 percent of the GDP.

CONCLUSION: CONSISTENCY IN FOREIGN POLICY

The present paper concerned itself less with “what should constitute as priorities for the Hungarian foreign policy”, (according to foreign policy analysts) and more with – what actors or, in this case, prime ministers considered important. In this respect, we have to note that only a minority of the speeches deal with foreign, as opposed to domestic politics. Nevertheless, some clear priorities follow: Both sides derive the most important priorities of their foreign policy from identity. Conflict between the two sides is partly a result of their competition for the democratic/anti-democratic cleavage. Where Fidesz accuses its opponent of violating democratic norms, including that of representing respect for citizens, MSZP downplays the democratic/anti-democratic divide and makes it into a progressive-nationalist/populist question. However, we can speak of a coherent approach regarding the most important priority of foreign policy. Moreover, this consensus applies to previous governments since the regime change.²⁷ The question is how this “coherence”, or overlap, emerges from the different priorities of both sides. To begin with, these priorities are not easily separable from domestic political goals.

The “modern” (in sense of “progressive”) answers given to the dilemma of foreign policy, by the left-liberal coalition, are ready-made answers appropriated from the New Left in Europe. They focus on questions of terrorism, solidarity, and open market economy. The answers given to these questions derive from the major players in the international scene, in order of importance. We could say that the left-liberal coalition sees priorities running from the global to the regional (European) and, lastly, to the local (Central-European and Hungarian) scenes, a policy which could also be described as, “bandwagoning”.

By contrast, the priorities of the political right run from local through regional to global, in order of importance. The logic underlying these priorities is the freedom of action by the government representing Hungary. In a sense, this results in more original answers to foreign policy, which attempt to match answers to the specific dilemmas of the country. It also results in a more active foreign policy on the regional level, in Central-Europe and Europe (MÁÉRT, status law, minority protection, a Europe of national autonomies), but one that has less access to the global level. The same logic, however, is detectable on the local-domestic scene, where Fidesz (whether on government or in opposition) is continuously experimenting with social and political movements that may be informative from a European perspective. These are movements which their opponent may attempt to imitate but are unable to follow (e.g. civic circles, new/direct forms of democracy). These movements build on Fidesz’s social advantage (an absence of fear) since the regime change as compared to MSZP society and of mass movements in general.

In other words, the competing logics (running from global to local vs. from local to global) do not stop at the border. They are not limited to foreign policy, but extend to domestic political priorities as well. Thus, while prosperity is a shared goal, partly feasible with our European membership, the exact path leading to it is seen differently. According to Fidesz, the road to prosperity leads through the creation of a thriving Central-European region, with the participation of the capital exports of flourishing Hungarian firms (the direction is again from local to global). The higher growth rates of the region, compared to the European average, offers a window of opportunity for this development; which is equally able to raise these societies on a mass scale to the European average. This requires an active economic policy by the government to act appropriately within a limited amount of time – by supporting and strengthening small and medium-sized firms expected to ensure workplaces for the majority of the population. Government intervention in the economy would imply ensuring loan availability, the lowering of the tax and administrative burdens of firms, and creating competition by balancing the taxes between foreign and Hungarian firms. The equalisation of opportunity requires, further, that education and health care remain in state control. By contrast, the Gyurcsány government anticipates: the import of technological innovations; efficiency stemming from an open market and competition among global multinational companies; the privatization of education and healthcare; and a non-intervening state. In other words, the active part is played mainly by private

and global actors and less by the state. These different inclinations are built on two competing visions of society. While both envision a large middle class, according to Fidesz, this middle class should be preferably self-employed and the owner of their own company or firm.

Surprisingly, however, where the policies of both sides come together is on the insistence of an American presence in Europe. This is a topic, which formulates a limit to European integration, especially, in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy. This result may seem surprising in light of different underlying logics and priorities, as well as the rather tense relationship between the two dominant parties. For the MSZP–SZDSZ coalition, which identifies the potential prosperity of Hungary with the prosperity of the major players, we could say that this policy results from identity (see section 1.2). In the case of Fidesz, however, it comes from an historical recognition and lessons learned over the 20th century. However, consensus breaks in local regional policy; where the Socialist government has a limited freedom of movement, determined partly by the opposition (as well as the definition of Hungarian identity by the opposition). This definition includes the Hungarian communities in neighbouring states.

The MSZP–SZDSZ coalition sees the conditions for the emergence of Central and Eastern Europe as automatically following the accession of countries with Hungarian minorities to the European Union. Likewise, it is believed that the question of minority protection will be solved primarily by EU membership, as it will be on the basis of European norms and require no additional institutional solutions beyond membership. Accordingly, the Medgyessy–Gyurcsány government abolished the status law and most of the institutions created by Fidesz. In the same way, it campaigned against dual citizenship and argued its threat to jobs, as a result of the free movement of labour, particularly from Romania.²⁸ While these arguments proved successful in gaining the domestic vote during the 2002 campaign, the alienation resulting from this approach amongst Hungarian communities led to the reorientation of policy towards a greater focus, than original intended by the government (at least on a rhetorical level), regarding the minority question.

However, the left-liberal coalition was unable to find a solution for the Hungarian communities in neighbouring states, namely how the rights and benefits of EU membership could be extended to these communities' prior to their accession.²⁹ This led to a tense relationship with Hungarian communities and demonstrates that there are limitations to the extent by which one's identity is malleable as a result of obstacles met within society. Likewise, it led to a hardening of positions, because the alienated Hungarian communities raised fears that by extending dual citizenship to members of the Hungarian communities abroad, the right to vote might also be permitted; thus, the vote may be tipped towards Fidesz and have potentially negative consequences for the Socialists.

The existence of competitive narratives means that not all questions are easily comparable. "Solidarity" for example, appeared in the vocabulary of the political right during the 2006 electoral campaign. Tied explicitly and consciously to the Polish solidarity movement, the main emphasis was

regarding the power of society, vis-à-vis – the state. Society was considered able to protect local and existing social services (health care or education) from closing down or privatisation, a policy not typical of the political right. This implied equally the critique that the rhetoric of “solidarity” from the left may be nothing more than rhetoric.

Indeed, following the 2006 elections, solidarity, i.e. the “social” part of a social market economy has been put into brackets due to: Austerity measures and the acknowledgement of Ferenc Gyurcsány to having consciously lied to voters in order to win the 2006 parliamentary elections.³⁰ Fidesz accused the government of breaching the most basic democratic norm by misleading the electorate with the intent of preventing the sanctioning of its low performance. This policy also involved the concealment of data concerning the condition of the Hungarian economy from the European Union and endangered Hungary’s foreign policy goals (in particular Hungary’s accession to the Euro-zone) and the fulfilment of her obligations for the sake of maximizing votes. The EU postponed the sanctioning of the Gyurcsány government because of its delayed disclosure of data under the principle of non-intervention in domestic elections. In other words, the government gained freedom of manoeuvre, playing on the principle of “the primacy of domestic over foreign policy”, a principle the government correctly understood to be widely accepted in Europe.

Upon the exposure of his speech, Gyurcsány attempted to obscure his responsibility by linking it to the responsibility of previous governments arguing that they also lied and pretended that the economy could afford the rise in salaries, which took place since the Orbán government. This narrative is shared by MDF who accused both parties of irresponsible promises during the parliamentary campaign. According to Gyurcsány what is relevant is not the fact of lying but the fact of acknowledging it. Likewise, Fidesz was accused of intensifying the crisis because he had no real program that would represent a true alternative to restrictions. Fidesz, on the other hand, called for the need to re-establish the credibility of the government through relieving the prime minister of his duties. Trusting him would be similar to placing trust on “a goat not to eat the cabbage”; this is in reference of the money that disappeared in the previous term.

In conclusion we can say that a party with a progressive identity finds justification for policy change more easily because it believes itself to represent the only viable way for the society. Thus the leaking scandal can even be considered a stunt, playing to the advantage of the government. While it certainly led to losses at the local elections, it successfully communicated to the population that there is no alternative to restrictions. The Gyurcsány government seems to have survived the legitimacy crisis and gained an additional four-year term in government, which also means additional time for the persuasion of the EU and the electorate. With this, we can confirm that the only thing of relevance was winning the parliamentary majority.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Where not stated otherwise, the speeches are available on internet on the following homepages: www.orbanviktor.hu and www.miniszterelnok.hu/gss/alpha?do=2&pg=3&st=1. The latter is the archive of the 2004–2006 ministerial term of Ferenc Gyurcsány. The translations are my own. The speeches of the second term, starting from 2006 April, are available on www.miniszterelnok.hu/mss/alpha. The parliamentary elections were held on the 9th of April.
- ² For the relationship between the divergent (meta)-theoretical approaches in IR see Waever, 1997a and Wiener, 2003. Wiener notes that the epistemological divide has been underestimated by most Constructivist analyses, which, however, eased communication, (up to a limit), between divergent meta-theoretical trends. The present paper seeks to keep the epistemological consequences of Constructivism in mind.
- ³ Insightful analyses establishing the identity-foreign policy link follow from both. A far from complete list would include such divergent thinkers as Campbell, 1992; Fierke, 1996; Williams and Neumann, 2000; Zehfuss, 2002 where authors attempt to formulate their own methodology drawing on theoretical work by different philosophers.
- ⁴ The Copenhagen School's security analyses were among the first approaches "acting on this insight" and presenting both theoretical elaboration and its application: Waever (1997b), Buzan, Waever and Wilde (1998), Werner and Wilde (2001). Contributions on the (meta)theoretical level(s) in IR comprise Kratochwil (1989:), Onuf (1989) and focusing mainly on the methodological implications compared to positivist conceptual analysis Guzzini (2005).
- ⁵ This position is held by what I would call mainstream constructivism, its most prominent representative being Wendt (1999, 2003). My theoretical critique of his "thin Constructivism" appeared in Guzzini and Leander (2001: 380–402 and 2006: 160–181).
- ⁶ In this case both by positivism and Constructivism (meta-theoretical level) and government and opposition (practical political level).
- ⁷ Fidesz (the Association of Young Democrats) was founded in March 1988 at the Bibó István College by 37 young people. Originally participation was limited to those below 35 of age. This condition for participation was cancelled in 1993. The formation of parties at that time is not yet legal, which explains why they tend not to refer to themselves as parties. As late as in January 10–11, 1989, the parliamentary debate still postpones the acceptance of the law that would legalize parties for another six month. Underlying is the preference of the "order party group" for a slow, two-step transition that would share power on the basis of "supposed power relations" in 1990 to last until 1994 or 1995, the intended time for the first free elections (Romsics, 2003: 126–127).
- ⁸ In fact, what the party seeks to achieve is to force both Fidesz and the Liga Trade Union to participate as a member of a larger body that would represent all the youth organisations and all the trade unions respectively, which would dissolve their position into comparable organisations under the supervision of the party (Romsics, 2003: 135).
- ⁹ EKA was formed on the 22nd of March 1989 by nine organisations. They included political parties like the MDF (Hungarian Democratic Forum), the SZDSZ (Alliance of Free Democrats), the FKGP (Independent Small Holders Party), the MSZDP (Hungarian Social Democratic Party) Magyar Néppárt (Hungarian People's Party), and Fidesz, and other organisations like BZSEBT (Friendship Society of Bajcsy Zsilinszky Endre), Liga (Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions) and the Független Jogász Forum (Independent Lawyers Forum). KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party) joined later. Among the seven of the parties, four MDF, SZDSZ, Fidesz and KDNP survived until the last elections in 2006, while the League survived as a trade union (Romsics, 2003: 135). The talks at the National Round Table (NEKA) started on the 13th of June, 1989 and lasted until the 18th of September 1989 (Bihari, 2005).
- ¹⁰ Imre Nagy (1895–1958), Prime Minister (1953–1955, 1956) after Stalin's death and Khrushchev's accession into power. In 1955 he is forced to resign, but the short-lived government following the 1956 Revolution reinstates him. When the Soviet tanks enter the country, he escapes to the Yugoslavian Embassy, from which he is ambushed, taken to Romania by the Soviets and handed to the Hungarian authorities. He is secretly tried, executed and buried namelessly, together with the four other convicted in 1958 at an outlying, unkempt plot numbered 301 of the public cemetery in Rákoskeresztúr. The bodies of Imre Nagy, State Minister Géza Losonczy, Minister of Defense Pál Maléter, journalist Miklós Gimes, and Imre Nagy's personal secretary József Szilágyi, found face down and wired together are exhumed and reburied on the 16th of June 1989. A sixth coffin stands in memory of the 300 other executed. János Kádár is aware of the reburial. He dies on the 6th of July, 1989 (Romsics, 2003: 150–152).

- ¹¹ Compared to the Polish Solidarity Movement, Hungarian opposition had relatively few contact with society. The funeral was one of these occasions. Others were the anniversaries of former revolutions fought for the independence of the country, such as the 15th of March, a formal national holiday commemorating the 1848 Revolution and the 23rd of October, the outbreak of the 1956 Revolution, which was first recognized as a national holiday only in 1989.
- ¹² In a recent interview: “Some wanted to use the occasion for a false national reconciliation, saying the moment of embracement has come, let us forget about the past. We wanted on the other hand to signal that we should not be thankful for letting us bury our dead after more than three decades” (25. 03. 2006).
- ¹³ All emerging parties were “to the right” of the Communist party.
- ¹⁴ The original paper was written for a conference organized by the Danish Institute for International Studies NORFACE Project “The Transatlantic Relationship and the Struggle for Europe” (Copenhagen, June 2–3, 2006) in the theme: *The West under Strain: Europe’s Small States in a Changing Environment*. The trigger was the ensuing tension in transatlantic relations following the support by states aspiring for EU membership of US’ unilateral action against Iraq.
- ¹⁵ The name of “the party” was Hungarian Workers’ Party (Magyar Dolgozók Pártja – MDP) until 1956, and Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (Magyar Szocialista Munkás Párt – MSZMP) following the 1956 Revolution. The Party Congress organized in October 1989 declared legal continuity with MSZMP as a compromise between the reformists and the conservatives and reorganized itself under the name of Hungarian Socialist Party (Magyar Szocialista Párt – MSZP). Within the next six months about 30 000 members joined the new organisation, compared to the previous 725 000 membership of MSZMP. Hardliners reorganized themselves under the name of Hungarian Communist Party (Magyar Kommunista Párt – MKP) a minor party since the first free elections (Romsics, 2003: 180–183).
- ¹⁶ By the end of 1989 internal tensions between social democrats led to scandals and the split of the party into four before the first elections. Other parties, including the MDF forming government in 1990 and its coalition partner the Smallholders will follow the same fate later.
- ¹⁷ She is member of the Communist Apró family and was head of Medgyessy’s election campaign. Gyurcsány is invited first as a consultant, but soon overtakes the direction of the campaign both informally and practically (Debreceni, 2006: 191–212). We can therefore say that the Orbán–Gyurcsány contest restarted with the 2002 elections, won closely by the Socialists.
- ¹⁸ The discrediting of the Hungarian right through its undifferentiated identification with nationalism and fascism shows remarkable continuity with the similar Communist rhetoric. Opposition to the regime was often labeled unprogressive by being reactionary. Consistent with this rhetoric until 1989 the revolution was referred to as a counter-revolution, initiated by reactionary if not outright fascist forces.
- ¹⁹ The quotes in brackets refer in this case to the title of the speech delivered by Prime Minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány. Some of his speeches are identified by title and not by date.
- ²⁰ An English version of the law adopted by Parliament on 19 June 2001 by 92% of the votes is posted on sfkornyek.szabadsagharcos.org/jog/lxiimagyar.html#LXIIinEnglish. For an evaluation of the law and Fidesz’ minority policy, see Kántor et al (2004).
- ²¹ E.g. from among the parties participating at the roundtable talks it required the coalition of MDF, FKGP, KDNP and, from 1994, Fidesz. Despite the overwhelming victory of the Socialists and an agreement with Fidesz to the contrary, SZDSZ aligned with the Socialists to form a government in 1994. This and the shattering defeat of MDF, the major party on the right in 1990–1994, pushed Fidesz to reorganize the opposition.
- ²² In a later interview: “At that time [i.e. following the 2002 defeat in elections] we have said ... that what matters from the work of a government are only the things that become part of our lives” (06. 02. 2003).
- ²³ The organization of the referendum in December 2004 on the extension of double citizenship to Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries was an answer to the abolition of the status law. It was proposed by a civil society organisation. Both Fidesz and the Hungarian political elites abroad supported the initiative.
- ²⁴ On grounds that the Romanian government accepted the status law about the preferential treatment of Hungarians of Romanian citizenship for educational, cultural and other services only on condition that the law extends the free movement of labor to all Romanian citizens.
- ²⁵ Quoted in the daily Magyar Nemzet on September 23, one week after the leaking scandal.
- ²⁶ See section 6.1 below on transatlantic relations.

LEGITIMISATION STRUGGLES IN HUNGARIAN POLITICS

- ²⁷ Compare József Antall, the first Prime Minister (1990–1993) in 1991: “We would oppose any strategic thinking or ideas related to foreign policy that would conflict with the European presence of the United States. We believe that two world wars and the Cold War have proved the inseparability of the transatlantic region, whether one stood on this or the other side.” (quoted by Orbán, on 21. 03. 1999). Antall died in 1993 in cancer. His term was finished by his interior minister, Péter Boross. His party, MDF (Hungarian Democratic Forum) lost the second elections dramatically, was one of the coalition parties of the Orbán government, and gradually sank to its present 5% level.
- ²⁸ Although the yes votes were in a slight majority, the contradictory messages from the major players resulted in low participation and the referendum declared invalid.
- ²⁹ The new government equally signaled the potential limitation of the freedom of labor following the accession of Romania.
- ³⁰ Only a few lines leaked from the original speech to the Hungarian television. The whole text has been put on Ferenc Gyurcsány’s public blog available from the homepage of the Foundation for the Modern Left, (www.amoba.hu) on the same day. A longer English translation of excerpts is available at news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5359546.stm.

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Managing Expectations and Hidden Demands: Options for the German EU Presidency

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Abstract: The “pause for thought” decreed by the heads of state and the government (after the voters in France and the Netherlands rejected the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe) has been extended for at least another year. The European Council meeting held on the 15th and 16th of June 2006 did little more than sketch out the way forward for the period 2006–2008. By the end of 2008, decisions should be made about how to continue the reform process. Before anyone can agree on how to move forward, all 27 European Union member states would have to state clearly what goals they are pursuing in the process of institutional reform (a process which all sides agree is necessary) and what steps they believe are required for achieving these goals. In this context, clear statements on the importance of the Treaty and its fate are needed. It is unlikely that Consensus on these issues be achieved among all 27 member states. Regardless, in order to allow a constructive discussion to take place, the 27 member states would have to agree on a shared criteria for assessing the reform proposals, that are on the table and on the options for resolving the “constitutional crisis.”

Key words: EU presidency, EU institutional reform, EU constitutional treaty, German EU policy

The pause for thought on the future of the EU was officially prolonged at the European Council meeting on the 15th and 16th of June 2006.¹ According to the Conclusions of the European Council, in the first semester 2007, the German EU-Presidency will present a report on the discussions with regard to the Constitutional Treaty and will explore possible future developments. The task of putting the Constitutional Treaty – or an alternative to it – on track for ratification will be an extremely difficult task in political terms. Although we witness a multitude of proposals dealing with the constitutional crisis, there is still a danger that the EU will get stuck in the same frazzled and vague discussion that characterised the first year following the “double no votes” in France and the Netherlands. As a remedy this paper suggests a clarification of criteria (common yardsticks) by which the alternative proposals could be measured. Such a step would require the governments and other protagonists – parliaments, parties, and academia – to unveil and clarify their most basic motivations and political aims.

THE GERMAN PRESIDENCY'S KEY FUNCTION: THE MANAGEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

The EU, its peoples, the parliaments, the individual state governments, its organs and institutions, and its international partners have all been looking to Berlin with particular expectations. Germany is a large state, which – at least nominally – disposes over the necessary materials and personnel resources to meet the multi-faceted management, leadership, coordination, and representational tasks associated with the Presidency of the EU Council. For Germany, domestic conditions are more congenial for playing a leading role than they are in other large EU-states, like France and the UK, whose scope for manoeuvre is restricted by leadership change and domestic crisis. The other member states therefore expect Germany to make “robust proposals” for shaping an approach to the Constitutional Treaty (CT).

The Presidency of the Council enjoys a plethora of instruments that allow it to steer negotiations, as well as possibilities to gain information about individual governments’ scope for manoeuvre. For strategic reasons, governments only partially reveal their negotiating position; only bilateral discussions with other governments can give the Presidency an insight into the – in most cases – rather larger room for negotiation that they secretly enjoy. On this basis, the Presidency can elaborate compromise proposals and negotiating packages, as well as fostering a greater amenity to cooperate amongst its partners by restricting the number of dossiers to be negotiated. Moreover, it can strategically guide the negotiating process by determining the number, incidence and timing, the format and the agenda of meetings, and the timing of votes. Presidencies can single out certain dossiers for particular attention, whilst ignoring others, passing them over to the next Presidency.

In this way, it is only natural that the job of President as broker may sometimes be at odds with that of “representative of national interests” and of “impulse-giver”. A canny Presidency must therefore seek to strike a balance between narrow national interests and European compromises. Depending on the domestic situation, the Presidency will enjoy more or less some scope for manoeuvre. For the German government, this point of departure, which applies to all EU-states, is doubly difficult: Firstly, the principle of ministerial autonomy means that individual ministries develop their own programmes and then represent them, not without contradiction to the Brussels organs. Secondly, even during the Presidency, the German *Länder* have developed their own ideas of European policy, promoting them self-confidently to the outside world – particularly in those policy areas where the federal level enjoys only competition and no legislative competencies. European governments, the Parliament and the Commission judge Presidencies according to their organisational abilities and their aptitude for negotiating and giving impulses. At home, however, their success is scrutinised in terms of their ability to exploit the unique opportunities spawned by holding the Presidency in order to push through national priorities.

These contradictory expectations place the German federal government in something of a dilemma. If it seeks to overcome the domestic conflicts of competence and interest by forging “national” positions on a lowest-common-denominator basis, and then presents these as President in a broader European context, its position can only be altered at the cost of questioning the hard won national “consensus”. Yet the federal government is often forced to adapt national priorities when faced with an array of interests as is reflected in the 26 other member state positions and those emanating from the European institutions. If the German government desires to maintain its mobility and recognition as the EU Council Chair, it must desist from developing this kind of “hard” and inward-looking profile. One way out of this dilemma is to establish new modes of negotiating; the “invention” of the Convention method during the last German Presidency in 1999 is a prime example. In short, Germany’s role as the EU Council Chair differs from that of other states by dint of the fact that it will be less concerned with achieving particular goals such as with accommodating robust negotiating corridors (and contexts) as well as complex somewhat long-term processes in order to solve conflicts.

BUILDING BRIDGES: BEATING A PATH TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY

The function of “path-finder” and “expectation-manager” is particularly in demand when dealing with the conflict that surrounds the future of the Constitutional Treaty. The German Presidency comes at a critical phase in the history of European integration. A stocktaking of progress on the 50th anniversary of the founding of the European Community gives a positive picture; all the same, it is important to take into account the challenges of globalisation and the change in Europe’s geo-strategic position. Certainly, the European Community survived war and totalitarianism on the European Continent, yet it must now justify its 50-year function as a motor and guarantor of peace, prosperity, and social security under altered circumstances. What is required is a comprehensible strategy that is projected beyond the borders of the EU; this would deal with both economic and financial integration and cooperation, free movement, and internal and external security.

Reservations about European integration have multiplied in the last few years, especially since the negotiation of the Maastricht Treaty. Criticism and scepticism is rooted not only in the perceived, assumed and real effects of the technological revolution and globalisation and international competition, but also in the self-interested, anti-European rhetoric of national elites, which itself has thus far escaped censure. As long as governments and parliaments refuse to admit that it was they who determined (and continue to determine) the limits of their own space to manoeuvre through the creation of the internal market, as long as they present every unpopular EU directive as if it were the work of an uncontrollable and undesired *Leviathan* (an “aéropage technocratique, apatride et irresponsable”),² the EU-project will be plagued by crisis – a crisis that harms its citizens, states, and institutions more than it benefits them. When it comes to dealing credibly with

globalisation and managing the associated risks the EU needs more effectivity, efficiency, coherency and above all sincerity from its actors..

WAS IT AN ATTEMPTED RESCUE?

These initial thoughts strongly suggest that the German Presidency should push for the future approach to the European constitutional process to be laid down. Against the background of an intensified debate about the ratification of the CT, no more time should be wasted on discussing the future of Europe without any common conception of the relevant criteria or indeed openness of the goals involved. Should the German Presidency view it as its highest priority to set the substance of the CT on its path to ratification, the 50th anniversary of the EC (at the end of March 2007) could be used to adopt a celebratory declaration and “globalisation strategy”.

The European Commission, the European Parliament, and almost all member states have formulated proposals for dealing with the crisis triggered by the “double no”. Not that this has produced any kind of clarity: yet in fact, there is not even a consensual interpretation of the crisis. The actors start from conflicting premises in some cases, they keep their real interests under wraps and their proposals vague. This is why the June 2006 summit, a year after the two negative referendums, was unable to make a joint strategic decision on the fate of the Constitutional Treaty or search for an alternative.

In order to analyse the existing positions in the “crisis discussion” it is useful to systematise the debate with reference to two indicators: The first indicator sorts actors according to whether they advocate the termination of the Treaty or not, the second is according to the actual reform goals that they are pursuing. The three groups can be clearly distinguished:³

- One group, led by those who have already ratified the Treaty,⁴ calls for the ratification process to be continued and for the text of the Constitutional Treaty to be retained; this is, because the reforms laid out there still continue to represent the aims of these states (Treaty). At most they would consider amending the Treaty with declarations and protocols that might make ratification in other states easier (Treaty plus). These states would want France and the Netherlands to embark on a fresh attempt at securing ratification.
- A second group, led by representatives from the UK, France, the Netherlands, Poland, and the Czech Republic, proposes “burying” the Constitutional Treaty and discussing a reform of the EU’s institutional system on the basis of the *status quo* of the Treaty of Nice (Treaty of Nice plus).
- Between these two extremes lie the advocates of the “mini-treaty” or the “consolidated treaty” option, which foresees progress on the basis of the first two parts of the Constitutional Treaty. These “bridge-builders” would like, in particular, to save parts I and II of the Constitutional Treaty in order to ensure implementation of the institutional and procedural reforms (Treaty minus). For that to occur, the Treaty would have to be renegotiated during a reconvened convention or a brief intergovernmental conference.

THE SEARCH FOR A COMMON YARDSTICK

In the ongoing discussions in the EU, the heart of the problem is more than a simple disagreement over how to deal with the *impasse* of the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty and the underlying crisis of the European integration project. The causes for this “lack of direction” lie deeper, as do the reasons for the severe difficulties observers encounter in their efforts to gain an overview of the different proposals (something which explains the lack of signs of convergence, still less of consensus). Almost none of the 27 governments have revealed their actual political aims in the current discussions regarding the EU’s future. There is no shared, explicable yardstick by which the problem-solving potential and chances of implementation of the various proposals could be measured. In setting up such an instrument, I propose four criteria, that should be referred to:

- Implementing the Constitutional Treaty on the agreed date of 2009. First of all, one could consider whether the proposals further the goal of putting the CT into effect by June 2009 at the latest, as was agreed by the heads of state and government when they signed it.
- Refuting or accommodating the arguments that led citizens to reject the Constitutional Treaty or integration as a whole. This criterion could be used to assess the extent to which the proposals satisfactorily dealt with the reasons motivating those who rejected the Treaty in France and the Netherlands, as well as those who have yet to reject it (in countries that have still to complete ratification).⁵ Proposals that meet these reservations would increase the chances of ratification for the existing Constitutional Treaty or an alternative treaty.
- Achieving the reform goals laid down in the existing Treaty. All proposals can be measured against the mandate of the Constitutional Convention and the Intergovernmental Conference that was sketched out in the Treaty of Nice (in Declaration No. 23 on the Future of the Union) and fleshed out with more detail at the European Council of Laeken in December 2001, to discover the extent to which they satisfy the terms of that brief. The mandate encompassed several separate tasks: adapting the Union’s institutions for expansion, defining the division of powers between Union and member states, clarifying the status of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, defining the role of national parliaments in the Union, and simplifying the Treaties. The Constitutional Treaty – as the product of a broad, thorough discussion in the Convention, signed and thus recognized by all the member states – can be regarded as the fulfilment of this mandate. For that reason, analysis of this third criterion is largely a matter of juxtaposing the alternative proposals against the existing answers of the Constitutional Treaty.
- Providing a face-saving way out of the deadlock situation for governmental actors: This requirement is especially important for the non-ratifiers of the Constitutional Treaty. In France, there will be a need to provide any new government with a credible explanation for why it should support the content of the Constitutional Treaty or a new reform compromise. Likewise, this criterion is of importance to the ratifiers of the Treaty, especially in referendum countries such as Spain or

Luxembourg, in which any deviation from the ratified Treaty has to be convincingly explained to the public.

These four criteria allow a transparent assessment of options to be conducted. Studies that keep their criteria of analysis under wraps quickly attract charges that they are arbitrary or merely politically motivated “advocacy research” (for example with the predetermined aim of saving – or sinking – the Constitutional Treaty). In the political debate, too, the actors should openly reveal their goals and principles, so that their co-actors understand clearly which problems they want to solve and which conceptual prerogatives and political interests guide their actions.

In the absence of such transparency, there is a real risk of the debate unravelling and the Union becoming even more politically fragmented. Growing public discontent and Euro-skepticism – exacerbated by the impression of helplessness at the level of the heads of state and government and the deliberate instrumentalization of negative European stories by populist forces – can only strengthen these centrifugal forces. And in strategic political terms, these forces will be stronger than the centripetal element of the European Union, partly because the Commission (which is treaty-bound to pursue the European “common interest”) is displaying increasingly clear signs of polarization. The Commission has suffered a noticeable loss in its capacity to provide integrative momentum as well as political influence over the member states’ governments and public debate.

SAVING THE CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY BY SLIMMING OR RENEGOTIATING

During his September 2006⁶ speech held in Brussels and his New Year’s address on January 12th 2006;⁷ Nicolas Sarkozy, French interior minister and leader of the governing UMP party, called for a shorter treaty text based on the first part of the Constitutional Treaty: This text would do nothing more than regulate the institutional and procedural organization of the 27-member Union. The subject matter of this abridged Constitutional Treaty would be: the arrangements for the Presidency of the European Council and Council of Ministers; the areas of application for qualified majority voting and for the co-decision procedure for the European Parliament; the election of the President of the European Commission, by the European Parliament; the CT’s mechanisms for checking EU proposals against the principle of subsidiarity, by national parliaments; the simplification of reinforced cooperation; and the creation of a post for the European foreign minister. Sarkozy proposed having this reduced CT version ratified only by national parliaments and left this question open – How will the Charter of Fundamental Rights, included in the second part of the Constitutional Treaty, and the reforms of the third and fourth parts of the Treaty be put into effect? Sarkozy’s proposal would only offer a way out if he were to win France’s May 2007 presidential election and then claim an electoral mandate, for pushing an abridged reform treaty through parliament. So far, Italy’s prime minister, Romano Prodi, is the only European head of state or government to publicly support Sarkozy’s initiative.⁸

Whether or not the German federal government has also been entertaining this option is unclear. Its idea of saving the “political substance” of the CT suggests an attempt on Berlin’s part to consider the idea of a reduced version of the CT carefully.⁹ The conditions for the German government’s acceptance of such a treaty would be twofold: Firstly, a sufficiently large number of states would have to be prepared to rally behind this Treaty. Secondly, not only the new French leadership but in the long run all European governments would have to express their willingness to define the “political substance” of the Constitutional Treaty, in broad terms, so as to come close to the reform compromise contained in this document.

Saving the core institutional reforms is just as important a starting point for the so-called Amato Group (a gathering of senior and acting statesmen from various EU countries and political affiliations with the goal of presenting a report on the matter in spring 2007)¹⁰ as it is the guiding principle for, “Plan B”, published by the Liberal member of the European Parliament, Andrew Duff (2006). Duff suggests ring-fencing the constitutional provisions in Part I, none of which have proven particularly controversial in the ratification process. Further, he proposes a restructuring of the Constitutional Treaty, turning Part III into a subsidiary of Part I with a softer revision procedure – the Charter of Fundamental Rights would be annexed to the Treaty. Unlike Sarkozy, Duff puts forward substantial modifications for five policy areas (economic governance, economic society, climate change, enlargement policy and a revised financial system). Accordingly – given that such an agenda would need a larger renovation of the CT, Duff recommends that a new IGC meet in 2008 to co-decide with the European Parliament on the specifics of this process (revising the existing Treaty). In order to achieve public consent, he suggests organising an EU wide poll on this revised constitutional package.

Although proposals of this kind are oriented around the text of the Constitutional Treaty, by undoing its “package” character they call into question the outcome achieved by the Constitutional Convention and the Intergovernmental Conference. The scope of the renegotiation would probably not be confined to the revision of the points criticized by the French¹¹ and Dutch¹² opponents of the Constitution. Other aspects would in all probability be called into question. Certain actors could take the negotiations as an opportunity to put elements of the Constitutional Treaty, which they themselves were unhappy with, back on the agenda. Evaluated against the criteria set out above, the minimalist strategy neither seeks to accommodate the arguments that brought citizens to reject the Constitutional Treaty, nor serves as an instrument to implement the Constitutional Treaty in 2009. Regarding the substance of reform, re-opening the package may lead to a situation which does little to ensure the implementation of the reforms contained in the Constitutional Treaty and may not even satisfy the requirements set out in the Nice Treaty and the Laeken Declaration. Some governments, particularly of those countries that have already ratified the Treaty, would face the problem of explaining this rollback to their electorate.

ADD-ON AND OPT-IN AS LAST RESORTS

Proposals for amending the Treaty – for example with a protocol, a declaration, or a charter¹³ – are more clearly designed to rescue the Constitutional Treaty and to achieve its goal of implementing the reform projects set out in the Treaty of Nice. An addendum of this kind could constructively address the concerns of the Treaty’s critics without affecting the political substance of the Treaty. The starting point for such considerations would be the reasons for the French and Dutch “no” to the Treaty.

Three factors can be identified as common denominators in the reasons for the rejection of the CT: existential personal concerns (with regard to social security and societal – or national-identity), fears associated with EU expansion, and the wish to preserve the autonomy of one’s own nation-state as, supposedly, the last bastion against the threats of globalization (the latter, perceived as a process that the EU has tended to push forward through liberalisation of the internal market, rather than ameliorating its socially detrimental effects and mitigating its impact on sovereignty and autonomy). As a result, a possibility arises to mitigate French and Dutch concerns by supplementing the Constitutional Treaty with responses to these fears. During the debates of the European Parliament’s Duff/Voggenhuber report, the two social democratic MEPs Carlos Carnero González (Spain) and Richard Corbett (Britain) were of the opinion that the current text of the CT could probably only be maintained if it were “accompanied by significant measures [...] involving in all likelihood, declarations interpreting the Constitutional Treaty and possibly protocols appended to it”.¹⁴ The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, also put forward at the December 2005 European People Party’s meeting, the proposition of saving the Constitutional Treaty with a declaration on the “social dimension” of Europe.¹⁵

The German Presidency could therefore begin a review of the CT, limited both temporally and in terms of its content range, and thus suggest ways to clarify the EU’s social and economic dimension, as well as its values and characteristics that might be instrumental in forging identity. At the end of the review, a declaration or charter on the social dimension of the EU would ideally – and as a first step – be elaborated. This might in turn be linked to the elaboration of a European globalisation strategy (Maurer 2006a and 2006b), setting out the basic social and economic standards of the EU. in a set of guidelines that could be applied to the EU’s relations with third countries.

Of the three factors set out above, the Dutch “Nee” to the CT was above all an expression of the fears of European “homogenisation” and a loss of national identity. The same sorts of fears influence governmental EU/CT-skepticism in the Czech Republic, Poland, Britain, and Ireland. A mere declaration on the social dimension would not meet their concerns. However, analogous to this approach in the area of social policy, Europe’s representatives could set out in search of the concrete meaning of the elements, presently named in Article 6 of the EU Treaty, as “national identities”, but not further delineated. These could then be politically proclaimed as a second stage in the supplementation of the CT. Article I-5

of the CT gives a lead in this regard. Yet, according to this Article, the EU respects only the “equality of Member States before the constitution as well as their national identities, inherent in their fundamental structures, political and constitutional, inclusive of regional and local self-government”.

Whilst supplementing and clarifying these elements of the Treaty, the temptation should be resisted to define national identity as an objective asset to be safeguarded, and thus marking the limits of a state’s EU-integration policy and its readiness to integrate. This kind of “introverted” interpretation of Article I-5 CT would merely reinforce the zero-sum notion of EU/nation-state relations. In the worst-case scenario, a reversal of the economic and political cooperation already achieved may result. For this reason, it would be important to identify the national identities of the member states as constitutive elements of the EU-project, without placing them in opposition to the process of integration (Maurer 2006c). The aim of this conceptualisation would be to “extrovert” the values underpinning national identities, and to turn the EU into a civilian “protecting power”, safeguarding these values and rights in the context of global competition. Accentuating national identities in such a way could prove to have a dynamic effect on the internal machinery of the EU, a protective one on its external relations, and identity-forging effects on EU’s citizens. It could also clarify what is meant by the motto “unity in diversity” – namely, mutual understanding for national sensibilities, which for their part must assert themselves *vis-à-vis* the fundamental and civil rights norms of the EU.

A not inconsiderable pre-condition for the success of this project would; however, be that the EU Presidency, along with those other states that have already ratified the Constitutional Treaty, would direct their attentions at the French and Dutch governments, seeking to initiate a new ratification process. In France, the referendum process is a constitutional requirement. The result of the referendum cannot be annulled by an act of Parliament, except if a new text is presented, which qualitatively diverges from the CT. By contrast, the Dutch Parliament could decide to ratify the CT under altered conditions. A number of hurdles would first have to be cleared, given that important actors in the Netherlands had already declared the CT for dead in January 2006 and warned against “quick fixes” and “cherry picking” tactics aimed at saving the project.¹⁶ It was therefore “out of the question that this Treaty would again be presented for ratification”.¹⁷ The Dutch government would not “present the European Constitutional Treaty a second time for the approval of the people or Parliament; not even should the text be slightly altered”.¹⁸ This “No” also applies to the *new* Dutch government.

The “add-on” strategy clearly seeks to accommodate the arguments that led citizens to reject the CT or indeed European integration as a whole. This strategy is an instrument to implement the Constitutional Treaty in 2009, as agreed upon; it would safeguard the full reform package accepted by the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) in 2004, thus achieving the reform goals sketched out in the Nice Treaty and in the Laeken declaration.

The problem with this strategy is that the conflicting interests of many national governments with regard to the future of the EU could make it impossible to develop a solution which allows all 27 governments to return to their home constituencies with a face-saving solution. The failure of the constitutional referenda in two countries shifted the parameters of the debate on the future of the EU. They have also resistance to the Treaty, for the countries which have rejected or not yet ratified, easier in political terms than when the IGC broadly endorsed the work of the Convention in 2004. “Buying these countries out” with add-ons that meet specific national demands has therefore become more difficult. If a new attempt to achieve ratification were to be launched with a protocol that was nothing more than a “placebo”, this would fail to silence the Treaty’s opponents and certainly do nothing to stimulate a “yes”. On the other hand, if the substance of such an amendment were to go further than the content of the Constitutional Treaty, this could endanger ratification in the United Kingdom, Poland, and the Czech Republic. One way out of this dilemma could be to formulate the elements of deepening that go further than the existing Constitutional Treaty as options for a group of member states, which others would be free to join as the integration process progressed. The Constitutional Treaty would remain intact in the form already presented for ratification, and no state would be compelled to participate in deepening.

NICE AND NICE PLUS: PIECEMEAL APPROACHES

Criticising the Austrian suggestion for reviving the ratification process, former Dutch foreign minister, Bernard Bot, stressed that his government felt it was advisable for the moment to “concentrate on practical measures on the basis of the Treaty of Nice”.¹⁹ French President, Jacques Chirac, has also been calling, since January 2006, for the EU to be reformed “on the basis of existing treaties” in order to improve the functioning of institutions.²⁰ A letter written in April 2006 by the French foreign and European affairs ministers to the Austrian foreign minister lent weight to this proposal. In it they suggested:

- Using the *passerelle* clause in Article 42 of the Treaty on the European Union to shift issues from the third intergovernmental pillar to the supranational Treaty Establishing the European Community (TCE). This move would include the reform and full integration of police and judicial cooperation into the TCE. Some or all of the policy areas named in the “third pillar” would thus come under the qualified majority voting procedure in the Council and be subject to the co-decision procedure of the European Parliament rather than the weaker right of consultation. They would also be open to much stronger judicial control by the European Court of Justice.
- The *passerelle* clause in Article 137.2 of the Treaty Establishing the European Community can be utilized to make a codecision procedure in those fields of social policy, which are currently subject to unanimity in the Council of Ministers and only the consultative procedure in the European Parliament.

- Stronger networking as well as institutional and procedural convergence in those committees, of the Council and the Commission, dealing with foreign policy questions, on the basis of the organs' right of self-organization.
- A further increase in the transparency of the Council of Ministers, on the basis of its right of self-organization.
- Strengthening the European Parliament's rights of control and information through the committees dealing with questions relating to the implementation of Community law (comitology).
- Strengthening the EU's instruments for coordinating economic and financial policy through, and on the basis of, the organizational autonomy of the Euro group.
- *De facto* advance implementation of the Constitutional Treaty's protocol on the principle of subsidiarity in an effort to involve national parliaments more closely; also on the basis of the current protocol on the role of national parliaments in the EU.²¹

For the French Socialist presidential candidate, Ségolène Royal,²² institutional reforms are at best a mid-term perspective. She suggests that Europe should first of all prove its value to its citizens, demanding efforts in the fields of renewable energies, research and innovation, transport, and social protection. Pushing aside the Constitutional Treaty, she asked the German Presidency to start a two-year discussion phase, which could lead to a new Convention under the French EU Presidency in 2008. The new Treaty should then be approved by a trans-European referendum. Without wholeheartedly joining the group who declare the Constitutional Treaty to be dead, the EU Commission informally shifted closer to this line and in its communication to the European Council, "A Citizens' Agenda – Delivering Results For Europe", proposed similar reform steps "à traité constant" (Commission 2006).

Numerous efforts are currently being undertaken to implement the two Treaty protocols on the role of national parliaments and the application of the Principle of Subsidiarity. The start was made by British foreign minister, Jack Straw, who emphasized directly after the two referendum defeats that the rules of the two protocols could be put into effect even without the Constitutional Treaty.²³ Also, the majority of participants at the annual subsidiarity conference from the Committee of the Regions, at the end of November 2005, demanded the implementation of the subsidiarity protocol in the Constitutional Treaty.²⁴

A further attempt was made at a meeting for justice ministers, in Tampere, in September 2006, when the Finnish Presidency together with the EU Commission and a group led by France, Spain, Portugal, and Luxembourg attempted to do away with the national veto on police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters. Several member states' ministers, including those from Germany, opposed the activation of the *passerelle* mechanism as "cherry-picking" from the Constitutional Treaty, which provides for justice-related decisions to be taken by qualified majority decision rather than by unanimity. While cherry-picking can in some cases ensure the rapid implementation of useful reforms, its downside could make the Constitutional

Treaty obsolete; especially if too many of the innovations are implemented without the Treaty. From the German point of view, the risk then is that some of the major, and more contentious innovations, such as the double majority rule or the new rules on the EU's budget procedures, will in the end not be implemented.

The concentration on partial reforms and individual projects does not address the concerns of those citizens who rejected the Treaty (or, for example in Britain, would reject it if asked). Demonstrative activity at the EU level is certainly helpful in allaying further criticism of the system and relativising the (empirically unproven) argument of high levels of public Euro-skepticism, but these "projects" cannot be expected to have any material effect before 2009.

Lastly, the concentration on piecemeal approaches and projects stands for an interpretation that understands the current crisis of the EU above all as an "output problem". In France this reading is associated with a striking overemphasis on the part of the political elite, of the social policy reasons for rejection. This rather threadbare maneuver distracts the debate from the crisis of political leadership in France, from criticism of the government's unsatisfactory representation of national interests at the EU level, and finally from the more fundamental problem of the input legitimization of the EU decision-making system itself. Interestingly, France is not the only country where, in terms of the "input" and "output legitimization" question, the political interpretation of the "non" and the proposed responses diverge strongly from the academic discussion, which itself has brought forth a veritable flood of publications on the theme of democratization and politicization of the EU.

A fundamental overhaul of the EU Treaties, by the piecemeal route of taking the Constitutional Treaty apart and passing partial reforms on the basis of the Treaty of Nice, is a cumbersome and risky venture. It would open up the possibility of making changes – to the relationships between the organs themselves and between the organs and the member states – that would not be compatible with the logic and method of the "quid pro quo" (deals practiced at the Intergovernmental Conferences). Each individual question would thus demand of the member state governments a greater willingness to compromise than required at the intergovernmental conferences. Additionally, this approach could have the disadvantage that by multiplying the volume of documents and rules it would further increase the bureaucracy that citizens already complain about. One of the main goals of the Constitutional Treaty – simplifying European primary legislation (treaties) – thus would not be achieved. Finally, if the proposed approach were to be implemented, important reforms laid down in the Constitutional Treaty would remain on the sidelines (Maurer 2006b).

THE PRESIDENCY'S OPTIONS

Since the German Council Presidency makes it its top priority to save the substance of the Constitutional Treaty, the 50th anniversary of the European Community at the end of March 2007 could be celebrated by adopting a

commensurate declaration and a “globalisation strategy” along the lines of the elements described above.

If in the meantime the cherry-picking continues, and elements of the constitutional reforms are put into effect in a piecemeal manner, their implementation would have to be accompanied by a joint initiative of the “friends of the Constitutional Treaty” to revive the EU’s reform process if there is any interest in saving the Treaty as a whole.

However, the possible scenarios should be rigorously judged. A strategy of confrontation with the “no”-voting countries and the not-yet-ratifiers could put the “friends of the Constitutional Treaty” in a situation where at best twenty countries agree, while two still reject the Treaty and three want to wait longer. In this constellation, the political leeway for the “friends” would be small. Germany has no interest in urging France to leave the European Union and European Monetary Union in order to implement the Constitutional Treaty with the diminished core group of the “friends”, nor can it be expected that political pressure will lead the “non-ratifiers” (probably five) to change their minds. Any initiative for saving the substance of the CT would only make sense if the situation of the non-ratifiers were to change in such a way that they would rediscover their own inherent interest in the EU’s institutional reform, or if the “friends” were to come to the conviction that in the worst case scenario it would be better to proceed with a reduced number of members than to abandon the Constitutional Treaty.

These options need to be assessed clear-headedly before choosing strategies for moving forward. If this does not happen, the fixation on the Constitutional Treaty will get in the way of developing alternatives. If the implementation of the existing Constitutional Treaty is treated as the only permissible option it may be possible to delay the piecemeal approach for a while, but if this strategy fails – and in view of the current constellation of attitudes toward the Treaty that is not unlikely – the discussion of alternatives, which then becomes necessary, will thus drag on over years. The EU would remain trapped in its stagnation and waste precious years while the rest of the world moves on.

This dilemma clearly shows how urgent it is for the 27 governments to bring about a clarification of their own and their shared motivations. In the absence of such clarification, Year Two of the post-“no” era looks like a heralding of the same kind of frazzled and vague discussion that characterized the first year of the “pause for thought”. Under these conditions, the German Council Presidency stands little chance of presenting a simple plan for the way forward. What is required is to clarify, as far as possible, the interests and the existing willingness to act – even with a government who is at present largely self-absorbed.

THE CONSTITUTION IS DEAD – LONG LIVE THE TREATY

Rather than seeking to maintain the integrity of the Constitutional Treaty, the best feasible option today seems to put all efforts into saving the core institutional reforms agreed upon in Part I and in the institutional, procedural and financial chapters of Part III of the Treaty. Thus, the rest of Part III can

be amended in such a way that it enables the functioning of the EU according to the needs of particular policy areas. This strategy could be complemented by the so-called Berlin Declaration of March 2007, which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Rome Treaty: A forward-looking declaration which re-introduces a sense of political leadership into EU policy-making, based on the global challenges facing the EU today. Calling upon such a treaty could reinvigorate popular support for European integration and privilege efforts to safeguard core reforms.

Two years after the EU's enlargement, it is becoming increasingly more clear that the current EU system is not functioning as smoothly as decision-makers often publicly state. Within the Council system, the current arrangements for voting, as well as those for the internal management and external representation of the Council, continue to have various negative effects in the enlarged EU. The Council, which represents the central link between the member states and the European institutions, is facing fundamental problems: First of all, the multiplicity of decision-making arrangements, according to which the Council must decide unanimously, increases the risk of decision blockades in a Union of 27 (Gomez and Peterson 2001).²⁵ Secondly, Gomez and Peterson (2001) provide clear empirical evidence about a loss of coherence on the part of the Council and a significant decrease in the coordination function of the General Affairs Council (GAC). Thirdly, the evolving network of "parallel structures", set up alongside the supranational EC, and informal arrangements between some member states (Prüm Treaty, G-6 group) put the system of the Council as well as the inter-institutional arrangements between the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament into question. These deficiencies restrict the Council's capacity for external and internal action, as well as efficiency. They damage the atmosphere of negotiations in Council meetings and preparatory committees. As for the European Commission, (its size and its heterogeneity) and the Commissioners' contradictory positioning, all have an increasingly negative impact on the EU's external image, as well as upon its power to formulate convincing policies within the EU's arenas of decision-making.

The German EU Presidency must view the crisis in the integration project as an obstacle and an opportunity in order to recalibrate the European project (inwardly and outwardly). One basis guiding its actions could be provided by the fact that, Europeans can only successfully pursue their interests in the world if they do so through common institutions, which are in turn bound to the common European good and are capable of reaching decisions to that effect. The faith of critical elites and citizens in the European project can only be won back if, the European institutions prove their capacity to act especially in regards to the challenges of a heterogeneous EU-society, as well as of the globalisation of the production of goods, services and risks. For the Presidency, this means no less than consciously emphasising the totality of instruments, available on both a national and European level, to drive integration forward in a phase of insecurity. This requires it to come clean about the goals and tasks, the competencies and limits of the enlarged Union. In order to engage citizens in European politics and its further

development, it is not simply the principle of subsidiarity that must be respected but also that of solidarity.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Conseil de l'Union Européenne/Conseil Européen (2006).
- ² Extraits de la conférence de presse du Général de Gaulle, Palais de l'Elysée, Paris, 9 September 1965; www.ellopos.net/politics/degaulle65.htm.
- ³ On the academic debate see Tosato and Greco (2004), Shaw (2005), De Witte (2004), Maurer (2005), Král (2004), Monar (2005).
- ⁴ For Germany, it has to be taken into account however that while the Bundestag and the Bundesrat have ratified the Treaty, a decision from the German Constitutional Court has been postponed, and that the German President consequently refuses to sign the Treaty. From a legal point of view, Germany cannot, therefore, be counted amongst the countries that have ratified the Constitutional Treaty.
- ⁵ For a deeper analysis on the factors of the French and Dutch No votes see Schild (2005), Uterwedde (2005), Lang and Majkowska (2005), Aarts and van der Kolk (2006).
- ⁶ Speech of Nicolas Sarkozy delivered to Friends of Europe and the Fondation Robert Schuman, 8 September 2006, Bruxelles.
- ⁷ Nicolas Sarkozy (Ministre d'Etat, Ministre de l'intérieur et de l'aménagement du territoire, Président de l'Union pour un Mouvement Populaire), vows to the press, Paris, 12 January 2006, www.u-m-p.org/site/GrandDiscoursAffiche.php?IdGrandDiscours=164.
- ⁸ See his interview in *Le Monde* of 13 September 2006: Romano Prodi: Une Constitution limitée aux grands principes.
- ⁹ "Steinmeier will 'politische Substanz' der EU-Verfassung", *Münchener Merkur*, 23 July 2006; Speech of Foreign Minister Steinmeier during the Bundestag's debate of the annual budget, 6 September 2006; www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2006/060906-Bundestag.navCtx=21928.html; "Polen und Deutschland – Gemeinsam Europas Zukunft gestalten", Speech of Foreign Minister Steinmeier at the University of Frankfurt/Oder, 26 October 2006, www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2006/061026-Viadrina.html; "Ausblick auf die deutsche EU-Präsidentschaft: Stand der Vorbereitung in der Bundesregierung", Speech of the Foreign Ministry's State Secretary Silberberg, 4 October 2006, www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2006/061004-SilberbergEuropa.html.
- ¹⁰ "EU 'wise' group welcomes new debate on constitution", *EU Observer*, 5 October 2006.
- ¹¹ See Lauren, Annie and Sauger, Nicolas (eds.), "Le référendum de ratification du Traité constitutionnel européen du 29 mai 2005: comprendre le 'Non' français". Paris: Centre de Recherches Politiques de Sciences Po, 2005 (Les cahiers du CEVIPOF, No. 42); Milner, Henry (2006), Brouard and Tiberj (2006), Schwarzer (2005).
- ¹² See Lang and Majkowska (2005), Aarts and van der Kolk (2006), Gouvernement Néerlandais (2006).
- ¹³ See the amendment No. 177 of González, Carlos Carnero and Corbett, Richard on the Duff/Voggenhuber-report of the European Parliament, No. 2005/2146(INI) 21a, doc. no. PE 364.885v01-00 56/69 AM586904DE.doc and, for a similar proposal made by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel: "Merkel will mit Sozial-Erklärung EU-Verfassung retten". *Handelsblatt*, December 18, 2005; "Text der EU-Verfassung soll unverändert gelten." *Berliner Morgenpost*, December 20, 2005; "Merkel schlägt ein Sozialkapitel vor". *Der Standard*, December 20, 2005.
- ¹⁴ Proposed amendment 177 by González and Corbett to the Duff/Voggenhuber Report, op. cit.
- ¹⁵ See "Merkel will mit Sozial-Erklärung EU-Verfassung retten", op. cit; "Text der EU-Verfassung soll unverändert gelten", op. cit.; "Merkel schlägt ein Sozialkapitel vor", op. cit.
- ¹⁶ See "EU-Verfassung ist für uns tot". *Kurier*, 12th January 2006.
- ¹⁷ See "EU-Verfassung für Außenminister Bot tot". Austria Presse Agentur, Release 12th January 2006.
- ¹⁸ See Nicolai, Atzo: "Auf dem Prüfstand der Wirklichkeit: Wie Hollands Regierung die Zukunft der EU sieht". Interview. *Der Tagesspiegel*, 16th January 2006.

- ¹⁹ See Florence Deloche-Gaudez, Contribution au symposium organisé par la Commission des affaires constitutionnelles du Parlement européen: L'avenir du processus constitutionnel de l'Union européenne, Bruxelles, 13 and 14 Octobre 2005; "EU-Verfassung für Außenminister Bot tot", op. cit.; Nicolaï, Atzo: "Auf dem Prüfstand der Wirklichkeit: Wie Hollands Regierung die Zukunft der EU sieht", op. cit.
- ²⁰ See Jacques Chirac plaide contre un "statu quo institutionnel" pour l'UE. *Le Monde*, 10 January 2006; Jacques Chirac relance le débat sur la Constitution européenne. *Libération*, 10 January 2006; Brändle, Stefan: "'Ursula' und 'Philippe' Hand in Hand. Außenministerin Plassnik zu Gast in Paris". *Der Standard*, 11 January 2006; "Chirac will 'Pionier Europas' sein". *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 January 2006; Alich, Holger and Rinke, Andreas: "Chirac will ein Kerneuropa. EU-Verfassung entzweit Paris und Berlin". *Handelsblatt*, 11 January 2006; Leparmentier, Arnaud: "Jacques Chirac veut convaincre les Allemands d'appliquer certaines dispositions de la Constitution". *Le Monde*, 9 January 2006.
- ²¹ See Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Améliorations institutionnelles à partir du cadre des traités existants, Contribution Française, Paris, 24 April 2006.
- ²² Ségolène Royal, Sept propositions pour l'Europe par la preuve. Speech to press conference, 11 October 2006.
- ²³ See Statement made by British Foreign Minister Straw before the House of Commons on 6 June, 2005, www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/cm050606/debtext/50606-05.htm, column995f.
- ²⁴ See Committee of the Regions, "Conference calls for creation of a 'real subsidiarity culture' to meet citizens' needs", Pressemitteilung, 30 November 2005, www.cor.eu.int/de/press/press_05_11138.html.
- ²⁵ See also the Report of the European Parliament on the Council's reform (rapporteur: Jacques F. Poos), Doc. No. A5-0308/2001, 17 September 2001.
- ²⁶ See also the Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson's speech at Humboldt University on 18 October 2001 (HRE 2001), www.whi-berlin.de, p. 16.

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***Akbar Ahmed and Brian Forst:
After Terror: Promoting Dialogue Among Civilizations***

London: Polity Press, 2005, 160 pages, ISBN: 10 0745635024.

“...there is only one good, knowledge, and only one evil, ignorance...”

(Socrates)

“After Terror” is a compilation of 28 essays composed by the world’s prominent thinkers and activists, put together with the kind initiative of Akbar Ahmed and Brian Forst. Mr. Ahmed is a prominent Pakistani expert on Islamic studies and Mr. Forst is a Professor of Justice, Law and Society at the School of Public Affairs at Washington D.C. The book is a reaction to the events that were set in train by the 9/11 bombings and its goal is to convince its readers that terrorism is surmountable without having to open the Pandora’s box of clashing civilizations. The book is divided into three sections, the first, concerning “The Nature and the Source of the Problem”, the second, concerning “Pathways to dialogue” and finally the last section, “From Concern to Action”. The essays range from objective scholarly analysis to subjective argumentative reasoning. In sum, the book seeks to solve the most pressing problem of international terrorism so that one day we may indeed reach the point “after terror”.

In the first essay of the first section called “The Nature and the Source of the Problem”, Zbigniew Brzezinski gives us his ideas concerning the problem at hand. Being a former National Security Adviser to the White House, Mr. Brzezinski gives his insights into the so-called “power of weakness”.¹ Here he reflects on the changing nature of international relations where realist hard power is no longer in monopoly, since the game is no longer only played among rational-egoistic nation states. Transnational actors are more flexible than their nation state counterparts. The US therefore, according to Mr. Brzezinski, has to mobilize its natural advantages such as its ability to attract support and to lead. In sum, the US should no longer seek to dominate international relations but is should try to consensually lead them. In many regards Mr. Brzezinski adopts the view similar to J. N. Nye.

In a following essay, Rajmohan Gandhi tells us that the “answer to terrorism is a greater goal than the war on terrorism”.² Concerning international terrorism, Mr. Gandhi blames the US for not attacking the root causes of the problem. As a model for the future he gives the example of the Indian President Vaj Payee who has recently went to great effort to promote dialogue between India and Pakistan. Mr. Gandhi calls on the US to stay faithful to the legacy of Benjamin Franklin who promoted unity through understanding. This idea is later picked up in the essay by Walter Isaacson. Like Mr. Gandhi, he suggests that the US should take an example from the teachings of one of its most religiously tolerant presidents, in order to counter the underlying causes of international terrorism.

Following on from that is the essay by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. According to Mr. Tutu “Human beings are worshipping animals”³ and “religion has the capacity to produce saints or rogues”.⁴ In another essay contributed by Dianna L. Eck, it is suggested that saints and rogues are determined by governmental actions such as the 2002 Patriot Act. Tutu however doesn’t blame governments or politics per se. For him the source of the problem is “injustice, hunger, oppression, poverty, disease and ignorance”.⁵

The first essay of the second section called “Pathways to Dialogue and Understanding” is written by Shashi Tharoor. He suggests that communication is one of the most important pathways to understanding and preventing the clash of civilizations. He reminds us that Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights marks free media as one of the most essential human needs. He however warns that communication can be counterproductive with the sprout of the so-called “hate media” following 9/11, not only in Asia, but also in the US. He therefore proposes that the US should listen to advice given by the International Council of Human Rights Policy (2002), when it told it should put more effort to cover hate crimes against Muslims in the West. He also warns us that there is a serious “digital divide” where the rich West enjoys almost unlimited internet access and the poor Third World remains in ignorance. Finally he suggests that the US should seek to promote “preventive journalism”, which would act as an “early warning of human rights abuses”⁶ by making such abuses public before they become serious. All this could help prevent international terrorism.

Picking up from that point is the contribution by Dame Marilyn Strathern and by Edward O’ Wilson. They both point out that division, social or religious, is natural to human species, hence suggesting that by compelling uniformity, we are actually going against a natural human instinct inculcated within us since the very beginning. Hence it should be via understanding and dialogue that we should fight against the forces of terrorism, since from first principles of cultural homogenisation cannot work.

The ensuing contribution is made by Lord George Carey. Lord Carey reminds us that Islam is a religion hijacked by religious fundamentalists. He refers to the Holy Koran (Surah 5, 8) where it is written that “the nearest to you in love wilt thou find those who say ‘we are Christians’”. He also outlines the major contours of contempt between Christians and Muslims: from one side that the US treats Arabic countries unfairly, and from the other, that Muslim leaders aren’t doing enough to prevent religious fundamentalism. Lord Carey calls on all religious clerics to preach moderation and understanding.

Following on from there, the next contribution is made by President Seyed Mohammed Khatami. He suggests that only by a *mélange* of ethics and politics can we succeed at elevating civilization above the barbarity of terrorist attacks. A similar point is made in the later essay by Amitai Etzioni. However, unlike Mr. Khatami who seeks solace in ancient Middle Eastern ethical philosophy, Mr. Etzioni introduces the more general idea of “transnational moral dialogue” which according to him “occurs when a

group of people engage in processes of sorting out the values that should guide their lives".⁷ This view is however contested by Sergio Vieira de Mello and Jean Bethke Elshtain in their respective two contributed essays. They imply that neither general transnational moral dialogues nor ancient Arabic ethical philosophy are a sufficient path to creating understanding among the cultures. They suggest that Universal Human Rights and the Just War Thesis⁸ are "inherently civilising",⁹ and so it is only via these Kantian principles that we can "keep alive and open the possibility of... negotiation along the way".¹⁰ In the later essay written by Jody Williams we come to realise that ever since the 1990's this would be harder than initially believed. But as Ms Williams suggests, "almost anything is possible when there is sufficient will".¹¹ This determination is also picked up in the later essays by Tamara Sonn, Judea Pearl and Jonathan Sacks.

The final group of contributions is made by Queen Norah of Jordan, Kofi Annan, Prince El Hassan bin Talal who is the former Crown Prince of Jordan, and Sir Ravi Shankar who is a renowned Asian musician. This set of writers put a great deal of stress on education. They all point out that what also matters is what type of education is provided because it could otherwise be counterproductive. Mr. Shankar suggests that musical education could provide a unifying language that would bring the world together.

The first essay of the last section called "From Concern to Action" is made by James D. Wolfenson. He makes the point that action has to be taken against the world's income gap. He suggests that the means for this are available since rich countries spend around USD 700 bn on defence, USD 300 bn on food subsidies, whilst only USD 68 mil on official development aid. He therefore suggests that Western officials try harder to fill in the poverty gap that provides terrorism with fertile ground.

The second contribution is made by the well-known Joseph S. Nye. Nye makes the distinction between "Hard Power" and "Soft Power", where the former is military and economic, and the latter means "getting others to want the outcomes you want".¹² Soft Power is the attractiveness of culture, political values and the ability to lead. Most importantly, it solidifies legitimacy in the eyes of international relations actors. Nye suggests that Soft Power is becoming more important in international relations than Hard Power. Hard Power is ineffective because for example only a quarter of Al-Qaeda training camps were eliminated by the war in Afghanistan. It is also ineffective because it cannot be adequately mobilised. In the age of globalisation and the privatisation of war, there is no set enemy. More importantly, Hard Power cannot guarantee that if one terrorist cell is eliminated, another cell doesn't sprout in its place. Hence, Mr. Nye suggests that US Soft Power is the way forward. He gives particular attention to cultural and educational exchanges "that will develop a richer and more open civil society in Middle Eastern countries".¹³

The third contribution is made by Benjamin R. Barber. He suggests that international terrorism is a form of "malevolent NGO's", which can be countered only if nation states become more interdependent – eventually forming global governance. Mr. Barber does admit that "there must first be a

global civil society and a global citizenry”¹⁴ before this is possible. However, he makes the point that if the US stops posing as a “stubborn loner”,¹⁵ the world may soon come to the stage where it is jointly combating international terrorism, both its causes and symptoms.

The final contribution to the book is made by William L. Ury. He introduces the concept of the “third side” which is “the emergent will of the community”, as a means to combat international terrorism. Ury adopts a stance particular to “Natural Law” lawyers that see Kantian morality as something fixed in international relations. He suggests that the “third side” was often mobilised, but in order for it to be a global force against international terrorism, it will take a lot of effort.

In conclusion, *After Terror* is an interesting read that carries a lot of pertinence to current international relations debates. Its strengths are numerous. Firstly there is the plethora of contributions by high profile individuals which gives the book an air of argumentative legitimacy, whilst making it diverse in viewpoints. It is particularly interesting to see how the problem of international terrorism is viewed by politicians and clerics from the West, and then comparing it with the way it is viewed by their counterparts in the Arab world. It is also good to see that the majority of authors managed to agree on a series of solutions to international terrorism, amongst which understanding via transnational moral dialogue was the strongest of all points. On the other hand, the book also has its weaknesses. It often contains contributions that are mere reflections of personal views and consequently of minute merit to the objective currents of international relations discourse. Also, some essays are short and lack corroborated argument – secondary literature is used only rarely. Finally, with the basic arguments about international terrorism being already outlined in the first part of the book, the rest of the read are just variations of those same arguments, hence becoming a little repetitive. Nevertheless, despite these shortcomings the book is a valuable asset to anyone interested in the possible strategies that could be used to combat the threats of international terrorism and of clashing civilizations.

Petr Urbánek

ENDNOTES

¹ Ahmad, Akbar and Forst, Brian (2005). *After Terror: Promoting Dialogue Among Civilizations*. London: Polity Press, 2005, p. 15.

² Ibid., p. 30.

³ Ibid., p. 40.

⁴ Ibid., p. 41.

⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

⁶ Ibid., p. 53.

⁷ Ibid., p. 79.

⁸ According to her, the a war is just only when a) combatants are distinguished from non-combatants, b) force is proportional, c) an that those in need are actually helped.

⁹ Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 148.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 71.

¹² Ibid., p. 167.

¹³ Ibid., p. 169.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 178.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 175. Note: by avoiding international treaties such as Kyoto, ICC, ABMT etc.

***Christopher Booker and Richard North:
The Great Deception. The Secret History
of the European Union
(Skryté dějiny evropské integrace
od roku 1918 do současnosti)***

Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2006, 624 pages, ISBN: 80-7364-026-0.

The reviewed book of the authors Christopher Booker and Richard North *The Great Deception: Can the European Union Survive? (Skryté dějiny evropské integrace od roku 1918 do současnosti)* is a rather interesting publication in the Czech environment as it takes a strongly anti-European stance. Christopher Booker is a British journalist well-known for his anti-European Union columns, particularly for the *Sunday Telegraph*. Richard North is a British economist and works as a consultant to the British government on European issues. They attempt to defend the thesis that the whole project of European integration has, since its early days, had the hidden objective of creating a European political union, forming a United States of Europe. To achieve this goal its proponents adopted the necessary principle that the true character and purpose cannot be articulated openly to the European public. The authors claim that the current state of integration has reached a point where this hidden agenda cannot be held secret anymore. The authors present an extensive work built on detailed research work. However, they choose a rather selective approach highlighting the negative sides of European integration on the nation state, particularly the United Kingdom (UK). As such, the book is quite useful in seeing the eurosceptic view of the entire process of European integration.

The book is logically divided into 22 chapters, from the birth of the idea of integrating Europe until the failure of the European Constitutional Treaty in 2005, which was missing in the original English edition of the book and was extended last year. This revised edition was translated into Czech. Particularly the introductory chapters of the book that focus on the path towards the creation of the European Community from 1918 to 1958 brings new light to what is generally considered well-known facts. The authors' comprehensive research destroys many clichés. They often go to the very root of the events, which might at first seem rather redundant and may appear to the reader to have little links with the integration but eventually lead to the presentation of the real building blocks and alternative forms of European integration. For instance, they document that the true basis of the European Coal and Steel Community lies in the idea of the French industrialist Louis Louchet, who was authorized by the French government in 1916 to reform and develop French production base (p. 24–25). This part also presents non-glorified profiles of the “founding fathers” of the European Union, such as Jean Monnet, Robert Schumann, and Henri Spaak. A rather extensive amount of space is dedicated to Jean Monnet and his footprints in

the process of forming and leading the movement supporting the integration of European states. Booker and North try to introduce the reader with an earthbound evaluation of their contribution to the project. They also dedicate a large amount of their attention to the backstage negotiations. The first part of the book is, thus, rather enriching for every reader, who has a good background in EU history and always suspected the authors of leaving some important facts out.

The remaining chapters that describe the history of European integration and the path to the Constitutional treaty are the backbone for Booker and North's argument that the entire project has had a hidden agenda kept secret from their public. Many of the presented views are based on detailed research and open new areas of discussion on the development of European integration. Nonetheless, the selective approach greatly damages the final impression from the book. First of all, the authors concentrate solely on the UK. There are many common traits among the member states but their experience also differs. Booker and North neglect other countries unless they are somehow related to the issues of British membership. A well-balanced evaluation of the British experience would be valuable once the title is changed so that the reader would know what the content of the book is. However, the book does not present an objective view of the 33 years of British membership either. The authors focus on the negative implications for the UK and their arguments are often quite populist. For example, they argue that the regional policy originally provided small amounts of financial resources for the UK. That is true but denies the fact the European Regional and Development Fund was founded in 1975 in response to British membership and was aimed at targeting specific problems of British regional development. Another example is their claim that the tax system the European Community introduced in 1967 was the most bureaucratic in the world. The EU tax system applies to only select elements of the national tax systems, those that are directly related to the correct function of the single market (customs union in 1967). Consequently, it is an overstatement – to say the least – to make such claim (without stating that Mister Booker and North are unlikely to have knowledge of all tax systems in the world). Such unfortunate statements give the reader the feeling that it should be read with caution and as an expression of one view on European integration rather than a well-balanced academic source.

The lack of objectiveness unfortunately lowers the quality of the book, whose scope is remarkable. Going into so much detail results not only in slowly boring the reader who might then skip over some of the important parts of the chapters, but the text often lacks analysis and becomes rather descriptive. Given the amount of work the authors spent conducting research for this work, a more analytical approach would be expected if not only the general but also the academic public was the targeted audience.

The language and structure of the book are very lucid and comprehensible for the wide public but it is also suitable for the academic community as it brings many new views. The authors made use of many disclosed materials that were not available earlier and help to modify and contribute to our knowledge of the EU. However, we have to keep in mind the eurosceptic

background of the authors, which becomes obvious in the language used, for instance The Milan pitfall (*milánská léčka*, page 255), or the French cheerfully announced that they would once more violate the budget rules in 2005 (“[...] *IFrancouzil* vesele oznámili, že v roce 2005 rozpočtová pravidla opět poruší”).

There are some factual mistakes too. For example, the authors claim that Poland, Hungary and Romania belonged to the inter-war period democracies, which is a very simplified view. They state that thousands died in the 1956 Hungarian uprising (page 111) while the death toll was never officially set and ranges from 120 to 2700. The authors also say that the population of Turkey is 90 million (page 504), which is rather exaggerated given its 70 million. The book also suffers from the above-mentioned one-sided arguments that highlight the negative sides of integration, while ignoring the positive effects of EU membership, including the UK.

The Czech edition has a foreword written by Hynek Fajmon, Czech Member of the European Parliament for the Civic Democratic Party. Apart from short references to the book, he attempts to characterise the Czech path to the EU. Apart from criticising the conditions for Czech farmers under the Common agricultural policy, and the 2002–2006 coalition governments of social democrats, Christian democrats and liberals, Mr Fajmon says that the media and other important social actors created a situation where every decent person must support Czech entry into the EU. Such claim can sound rather confusing when applied to a country as the Czech Republic that has one of the highest rates of euroscepticism among all EU member states. Mr. Fajmon also argues that the EU reminds us of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* where all animals are equal but some are more equal than others. However, any standard textbook of European integration would show that the new member states have always had a somewhat different status than the incumbent states. Thus, such things should not be neglected if we want to give the general public a well-balanced information about the EU. It is true that the Czechs have not been granted access to most of the old member states' labour markets. However, will the Czech public not demand the same for Turkey once it enters the EU? Will Mr. Fajmon then argue that such a step would be discriminatory and oppose it?

The more than 600 pages of the book present the reader with an informative text. Both europhiles and eurosceptics, the general and academic public will find it useful and relevant. The thorough research, documented with a large amount of quotes, lucid language, and an excellent translation make it worth reading. On the other hand, the reader should keep in mind that the authors are often very populist and the book lacks objectivism. It is not surprising that it is praised by eurosceptics in Europe as the most significant book ever written on the European Union. For these reasons I recommend to read the book if the reader wants to learn how eurosceptics view European integration but not if he/she is looking for an objective informative source.

Lucie Tunkrová

Hanns W. Maull:
***Germany's Uncertain Power: Foreign Policy
of the Berlin Republic***

New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 288 pages, ISBN: 1-4039-4662-0.

In the last few years there has been much talk about Germany's "emancipation" within the state system and the "normalisation" of its defence and security policy. In the aftermath of German reunification hysteria surfaced, that Germany might once again become a problem, and fears were spelled out that the country would aim to dominate Europe, resulting in a German Europe rather than a European Germany. None of these fears have been substantiated, however, particularly during the tenure of chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, political commentators have observed an increasingly self-assured position of Germany within international affairs, many seeing a departure from Germany's "civilian power" status. The fundamental principles of this status have been a pronounced preference for an institutionalised cooperation in multilateral fora ("reflexive multilateralism"), and a deep scepticism about the appropriateness and usefulness of military force ("culture of restraint"). Since the Second World War Germany adopted and internalised a self-reflective critical stance of never allowing itself to pursue a *German Sonderweg* with narrowly defined self-interests. Since then German foreign policy has been firmly embedded within the transatlantic and European institutional architecture with the goal of preventing any such path. Continuity has been the *Leitmotif* of German foreign policy for over 60 years.

"*Germany's uncertain power. Foreign policy of the Berlin republic*" is a recent publication, which has been edited by Hanns W. Maull, professor of Foreign Policy and International Relations at the University of Trier, Germany. He has published extensively on German foreign policy, comparative foreign policy analysis, and issues of East Asian and international security. The book is structured in five parts, each one containing a series of political case studies, which document the evolution and standing of German Foreign Policy in key foreign policy areas since the mid-1990's. Emphasis is placed on the period of the red-green government from 1998 to 2005. The chapters are written by a wide range of German and international authors, all who are renowned experts in the field of German foreign policy. The basic question that the book sets out to ask is whether German policy has changed, i.e. if it has left its orientation of a civilian power, and if so, to what extent has it departed from these parameters. This is the basic framework of analysis each author applies in the respective foreign policy field he investigates. The authors come to the conclusion that noteworthy changes have taken place, however, they still see these changes below the threshold of fundamental change. The tenor is that Germany has been too slow in adapting its civilian power position to a fundamentally

changing global environment, and thus is beginning to lose influence due to this lack of foreign policy purpose.

The introduction, written by Hanns W. Maull, starts with the premise “that German Foreign Policy has undergone subtle but important mutations, some of which seem to go against the grain of the country’s traditional foreign policy orientation as a civilian power (p. 5). Part I of the book sets out to describe the political culture and polity of the country and how they reflect the country’s historical experience and legitimise German foreign policy. It describes the domestic and European sources of German Foreign Policy, which have a strong normative character. The contribution by August Pradetto mentions the judicial governing of foreign policy, which has undergone a series of revisions since 1994, after Germany first took on more robust peacekeeping and enforcing missions under the UN and NATO. In order for Germany to contribute to increasing international commitments of NATO or the UN, the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) has tended to enhance the executive’s decision-making power, giving legitimacy to out-of-area missions. The FCC stated that the deployment of the Bundeswehr in peacekeeping operations was permissible within the framework of systems of collective security, as long as such systems were strictly bound to the preservation of peace.

Part II takes a look at Germany’s security and defence policy, the sector of German Foreign Policy, which has seen the most visible changes with the geographic extension of German security [Struck doctrine], the participation of German armed forces in various NATO out-of-area-missions, and reform efforts to transform the Bundeswehr from a training to a deployment army. Marco Overhaus in his contribution argues that Germany’s civilian power status has come under pressure from several sides: domestically, the author speaks of the hijacking of foreign and security policy in an election campaign and asks whether this subordination to national interests is a trend or if it was just a one-off incident. He also puts forward the generational change of German leaders, who are more pragmatic and less inhibited to dissociate themselves with traditional allies such as the US. Externally, the departure of what Ikenberry calls “liberal hegemony”, has caused a great deal of change to the once so stable transatlantic relationship. Overhaus puts forward the significance of Germany giving up its long-held equidistance towards Paris and Washington, in favour of the former, and its traditional role as a champion of the smaller EU member states. By outlining a more noticeable German position in international affairs, Germany weakened its influence in multilateral structures. The one-sided stance on Iraq has considerably hurt the country’s influence in the CFSP and especially the axis Berlin-Paris-Moscow scared the smaller eastern European member states. Overhaus concludes that since the mid 90’s Germany has lost its enthusiasm for multilateral institutions.

The chapter by Harald Mueller deals with Germany and the proliferation of WMD. He detects that throughout the nineties Germany’s policy in this area was consistent with the criteria of a civilian power. Although he sees a collision of multilateralism and pacifism during the 2002 election campaign which tipped the balance towards pacifism but was soon after

restored. He sees continuity not revolution at work when he views Germany's non-proliferation policy. Martin Wagener looks at the "normalisation" of the security policy dimension. He notes that during the Kohl-era Germany "never assumed responsibility for any supreme command or any multinational contingent" (p. 87). Under Schroeder Germany has contributed much more intensively to international military operations than in the Kohl-era, making Germany one of the biggest troop providers for international operations. Towards the end he assesses that the future of the armed forces deployment will be influenced by the fiscal restraints and the global role that Germany wants to play in multilateral operations. Wagener accentuates that Germany still lacks a coherent national security strategy, and that German national interest is defined in a more general manner and often consists of a nebulous concept of responsibility, or out of the aim to please international partners or domestic political factions (p. 90).

Part III deals with Germany's two core bilateral relations with France and the United States, both of which are an integral part of the EU and NATO respectively. The first contribution by Harnisch and Schieder highlight that "Germany's European Policy has changed considerably, both in terms of process and substance" (p. 96). The authors speak of a "contingent German Europeanism" as the country's new strategy, combining pro-integrationist positions (for example in European foreign and defence policy), with a clearer "delineation of competencies between the European Union, Germany at the federal level, and the Laender" (p. 97). Due to Germany's stagnating economy the country is less able and willing to be the paymaster of Europe, which has led to Germany not being able to fulfil its EU obligations, as the non-compliance with the Stability and Growth Pact demonstrates. In chapter 7, Hans Stark deals with the Franco-German relationship during the tenure of the red-green government. The chapter nicely illustrates how the relationship between Schroeder and Chirac stands for the Franco-German relationship as a whole: that close, confidential and fruitful Franco-German relations are not self-evident, and that the relationship between France and Germany experience all possible ups and downs. The first years actually seeing one of the biggest crises within the Franco-German relations, with French and German disagreement over EU reform, and in 2002/2003 seeing an unprecedented Franco-German harmony in the run-up to the Iraq war.

In chapter 8 and 9, by Stephn Szabo and Peter Rudolf respectively, each author takes a view on the transatlantic relationship from his side of the Atlantic. Chapter 9 is interesting in that, towards the end, it opens up a discussion about the motives of Schroeder's opposition towards the Iraq war. Contrary to Hanns W. Maull (and major opinion), Rudolf does not see a "clear turning away" ["eindeutige Abkehr"] from the role conception of a civilian power. Quite convincingly, he argues that Germany's behaviour was not a dramatic change in German Foreign Policy away from multilateralism and international organisations, but instead he states that "never before had a German government faced the question of whether to actively take part in a war deemed wrong and not in Germany's vital interests just for the sake

of demonstrating its multilateral orientation... One has to keep in mind that it was all too clear that the question was not to enforce UN resolutions by force, but to overthrow a regime and to occupy a country" (p. 145). So rather than seeing a fundamental shift in Schroeder's stance, Rudolf sees the major shift in the US foreign policy towards unilateralism, which was incompatible with the principles of a civilian power like Germany.

Chapters in Part IV includes Germany's standing in the international financial order, German trade policy, environmental policy, and German energy and security policy. Germany has been one of the greatest proponents of universal environmental regimes, taking on a leadership role in global environmental policy. The green party certainly underpinned and strengthened this position. The chapter on energy security demonstrates how this issue is gaining priority in foreign policy, moving from a low to a high foreign policy issue. In this regard Germany faces the same challenges as other European countries. The author takes on a critical view as he highlights the failure of German and European energy policies to integrate energy, environmental, and security objectives. Part V focuses, amongst others, on the German-Israeli relationship and the red-green government's policy towards Pacific-Asia. The latter chapter signals the increasing *Oekonomisierung* (economic emphasis) of German foreign policy towards Asia, especially with regards to China, where the author Jörn Carsten Gottwald detects a Germany that is behaving like a trading, rather than a civilian, power. In the case of China economic interests seem to have relegated human-rights and democratic deficits to a subordinated role. The chapter on Germany and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict underscores that German foreign policies towards the Middle-East only partially meet the requirements of a civilian power, due to the absence of well-established institutions and the power-oriented US policy in the region. The chapter also puts forward the power of norms in foreign policy, as Germany, shaped by the Holocaust, feels strongly committed to ensuring the survival of the Jewish state.

All in all the book delivers a comprehensive picture of the evolution of German foreign policy since the mid-1990's. It is very readable, and offers the reader different perspectives on where German foreign policy could head, with the wide range of authors ensuring that the views are not too one-sided. What is clearly missing is a chapter on Germany's *Ostpolitik*. A chapter on this dimension of German Foreign Policy is something one would expect of such a book, as the foreign policy towards its eastern neighbours has always been an important and integral part of Germany. Maybe the reason is, that under Schroeder, relations with the central and eastern European neighbours were widely neglected, instead Schroeder decided to forge a buddy-relationship with Putin. The book also doesn't shed much light on Schroeder's bid for a German seat on the UN security council, where Germany without its traditional allies forged alliances with other like-minded nations like Japan, displaying a clear national interest on a bilateral basis. In my view the book also could have committed more detail to Germany's participation in the Kosovo crisis, and the ensuing fierce debate this operation sparked in the German polity and public, as that event marked

a clear turning point in Germany's foreign policy as it was the first time since the Second World War that Germany actively took part in combat operations.

Daniel Adolf

Andrey Zagorskiy:
***Helsinki Process (Negotiations within the Conference
 on Security and Cooperation in Europe 1972–1991)***

Moscow: Publishing House PRAVA TCHELOVEKA, 2005, 447 pages, ISBN: 5-7712-0285-1.

There are hundreds and thousands of different publications on various aspects of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), and the actions of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) since 1975. But most authors express their understanding of this conference or organization from a Western point of view, often ignoring the prevailing Soviet or Russian views, and vice versa.

The most valuable characteristic of this book is its objective analysis of the CSCE's development and activities, which skilfully avoids any tendency to side with either camp. This is undoubtedly due to the author's career and experience in the political world. The biggest handicap of the book is that it is written and published in Russian, although one can expect an English version to be published – and the sooner the better.

The author, Andrey Vladimirovitch Zagorskiy, is well known within the CSCE/OSCE community, and his work has been highly regarded for decades. He has published more than 200 works on European security, post-Soviet studies, arms control and Soviet/Russian foreign policy. In comparison with Soviet and later Russian propagandists, Zagorskiy has always tried to see the world objectively, through academic eyes. This once more applies perfectly to this latest release. While living in Russia, Zagorskiy has always maintained close working contacts with his Western colleagues. This helps him to keep a rational approach in his writings, and allows him to go further under the surface of public declarations made by both sides in the cold war, and even beyond that time.

A. Y. Zagorskiy was engaged as Deputy Director of the Moscow Office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation from 2000 to 2005, and between 2002 and 2003 he also acted as Deputy Director of the Institute of International Studies in Moscow. In 2002, he was appointed visiting professor at the Geneva-based Centre for Security Policy, and between 2000 and 2001, he was senior Vice-President and Director of the East-West Security Studies Institute, Prague. From 1992 to 1999 he was Vice-Rector at the Moscow Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). During the 1980s and early 1990s, Zagorskiy participated in many CSCE sessions as an expert for the various Soviet delegations.

This latest book covers the first two decades of the CSCE's existence, including the preparatory phase that led to the Helsinki Summit in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The first chapter deals with the political and diplomatic preparations for the Conference, mainly in 1972 and 1973. The second chapter focuses on the formulation of the Helsinki Final Act between 1973 and 1975. It offers an evaluation of this historical document, which not

only prevailed in the West and the East at that time, but also as it appears today, under the light of the experience we have gained since.

The third chapter examines the formation of the CSCE's infrastructure as discussed at the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting, 1977–1978, and at several specialized expert meetings between 1978–1980 (e.g. the Meeting on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes in Montreux, the Meeting of Experts on the Mediterranean dimension in la Valetta, and the Scientific Forum that convened in Bonn and Hamburg). The Madrid Follow-up Meeting (1980–1983) is a particular focal point, and in spite of the overall success of these particular negotiations in Madrid and of the other meetings at expert level, the author closes this chapter by summarising this period of the CSCE's history as "The CSCE crisis".

The fourth chapter is called "The Way Out of a Blind Alley", and deals with the Stockholm conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures in Europe, which convened between 1984 and 1986. It also covers the Vienna Follow-up Meeting between 1986 and 1989. The author examines the second part of the eighties as a whole, under the title "1989: The Period of Uncertainty".

The fifth chapter first describes and evaluates the time period entitled "From Process to Institutions", specifically depicting the CSCE's institutionalisation process and the formulation of the "Paris Charter for a New Europe", signed in 1990. The last part of this chapter calls 1991 "The Last Year of the 'Old' CSCE". As an appendix, there is a very useful quick reference guide giving the dates of all of the CSCE's official meetings and conferences between 1972 and 1991.

The book does not offer a general bibliography on the CSCE/OSCE, but following each of the 24 parts that form the five above-mentioned chapters, and after the preface and final conclusions, references to hundreds of documents, literature and explanatory texts are available. No significant author writing on the CSCE/OSCE goes without quote or mention in this book. Such references are testament to the author's extensive studies and use of a tremendous number of official and informal CSCE/OSCE documents, primarily deposited at the Prague Office of the OSCE Secretariat. He also refers to and quotes numerous Western, Soviet, and Russian publicists and other secondary sources.

It is a great pity that this book does not continue beyond the nineties. Of course, a book about the first two decades of the CSCE is undoubtedly interesting for a lot of OSCE/CSCE fans, in addition to enthusiastic historians. But those readers who would be disappointed to find nothing about the Organization's later developments will be grateful that the author has included many comments on what happened in CSCE/OSCE later, after 1991 and up until the first years of the 21st century, in the preface and final chapter. I would expect all readers of this book to be looking forward to Zagorskiy's detailed picture of the next chapters of CSCE/OSCE's history.

The language, or more accurately the verbal precision, used in this book differs significantly from that mostly used by the Western media. The author sticks to the official names of countries and institutions he refers to. For him, the Soviet Union is simply the Soviet Union and not an evil empire or a

Bolshevik state. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe are not called Communist, but are referred to as members of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, or as WTO countries. Of course, for the sake of style, shorter terms like Warsaw pact or Eastern block are used occasionally, but generally the author evades the offensive terms and propagandistic slogans used in some pamphlets. The author also faithfully reproduces all the official titles of all organs, such as the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the WTO, or the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, etc.

Not only those who consider the CSCE/OSCE an important part of the European security architecture but also those who would dissolve it because they consider it impotent, will be fascinated by the reasons the author reveals behind the astonishing reality of the CSCE's/OSCE's survival of the political earthquake in 1989/1990. An institution founded to establish rules of coexistence between two blocks not only failed to disappear, but on the contrary grew tremendously and took upon itself new tasks under totally different circumstances.

While following the analysis of the course of CSCE meetings and conferences, the reader encounters specific examples of proposals made by both Western and Eastern parties. The author reveals the merits of those proposals worthy of attention, be they made by the Western, Eastern or Neutral and Non-Aligned (N+N) countries. It should be mentioned that the author is right to pay tribute to certain neutral countries that played an extremely important role at all CSCE meetings during the cold war, especially Finland and Yugoslavia, in their efforts to reach consensus on the most controversial issues, difficult problems and/or formulations. In a number of specific examples the author also illustrates that the Warsaw Treaty countries were not as monolithic as is generally assumed. Romania, for example, almost always adopted its own position on all important issues. Though Western propaganda praised Ceaucescu as a hero on a majority of issues, he was more dogmatic than the Soviets, especially during the Gorbachov period.

Zagorskiy comprehensively examines every important CSCE meeting of the 1970s and 1980s, giving each its proper place in the rich history of the Helsinki process. He is full of praise for those contributing to the historic breakthrough of the CSCE Final Act in 1975, but also depicts the difficulties of overcoming the great differences between participants and of reaching agreements in the follow-up meetings that became real milestones along the road linking the divided continent. Zagorskiy pays special attention to the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting in 1977–1978 – often labelled as unfruitful. But he rightly considers it important, as it actually began “the formation of the infrastructure of the Helsinki process in the form of regular substantive meetings of representatives of participating states”.¹ The Belgrade meeting was also the beginning of the “balanced progress” concept, and of the “asymmetric deals between East and West” in which the East would compromise on the human dimension in return for Western concessions in the political, security and economic baskets.

Supporting his work with a great number of factual examples, the author describes how the Madrid Follow-up Meeting (1980–1983) played a very

special role in the development of the Helsinki process. This meeting was the first undoubtedly successful meeting since the Helsinki Summit, with a consensus reached on a set of balanced final documents. The biggest achievement of these negotiations was, of course, the formulation of the mandate for the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures.

The pages in which the author destroys myths and takes apart clichés and stereotypes about the CSCE/OSCE are highly interesting and essential. Zagorskiy reminds us that right after the signing ceremony of the Final Act, conservatives in Western Europe and especially in America accused Western leaders of betraying the East European nations by selling them off to Brezhnev. Later on, another one-sided assessment appeared, arguing that the Eastern concessions made in the human dimension were in fact the substance of the Helsinki process. Incidentally, the Helsinki Decalogue's seventh principle on human rights was not initiated by the Americans, but after its adoption the Carter administration and later American governments used it as an effective weapon in their foreign policy. Today it is generally accepted that the human rights instrument contributed to the downfall of Communism, but before 1989 there were many disputes among politicians and observers on both sides about the tangible results of Western pressure on human rights, and whether it helped liberalise any given regime or only hardened its repression.

Andrey Zagorskiy stresses that the two decades of the Helsinki process enhanced the practice of international relations by creating a unique mechanism for monitoring the implementation of decisions and obligations reached by consensus in all three OSCE dimensions. The CSCE/OSCE also broke new grounds and gave priceless experience in multilateral negotiations. The most effective method for reaching a balanced compromise was the strategy of linking different issues and preparing so-called package solutions. Among them, the best known is a key compromise worked into the Final Act on the "frontiers for human rights".

There is little to disagree with Zagorskiy on as far the pre-1991 period is concerned. The only small problem I have with some of his conclusions is his description of the present situation: "Today's OSCE has appeared on the periphery of basic political processes in Europe. Since the end of the nineties it has more often played the role of a mere subcontractor fulfilling tasks decided by other organisations, especially the UN."² In a world where the UN's leading role is often questioned in words and even in deeds, I see this as more an advantage than a disadvantage. I hasten to add, however, that immediately after these words, the author continued: "This does not mean that the present inheritor of the tradition of the Helsinki process has become a useless organisation."

The OSCE has not exhausted its potential yet did not become an organisation making key political decisions or determining the basic trends of European development. It is one of many European organisations, which has its strong and weak sides, its comparative advantages as well as shortcomings. Today's OSCE is not the old CSCE with a new name, but an absolutely different organisation fulfilling new tasks in circumstances which

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have changed radically. It is now set in tough competition with other European organisations in the security field. I would not myself use such strong words, but the fact is that in 1990 many European politicians (including Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Václav Havel and Jiří Dienstbier) foresaw a far greater role for the CSCE in the European security architecture. There are many reasons why this did not happen, but one is certainly the adoption of many of the CSCE's original tasks by NATO. Some critics of this development even say that NATO has become "an OSCE with teeth".

Zdeněk Matějka

ENDNOTES

¹ Andrey Zagorskiy (2005), *Helsinki Process*. Moscow, p. 140.

² *Ibid.*, p. 428.

***Jan Zielonka:
Europe as Empire. The Nature of the Enlarged
European Union***

1st edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, 293 pages, ISBN: 0-19-929221-3.

Whilst heralding the birth of a misty neo-medieval behemoth, Jan Zielonka has invited a nascent Westphalian superstate to its own funeral. The Oxford professor's latest work stages a last battle between the notion of the European Union as an emerging Westphalian state and its challenger, Zielonka's concept of a neo-medieval European empire. However, Zielonka hardly conceals his determination to toss the former on the pyre and dissolve what he perceives as its hegemony in the field of European Studies. The book offers a comprehensive theory, which claims to explain European economic and political integration, as well as European Foreign Policy.

In the introductory chapter Zielonka develops his idea of a neo-medieval European Union, marked by little similarity with the states that emerged in Europe after the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. According to him, the typical Westphalian state was characterised by hard outer borders, a central authority, a roughly homogeneous cultural identity and coinciding administrative, economic and military regimes. In addition, such states could in theory rely on sovereignty as the governing principle in international politics. Zielonka claims that the academic field of European integration has become dominated by the paradigm of such a budding Westphalian superstate, despite the fact that there is little evidence for such an emergence.

In stark contrast, the author's neo-medieval paradigm holds that the European Union may best be characterised by four opposite key features. Firstly, the Union's borders are fuzzy. It is increasingly difficult to distinguish members from non-members and borders are often of a temporary nature. Secondly, power and authority are not concentrated, but unevenly distributed throughout the continent and organised in concentric circles. The European Union's governance is multi-layered and made up of quasi-feudal relationships between agents, which poses obstacles to a clear Westphalian chain of command. Thirdly, the European Union is not in the process of developing a clear cultural identity and will in the future remain heterogeneous. Finally, the European Union's Member States do not only engage in each other's domestic affairs, but are also willing to interfere with the EU's neighbours, thus somewhat antiquating the concept of sovereignty. However revolutionary and non-conventional the notion of a neo-medieval empire might appear, it must be stressed that it is not entirely novel.¹ Yet, over the last few years, the name Zielonka has become attached to the concept, due to his attempts to transform the concept into an all-embracing theory.

The author's first three chapters, which form the informal part one of the book, deal with the EU's enlargement into East Central Europe, whereby he

examines the initial disparities between old and new members, the interests behind the accession and the adjustment process between the EU-15 and the East Central European countries. This first part enables Zielonka to strengthen his neo-medieval concept. It is in his sharp analysis of the EU's eastern enlargement, labelled an "impressive exercise in empire building",² that the author displays his intention to depart from the dominant discourse. Hidden behind the official rhetoric of enlargement he identifies an often badly coordinated attempt by the Union's old members to fill a power vacuum, to conquer new markets and secure stability in their Eastern neighbourhood. Furthermore, he points out that the losers of the enlargement process in both new and old Member States were "often appeased if not bribed".³ Significantly, Zielonka argues that the accession of the East Central European states has substantially increased the Union's diversity, which, as the author reveals, is treated with suspicion in the academic field of European Studies. By means of a comparative examination of economic and good governance indicators, Zielonka convincingly argues that a clear and lasting East-West divide after the 2004 enlargement, which is regarded by many as paralysing, cannot be detected, despite the overall increase of heterogeneity.⁴ Instead, this amplified diversity, Zielonka observes, fosters the development towards a neo-medieval empire and renders the European Union incapable of transforming into a Westphalian superstate.

In the three subsequent chapters, the informal second part of the book, Zielonka tests and traces his neo-medieval concept. The author discusses his concept's applicability in three areas; the economic sphere, the field of democratic governance, and the area of European Foreign Policy. In this second part, the Zielonka's initial analytical sharpness wanes and the link between the evidence and his notion of a neo-medieval empire becomes somewhat artificial. It is for instance unclear and therefore unconvincing that the Lisbon agenda, increased internal liberalisation and privatisation are inherently neo-medieval responses to global economic pressures. After all, this would assign a Westphalian state like the United States a leading-role in the spread of global neo-medievalism. Although Zielonka states that his neo-medievalism is more of an abstract concept than an historical comparison, the reader might ask why Zielonka does not use established concepts instead of referring to the rather misleading notion of a "neo-medieval model of democratic governance", which is merely synonymous with a flexible multilevel and polycentric system of governance in which majoritarian bodies dominate only on the national level.⁵

In his chapter on European Foreign Policy the concept is able to regain some of its strength; nowhere else is the Union less Westphalian than in this area. Instead of enjoying coherence in decision-making and possessing a foreign minister, a secret service or a nuclear arsenal, Brussels' foreign policy is characterised by a multiplicity of actors, the absence of hard power tools, multiple loyalty and overlapping authority, which can be observed in the varying membership of NATO, Schengen or the European Monetary Union. Towards the end of the book Zielonka draws an interesting comparison between the current role of the United States as a "European power *sui generis*"⁶ and the position of the Vatican in the Middle Ages.

According to Zielonka, the struggle for cultural superiority and power between Church and Empire in medieval Europe is analogous to the competition between the United States and the European Union in contemporary Europe.

Concerning Zielonka's key concept of fuzzy borders, it must however be pointed out that especially the EU's southern border might not be as blurry as Zielonka claims it to be, given the fact that the northern costal line of the *mare nostrum* increasingly resembles a fortification against political and economic asylum seekers. Moreover, whilst in the South East and to the East the Union is at least rhetorically upholding the chance of accession, enlargement to Northern Africa and the Middle East has been ruled out. Even though the author explicitly rejects a normative view of his concept and its future implications, his preference for the neo-medieval solution is hard to miss. Moreover, his work provides academic legitimisation for the current shape of the European Union and will be welcomed by those who propagate both further economic liberalisation and a weak political Union.

Furthermore, Zielonka's analysis fundamentally lacks a comparison to traditional empires, which for instance are also characterised by fuzzy borders.⁷ This comparison, for which the word "empire" in the author's concept calls, would show the limitations of the neo-medieval paradigm, as can be demonstrated by three examples. Firstly, the author neglects the creation of an educated quasi-imperial elite. Through financial incentives, education and propaganda the European Union and especially the European Commission have helped to install an elite in Brussels and other European capitals that will defend the existing power structures and render the absence of a common popular identity insignificant. It is this economic and political elite that will continue to spur integration by stealth, the only possibility of avoiding the failure of European prestige projects like the European Defence Community or the Constitutional Treaty, as Zielonka rightly observes. Secondly, Zielonka has either failed to grasp or deliberately downplayed the militarisation of the European Union and thus the possible shift from "soft imperialism"⁸ to hard imperialism. Despite the new military structures' apparent lack of autonomy from NATO and the United States, the Union as an economic block is acquiring a tool that potentially enables it to install and stabilise regimes and ensure access to both markets and resources. Thirdly, he overlooks that the European Union, like traditional empires, but unlike Westphalian states is in the process of acquiring an "imperial mission".⁹ The ideas of Robert Cooper that have shaped the European Security Strategy could serve as a basis for such an ideological mission, which would provide it with further internal and external legitimacy.¹⁰

Despite its shortcomings, Zielonka's "Europe as Empire" is a must for students, scholars and policy-makers in the European arena who have observed a painful divergence between well-established conceptualisations of the European Union and their own perception of and experience with the enlarged European leviathan. The neo-medieval notion's all-encompassing nature, its applicability to both the debates on European integration theory and on European Foreign Policy and its unconventional approach to the latest enlargement, make it an exceptional contribution to the existing body

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of literature. It is, however, a book which despite its seemingly radical name remains embedded within the mainstream discourse on the European Union.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Hedley Bull was amongst those who sparked off the debate about a return to medievalism in the late 1970s – Bull, Hedley (2002), *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics*. 3rd edition Columbia University Press.

² Zielonka, Jan (2006), *Europe as Empire. The Nature of the Enlarged European Union*. 1st edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 44.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁴ Zielonka claims that the diversity does not follow the old East-West border. In terms of economic performance and good governance, Zielonka observes a decline towards both the East and the South of the Union, although he also explains that there are many exceptions to this pattern.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁷ Although some striking parallels exist between the EU and other empires, the idea of the European Union as a nascent empire has remained largely outside the mainstream discourse with few exceptions. See for instance: Münkler, Herfried (2005), *Imperien. Die Logik der Weltherrschaft*. Bonn: Lizenzausgabe für die Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung; Ferguson, Neill (2004), *Colossus. The rise and fall of the American empire*. London: Penguin Books. Whilst Münkler claims that Europe is an emerging empire though at the same time part of an American empire, Ferguson dismisses the chances that Europe is turning into an empire.

⁸ Hettne and Soederbaum define “soft imperialism” as soft power applied in a hard way. Currently, this soft imperialism acts as the Union’s last resort to coerce other actors in the international arena. Hettne, Bjoern and Soederbaum, Fredrik (2005), *Civilian Power or Soft Imperialism. The EU as a Global Actor and the Role of Interregionalism*. European Foreign Affairs Review 10. Kluwer Law International.

⁹ Münkler, 2005, p. 132.

¹⁰ Cooper, Robert (2004), *The breaking of nations. Order and chaos in the twenty-first century*. 1st edition. London: Atlantic Books.

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Articles, chapters and internet sources:

Author's name, title of article or chapter within single inverted commas with principal words capitalised, title of journal or book in italics, volume number, issue number, place of publication if in a book, page reference:

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