

28 Summer 2007

Perspectives

*The
Central European
Review of
International
Affairs*

Figuring Out Europe: EU Metaphors
in the Minds of Czech Civil Servants

The Perils of Performance:
Legitimization in EU Foreign Policy

Moving Politics Beyond the State:
The Hungarian Minority in Slovakia

Delegation in EU Humanitarian
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The Bosnian Peace Process:
The Power-Sharing Approach Revisited



INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PRAGUE

Perspectives
The Central European Review of International Affairs

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Tel.: 00 420 / 251 108 101 (P. Kratochvíl), 00 420 / 251 108 124 (J. Karlas).

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Subscriptions: US\$ 50, p. a.

Single Issues: US\$ 30.

Send orders to the Administrative Office.

Printed by: Petr Dvořák – Tiskárna

ISSN 1210-762X

ČÍSLO REGISTRACE MK ČR 6554

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Figuring Out Europe: EU Metaphors in the Minds of Czech Civil Servants

PETR DRULÁK AND LUCIE KÖNIGOVÁ

Abstract: This article presents the results of a metaphor-oriented research programme studying civil servants' conceptions of the European Union (EU). It reveals the metaphoricality of apparently neutral terms used when describing Europe and shows how the metaphors we use influence our understanding and expectations. Three conceptual metaphors – container, equilibrium and motion – are defined as modes of thinking about the EU's institutional governance. Czech civil servants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government Office seem to understand the EU as either a series of intergovernmental bargains (i.e. an equilibrium) or as continuously transforming (i.e. a motion). The preferences of officials for one metaphor over another depends on their agendas: Czech Foreign Ministry officials involved with Community and intergovernmental issues tend to use the motion metaphor, while Government officials responsible for intergovernmental issues prefer the equilibrium metaphor. Yet there is a general tendency for all civil servants to portray the EU as a rule-based integration project.

Key words: Czech civil service, Europeanisation, institutional governance, intergovernmental integration, metaphors, supranational model

INTRODUCTION

The nexus between the European Union (EU) and the national civil service has been a fruitful area of research in recent years. The study of the civil servants' conceptions¹ of European integration is of particular interest in this respect (Egeberg 1996, 1998, 1999, 2005; Egeberg, Saetren 1999; Egeberg, Schaefer, Trondal 2003; Trondal 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c; Lippert, Umbach, Wessels 2001; Peters, Pierre 2001; Drulák, Česal, Hampel 2003, Featherstone, Radaelli 2003; Lippert, Umbach 2005; Beyers 2005; Flockhart 2005). Providing insights into their inter-subjective worlds, these studies point to ideational frameworks within which national civil servants' daily practices are embedded. Moreover, they also show how these practices may impact their conceptions of Europe.

There are various ways of conceptualising the civil servants' images of Europe. These mostly rely on the well-established dichotomy between supranational and intergovernmental Europe², outlining two possible conceptions of European institutional governance. However, to do justice to the specific complexities of European integration, some studies attempt to transcend this dichotomy by introducing a third conception of Europe – neither supranational nor intergovernmental.³ This article draws on the latter

approach by using the three concepts of Europe and examining their respective influence in two key institutions of the Czech government.

In contrast to the usual conceptions of Europe, we define three models of European institutional governance metaphorically using these conceptual metaphors: CONTAINER, EQUILIBRIUM and MOTION.⁴ While the analyses of metaphors in the discourse on European integration have gained some attention in European studies (Drulák 2004, 2006; Musolff 2001; Hülse 2003; Luoma-aho 2004), research on the EU metaphors used by civil servants could be rewarding and has yet to be undertaken.

Metaphor-oriented research can be rewarding in several respects. To start with, it reveals the metaphoricity of apparently neutral terms that are used when describing Europe, and it shows how these metaphors influence thinking about Europe. Moreover, metaphors provide useful connections between very different discourses that rely on similar conceptual metaphors. Not only can they link separate areas of research, such as EU institutional reform and the Europeanisation of national administrations, but they can also connect scholarly discussions and political or popular discourse. Furthermore, metaphorical analyses can help identify new conceptions of Europe which have not been assumed by analysts but are relevant for actors. Finally, since it is difficult to lie about metaphors (Hülse 2003), since they reflect our internalised beliefs. If people are asked to use metaphors rather than standard terminology when assessing the EU, they are likely to reveal what they really think.

Our argument starts with a theoretical backdrop to clarify the concept of metaphor, to explain the choice of the three metaphors used and to contextualise these concepts within the literature on Europeanisation. Following this introduction, the research design is sketched out to develop the three issues the paper raises: the significance of pre-established metaphors, the weight of administrative experience and the presence of new metaphors. The analysis of each of these brings about new empirical insights.

To start with, Czech civil servants live in a conceptual world within which the EU is pictured mainly in terms of EQUILIBRIUM and also, to a significant extent, in terms of MOTION. However, the significance of each of these two metaphors depends on the administrative experience of their users. While officials from the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs tend to use MOTION, Government Office officials clearly prefer EQUILIBRIUM. Moreover, where civil servants have more frequent contacts with the EU, the difference between the two institutions is sharper. Finally, we find that apart from MOTION, EQUILIBRIUM and CONTAINER, the civil servants' metaphorical preference also hints at another conceptual metaphor: the EU as a RULE (Sylvan, Voss 1998).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Our concepts rely on three bodies of literature: the wide literature on applied metaphor research (Ortony 1993; Cameron, Low 1999; Gentner, Wolff 2000; Lakoff, Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1993), the literature on metaphors in politics (Beer, de Landtsheer 2004; Chilton 1996a; Chilton 1996b;

Chilton, Ilyin 1993; Chilton, Lakoff 1995; Milliken 1996; Schöffner 1995), especially in European politics (Drulák 2004, 2006; Musolff 2001; Hülse 2003; Luoma-aho 2004), and research on the Europeanisation of civil servants (Egeberg 1996, 1998, 1999, 2005; Egeberg, Saetren 1999; Egeberg, Schaefer, Trondal 2003; Trondal 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c; Lippert, Umbach, Wessels 2001; Peters, Pierre 2001; Drulák, Česal, Hampl 2003, Featherstone, Radaelli 2003; Lippert, Umbach 2005; Beyers 2005, Lewis 2005).

Our conceptualisation of metaphors draws on Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who argue that metaphors are not a dispensable ornament of language, but that they are at the very heart of our thinking and speaking. In general, metaphors help us see something in terms of something else, which is indispensable for the organisation of our experience. In this respect, it is important to distinguish *conceptual metaphors* from *metaphorical expressions*.

A *conceptual metaphor*, for example STATES ARE PERSONS, is an abstract rule or mapping that connects two distinct “conceptual domains” (Lakoff 1993: 208): the source domain, such as PERSONS, and the target domain, in this case STATES. Thus the conceptual metaphor applies what we know about one area of experience (the source) to another (the target). It is independent of any specific statement found in language. As Lakoff (*ibid.*) observes, the conceptual metaphor is a matter of “thought and reason”, while “the language is secondary.”

On the other hand, a *metaphorical expression* is a specific statement that draws upon a general conceptual metaphor (Lakoff 1993: 209). While conceptual metaphors connect conceptual areas, metaphorical expressions provide the bridges between the sources and targets of these conceptual areas. For example, the statements “France decided to go to war” and “Germany is our ally” are two different metaphorical expressions, but both draw upon the same conceptual metaphor: STATES ARE PERSONS.

While conceptual metaphors draw upon an organising principle of experience, which informs our understanding of the world, metaphorical expressions, which rely on a particular conceptual metaphor, are found in discourse. This distinction makes it possible to analyse and connect the two levels: that of abstract models and that of particular statements. On the basis of these statements we can identify conceptual models whose analysis reveals the speaker’s conception of the given topic.

When examining a topic, several conceptual metaphors can usually be found connecting the topic’s target domain with several possible source domains. However, each source domain reveals some features of the target domain while hiding others, thus making some comprehensible and others confusing. For example, Gentner and Wolff (2000: 318–319) notice two conceptual metaphors of electricity: ELECTRICITY IS A WATER FLOW, and ELECTRICITY IS A MOVING CROWD. Each relies on several metaphorical expressions connecting one of the two source domains with the target domain of electricity. Hence, if electricity is water, then “wires are pipes, batteries are reservoirs, current is flowing water, voltage is pressure, and resistors are narrow constrictions in pipes.” Similarly, if electricity is a

moving crowd, then “wires are paths, current is a number of entities that pass a point per unit time, voltage is how forcefully they push each other along, and resistors are narrow gates.” (ibid)

As expected, some electrical phenomena are easier to grasp by using the water metaphor while others are better explained by the crowd metaphor. For example, batteries are easy to comprehend in terms of water reservoirs but are not as comprehensible when they are connected with the crowd metaphor. In contrast, the water metaphor is poor at comprehending resistance, which is nicely captured by gates through which a crowd moves. These differences have been confirmed experimentally when people were asked to solve electric circuit problems. A Subject using the water metaphor “performed better on battery problems than on resistor problems” (ibid. 319) while the opposite was true with subjects using the crowd metaphor. Interestingly, when researchers tried to enrich some subjects’ stock of metaphors, by introducing the water metaphor to those who used the crowd metaphor and vice versa, these subjects performed worse than those sticking to their original metaphors. This suggests that conceptual metaphors guarantee consistency and that changes in the metaphorical stock, enriching though they may be, can bring about short-term costs by destabilising a consistent framework of understanding.

While electricity metaphors highlight some features and darken others, metaphors of Europe do the same with respect to European integration (Drulák 2004; Musolff 2001; Hulsse 2003; Luoma-aho 2004). Drawing on a previous study (Drulák 2004), we argue that three conceptual metaphors of the EU have turned out to be especially powerful: THE EU IS A CONTAINER, THE EU IS EQUILIBRIUM and THE EU IS MOTION. These three conceptual metaphors account for most of the metaphorical expressions used in the theoretical discourse about the EU as well as most of those used in the debate on the EU’s basic set-up. Therefore, even though alternative sets of conceptual metaphors for the EU are possible (Musolff 2001), these three conceptual metaphors are general enough to cover most of these alternatives, and their previous operationalisation and methodological development (Drulák 2006) fit into our current research concerns.

These metaphors embed three radically different discourses and visions of European integration. To start with, the CONTAINER metaphor implies a state-like entity clearly differentiated from the outside world, within which it can be a strong actor promoting its own interests. In contrast, the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor sees the EU as consisting of several containers (its members), which try to accommodate their conflicting interests in mutual trade-offs. The EU’s own interests are therefore rather vague, reflecting the lowest common denominator, and the internal accommodation of particular interests is the most important game in town. Finally, the MOTION metaphor captures the unceasing transformation of European integration while countering attempts at its delineation by traditional categories such as borders or the division of competencies. The dynamics

between these concepts are frequently expressed by an oxymoron: the EU is a federation of sovereign states.

So what is revealed and what is hidden by these metaphors? The CONTAINER metaphor serves well when dealing with the EU's external actions or with deeply integrated policy areas like monetary policy. The EQUILIBRIUM metaphor is useful for understanding intergovernmental conferences and weakly integrated areas, and the MOTION metaphor helps us address the fluidity of the EU's borders, the lack of clarity as to its ultimate form and the quasi-permanent institutional change.

We claim that civil servants embracing a certain metaphor are better prepared to understand and practice policies consistent with that metaphor and are likely to perceive other policies as less natural or less logical. We draw upon the basic insights of Europeanisation literature and contend that the study of the intersubjective world of national civil servants (based on interviews with them) matters if we want to understand how the Europeanisation of national administrations actually works (Egeberg 1996, 1998, 1999, 2005; Egeberg, Saetren 1999; Egeberg, Schaefer, Trondal 2003; Trondal 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c; Peters, Pierre 2001; Drulák, Česal, Hampl 2003; Featherstone, Radaelli 2003; Lippert, Umbach 2005). Moreover, as the conceptions of Europe held by civil servants develop with respect to their institutional affiliation, experience and contacts with the EU (Egeberg 1999, 2005; Featherstone, Radaelli 2003; Drulák, Česal, Hampl 2003; Hooghe 2001), we look at the connection between civil servants' administrative experience and their usage of metaphors about Europe.

Our distinction between the three metaphors for the EU held by civil servants is somewhat similar to the distinction between their national, supranational and functional identities (Egeberg 1999: 457–458). National identities make people identify themselves as representatives of nation states, which is consistent with the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor. Supranational identities make them feel that they belong to a single European whole, which is consistent with the CONTAINER metaphor. Functional identities, however, are those of neutral experts beyond the dichotomy of national and supranational. While functional identities that define the main fault-lines irrespective of national boundaries can be consistent with the CONTAINER metaphor, they may also agree with the MOTION metaphor. Indeed, the MOTION metaphor reflects the functionalist view of integration as an open-ended process that also provides the conceptual background to the idea of functional identities (Egeberg 1999: 471). In this respect, the MOTION metaphor transcends the dichotomy between Europe as a CONTAINER and Europe as an EQUILIBRIUM of containers, similar to the way functional identities transcend the dichotomy of supranational and national identities.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Interviews with Czech civil servants help us to provide partial answers to the following questions: What is the relative significance of the MOTION, CONTAINER and EQUILIBRIUM metaphors for Czech civil servants? And

how does their administrative experience impact upon that significance? Finally, what other metaphors for the EU do Czech civil servants use?

To start with, we assume that the significance of a metaphor in the discourse can be measured by its frequency (Cortazzi, Jin 1999). The more frequently civil servants use a conceptual metaphor, the more significant it is for their understanding and practice. To estimate the frequency, conceptual metaphors must first be associated with metaphorical expressions. It is on the basis of these metaphorical expressions that the significance of the given conceptual metaphors is assessed.

Thus, each of the three conceptual metaphors is operationalised in a series of metaphorical expressions related to sports, the arts and nature to bring about a detachment from the usual EU terminology, although a caveat is needed here since civil servants might automatically and/or thoughtlessly emulate the discourse of their peers and use EU clichés rather than constructions that express their deeply-ingrained beliefs. In the domain of sports, civil servants were offered the following metaphorical expressions: *biker* (MOTION), *team captain* (CONTAINER) and *referee* (EQUILIBRIUM). *Biker* is a common metaphor of motion associated with the EU (either it moves or it falls), the metaphor of *team captain* implies that the EU is a single team with a clear hierarchy and the metaphor of *referee* depicts the EU as divided among several players who compete against one another. The realm of nature provided us with the following metaphorical expressions: *stream* and *river* (MOTION), *pressure* and *pond* (CONTAINER), and *vibration* and *system of lakes* (EQUILIBRIUM). Streams and rivers evoke movement and are widely used as metaphors for the phenomena of change; a pond differs from a river by its clear borders and its tranquillity, and pressure comes into being only in closed containers. Objects vibrate around an equilibrium state, and equilibrium is also needed in a system of interconnected lakes. The world of arts inspired us to create the following metaphors: *movie* (MOTION), *statue* (CONTAINER) and *collection of pictures* (EQUILIBRIUM). Movies are cultural artefacts associated with movement; a statute implies a single, delimited entity, and a collection of pictures steers one's attention to the diversity of its parts.

Interviewees were then asked to choose one metaphorical expression out of the set of three (each standing for a different conceptual metaphor), which they believed would best capture the essence of the EU. We prepared six sets of metaphorical expressions like those above to guarantee robust results. Moreover, the list of questions also included three multiple-choice questions, which elaborated the possible implications of the conceptual metaphor.⁵ In total, each civil servant made nine choices, each revealing her metaphorical preferences between MOTION, EQUILIBRIUM and CONTAINER.

The frequency of the metaphors is calculated in the answers to these questions. Depending on the unit of analysis, this frequency can be counted in two different ways depending on the unit of analysis: either the metaphorical expression or the interviewee. The metaphorical expression coincides with an option in each multiple-choice question. In this respect, nine choices yield nine units of analysis that may be summarised across all

of the interviews. However, the nine choices of each interviewee can be aggregated and treated as an autonomous unit of analysis as well. At the level of the interviewee, each conceptual metaphor is characterised by the frequency with which it is used by the interviewee, as either *dominant* (more than half), *important* (less than half but more than a third) or *used* (less than a third but more than a tenth) or *absent* (less than a tenth). On this basis, the number of interviewees using the given conceptual metaphors as a dominant (or important) metaphor is a key variable in capturing the significance of the metaphor.

The unit of metaphorical expression offers a valuable insight into the frequency distribution of the conceptual metaphors, and thus into their respective significance. However, on the level of the interviewee, on which our investigation focuses, it provides a more refined perspective. Not only does it tell us how significant each conceptual metaphor is, with respect to the given individual, but it also reveals how consistent the individual is with respect to the given conceptual metaphor, as it implies that the interviewee uses two or more metaphors with comparable frequency. In this respect, the absence of a dominant metaphor signals a lack of consistency. Moreover, at the individual level the contextual differences in which the metaphorical expressions are found (open questions, multiple-choice questions, speech, article, etc.) are accounted for. Although this is not very important for this study, which deals with metaphorical expressions identified in the same context (the multiple-choice questions posed to representatives of the same institution within one month), it is relevant when comparing the output of this research to other studies.

Having established the relative significance of conceptual metaphors with regard to civil servants as a whole, we can see if their administrative experience affects their use of metaphors. In this respect, the set of investigated civil servants can be divided into several sub-sets, each representing a different administrative experience. If the same conceptual metaphors have widely different significances for the different sub-sets, then we argue that there is a link between administrative experience and the perception of the world as conceptualised by metaphors.

Three proxies for administrative experience are used: the length of the individual's civil service, the frequency of contact with the EU and the quality of those contacts. While the former two criteria are easy to operationalise⁶ and have proven to be important in the Czech civil service by a previous study (Drulák, Česal, Hampl 2003), the last criterion was less clear. We assessed the quality of contacts by examining civil servants from two different institutions: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Government Office (GO). Putting aside the differences of their internal workings and their relative positions in the Czech administration, each institution also reflects a different part of the EU's agenda. While the MFA deals with a broad range of issues, the investigated branch of the GO, headed by the Deputy Prime Minister for Economy, focuses on the Lisbon agenda and other intergovernmental initiatives.

Finally, in addition to assessing the significance of pre-established metaphors, our method identifies new metaphors, which may be important

from the actor's perspective. Civil servants are asked to suggest metaphors that they personally see as relevant. However, to ensure that they actually use metaphors, rather than abstract arguments or Euro-speak, they are asked to explain the EU to a ten-year old child. In the second step, civil servants are asked to summarise the EU in a word or phrase that a ten-year old would understand. Thus, each interview yields one metaphorical expression referring to the source of the metaphor (the EU) as embraced by the interviewee. Our investigation focuses on the extent to which these metaphors relate to the three pre-established conceptual metaphors while looking for any new conceptual metaphors which would complement the original three.

What answers can we expect to the three questions raised here? Two groups of hypotheses can be raised on the basis of the previous research. First, the three conceptual metaphors are unlikely to be equally distributed throughout the discourse (Drulák 2004). European leaders who have participated in the debate about the future of Europe used the three metaphors in the following descending order of frequency: MOTION, CONTAINER and EQUILIBRIUM. However, when we focused only on the leaders of the new EU member states, the ranking changed: MOTION, EQUILIBRIUM and CONTAINER. Therefore, Czech civil servants are expected to use the MOTION metaphor the most and the CONTAINER metaphor the least.

Second, administrative experience is also likely to matter. A previous study of Czech civil servants suggests that civil servants dealing with the EU have better knowledge of the EU and are quite supportive of integration, albeit without being too enthusiastic about it (Drulák, Česal, Hampl 2003). On this basis, one can expect civil servants in contact with the EU to embrace the MOTION metaphor more frequently.

There are two reasons for this: first, MOTION is less obvious than CONTAINER or EQUILIBRIUM because it requires a deeper understanding of the EU and captures the transformative nature of European integration better; and second, MOTION can be seen as an alternative path between the eurosceptic (EQUILIBRIUM) and the euro-enthusiastic (CONTAINER) conceptual metaphors. However, this can differ according to institutional affiliation, as the GO officials primarily dealing with the intergovernmental agenda may prefer the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor. Therefore, one can also expect more experienced civil servants to use metaphors more consistently. Given that consistency can be measured by the presence of dominant metaphors, more experienced and knowledgeable interviewees should use more dominant metaphors.

Despite the potential of this approach to yield new insights, it has yet to be tested, and so several caveats are in order. First, there is no completely objective way of forming abstract conceptual metaphors into specific metaphorical expressions. To guarantee that the metaphorical expressions in the questionnaire are understood as intended, they were tested on a group of our students. Second, the sample of civil servants is quite small, and has been selected to represent the qualities important for our research. Hence, the use of inferential statistical methods is problematic, and the results rely

on descriptive statistics, undermining their value to make generalisations. In this respect, our research is situated in the grey area between quantitative and qualitative methodology.

Finally, even though our approach is synchronic, dynamics in the cognitive world of civil servants and causal relations are hypothesised and tested, such as the connection between civil servants' administrative experience and their use of metaphors. In this respect, we partly rely on the causal patterns recognized in Europeanisation literature and present our results as preliminary contributions to this literature. However, our approach is based on an ontological assumption that the metaphors, which are part of the cognitive world of civil servants, and their administrative practices are mutually constitutive.

DATA AND RESULTS

The results confirm our hypotheses, as described in the previous section, only to a limited extent. As expected, the CONTAINER metaphor is the least significant, but the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor, contrary to our expectations, is more significant than MOTION for Czech civil servants. When asked to identify metaphors of the EU themselves, the Czech civil servants chose metaphorical expressions referring to the normative features of the EU, which we summarised with a new conceptual metaphor: the EU as a RULE.

As expected, Czech civil servants differ in their perception of the EU according to the frequency of their contacts with the EU and their domestic institutional affiliation. EQUILIBRIUM is much more important than MOTION for Government Office staff, while both metaphors are equally significant for Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials. Also, as expected, civil servants in contact with the EU embrace the MOTION metaphor more frequently and use metaphors more consistently. Surprisingly, however, the same applies for the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor. Contrary to our expectations, the length of administrative experience played no significant role in dividing the civil servants according to the metaphors they used, nor did their positions within the institution reveal a relevant fault-line.

The data (Table 1) was collected during forty interviews with officials of the MFA and the GO (conducted in April and November 2005). We approached forty civil servants from different MFA and GO departments (twenty from each) with the intent to interview roughly equal numbers of senior officials and junior staff and equal numbers of civil servants who are frequently in touch with the EU and those who are not. The administrative background is reflected in the first two columns of the table. The third column contains the metaphors interviewees created themselves, answering an open question. It also includes our suggestions of the metaphors, out of the three conceptual ones, that seem the closest to their answers (the letters in the brackets). Columns four through twelve contain the metaphorical expressions officials used when answering the multiple-choice questions. Finally, the three last columns represent the interviewee units and show how frequently each metaphor is used with respect to the interviewee.

Table 1 – Summary of Findings

<i>Administrative Experience</i>		<i>Metaphorical Expression as a Unit</i>		<i>Interviewee as a Unit</i>		
<i>Institutional Affiliation</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Metaphors of EU Given by Civil Servants</i>	<i>Answers to Multiple Choice Questions</i>	<i>Contai-ner</i>	<i>Equi-lib-rium</i>	<i>Motion</i>
MFA	0	playground (e)	e e e c m e m m c	u	i	i
MFA	0	future (m)	m m c m e m m e e	u	i	d
MFA	0	team (e)	e m c m m e m e m	u	i	d
MFA	1	peace (m)	m e m m m m e e m	a	i	d
MFA	0	class (e)	c c e c e e e c c	d	i	a
MFA	0	Kindergarten (e)	m c e c e e m e c	i	i	u
MFA	1	cooperation (m)	c m m m m e m e e	u	i	d
MFA	0	class (e)	m e e c m e m e c	u	i	i
MFA	0	family (e)	e e c c e e m c c	i	i	u
MFA	1	home (e)	c m c m m e m e e	u	i	i
MFA	0	football team (e)	m m e e e m m e c	u	i	i
MFA	1	house (c)	c c e m e e m e c	i	i	u
MFA	0	little shop (c)	c c e c c e m c c	d	u	u
MFA	0	Construction kit (m)	c c e m m e e e c	i	i	u
MFA	1	family (e)	e e e m e e e e c	u	d	u
MFA	1	group of school teachers (2 nd part is US) (e)	c m e m c m m e m	u	u	d
MFA	1	scout group (e)	e c c e m e m e c	i	i	u
MFA	1	children’s game (e)	m m e e e e m e c	u	d	i
MFA	0	playground without fences (e)	c c c c c m m e m	d	u	i
MFA	1	house under construction (m)	e m c m m m m e c	u	u	d
GO	1	football team (e)	e c e c e e e e m	u	d	d
GO	0	fair (e)	c m e m m c m e m	u	u	d
GO	1	zoo (e)	e c m m e m m m c	u	u	d
GO	0	board game (e)	c e e m e e e e c	u	d	u
GO	0	football team w/o captain (m)	m c e c e e m c c	i	i	u
GO	1	bunch of friends (e)	e c e c e e m e e	i	d	u
GO	0	anthill (e)	c c e e m e m e c	i	i	u
GO	0	diversity (e)	e c c e e c m c e	i	i	u
GO	1	group of friends (e)	m c e c m e m e m	u	i	i
GO	1	garden (c)	c e m m m m e m e	u	i	d
GO	0	house (c)	c c c m m m m e c	i	u	u
GO	0	coherence/cooperation (e)	c c c c e e e c e	d	i	a
GO	1	orchestra (e)	e c c e e e m e e	u	d	u
GO	1	trickle of water (m)	e c c m e e c e c	i	i	u
GO	1	block of flats (c)	c c c c m m m e e	i	u	i
GO	1	bread with butter (c)	c e m e e e m e c	u	d	u
GO	0	future/prosperity (m)	c m c m e e m e e	u	i	i
GO	0	ship with diverse crew (e)	m m c m m e c e e	u	i	i
GO	1	friendship and support (e)	c e e m e e e c m	u	d	u
GO	0	representatives of our interests (c)	c c c e e e m e c	i	i	u

Notes:

Affiliation: MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs; GO – Government Office

Contact: 1 = Officials with daily contact with the EU business and in a monthly/more frequent personal or phone contact with EU institutions; 0 = Other Officials

Metaphorical Expressions: e = equilibrium; c = container; m = motion

Prevalence of metaphors: d = dominant (>50%); i = important (33–50%); u = used (10–33%); a = absent (< 10%)

General features

The data show that our initial expectation underestimated the significance of EQUILIBRIUM while overestimating the significance of MOTION. The sample of Czech civil servants uses the three metaphors in the following descending order of frequency: EQUILIBRIUM, MOTION and CONTAINER. At the level of expression (which is not reflected in our tables for reasons of space), EQUILIBRIUM is by far the most frequently used (41%) while MOTION and CONTAINER are referred to with comparable frequency (31% and 28% respectively). However, these results need slight qualification when the interviewee level is taken into account (Table 2). MOTION and EQUILIBRIUM are roughly comparable as dominant metaphors (22.5% and 20%), while CONTAINER trails behind. But when the categories of dominant and important are merged, EQUILIBRIUM is once again clearly favoured. In addition, once the MOTION metaphor has been used for the first time, it is used with more consistency (measured by the number of dominant metaphors) than EQUILIBRIUM or CONTAINER, confirming the expected link between MOTION and knowledge of the EU.

Table 2 – All civil servants interviewed (n=40), individual level

	<i>Container (%)</i>	<i>Equilibrium (%)</i>	<i>Motion (%)</i>
Dominant	10.00	20.00	22.50
Important	32.50	60.00	25.00
Used	55.00	20.00	47.50
Absent	2.50	0.00	5.00

The dominance of EQUILIBRIUM can also be observed in the series of metaphorical expressions proffered by civil servants when asked for their own metaphors. However, many of these are consistent with another conceptual metaphor – the EU as a RULE. Each of these metaphorical expressions (Table 1, column 3) is coded by one of the three conceptual metaphors (the letters in parentheses).⁷ The coding reveals that the officials used EQUILIBRIUM most frequently (62,5%), while MOTION (20%) and CONTAINER (17,5%) lagged behind. Most of these metaphorical expressions are easy to associate with the three conceptual metaphors. For example, the metaphorical expressions of *family, class, kindergarten, fair or football team* are typical elements of the EQUILIBRIUM set. Similarly, metaphorical expressions like *house, garden and little shop* belong to the CONTAINER metaphor set, while the *house under construction, and trickle of water* are examples of MOTION. They tend to be rather conventional, with only a few exceptions (*e.g. a little shop or playground without fences*).

However, some metaphors used by civil servants do not immediately fit into any of the three sets (e.g. peace, construction kit, bread and butter or cooperation). Some of these are rather abstract, going against the very nature of a metaphor, connecting a tangible source domain and an abstract target domain, and we must look deeper for the chief characteristics of these expressions so as to be able to categorise them. Also, there is a remarkable prevalence of team sport metaphors from the EQUILIBRIUM group. Perhaps even more significant, however, is the presence of a “rule” (or norms) element in most of the metaphors given by the civil servants. Most of these expressions imply frequent interaction, and their very essence is rules or rule-guided behaviour (e.g. *playground, team, class, kindergarten, cooperation, family, football team, home, construction kit, scout group, children’s game, zoo, orchestra, ship with a crew, anthill*).

In this respect, many of the metaphorical expressions suggested by the interviewees can be said to be consistent with a new conceptual metaphor: the EU IS A RULE. Not only does this account for metaphorical expressions that are difficult to associate with any of the three conceptual metaphors, but it also covers most of the remaining metaphorical expressions that cut across the metaphorical boundaries established by MOTION, CONTAINER and EQUILIBRIUM, and reveals a rule-focused element to the civil servants’ vocabulary.

Administrative fault lines

As expected, the civil servants differ according to their administrative experience. Both the quality and quantity of contacts matter. Concerning the quality of contacts, assessed by institutional affiliation, our preliminary expectation has been confirmed. EQUILIBRIUM is much more important than MOTION for GO officials, while both metaphors are used with the same significance by MFA officials. At the expression level (which is not reflected in our tables out for reasons of space), GO officials clearly prefer EQUILIBRIUM to MOTION (43% to 27%), while MFA officials use both metaphors with almost comparable frequency (EQUILIBRIUM 39%, MOTION 34%). The differences between MFA officials and GO officials are even more pronounced at the interviewee level (Tables 3 and 4). MOTION is the dominant metaphor of MFA officials (Table 3), yet EQUILIBRIUM prevails when the categories of dominant and important are merged. In contrast, EQUILIBRIUM is clearly the most significant metaphor for GO officials (Table 4).

Table 3 – Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) officials (n=20), individual level

	<i>Container (%)</i>	<i>Equilibrium (%)</i>	<i>Motion (%)</i>
Dominant	15.00	10.00	30.00
Important	25.00	70.00	30.00
Used	55.00	20.00	35.00
Absent	5.00	0.00	5.00

Table 4 – Government Office (GO) Officials (n=20), individual level

	<i>Container (%)</i>	<i>Equilibrium (%)</i>	<i>Motion (%)</i>
Dominant	5.00	30.00	15.00
Important	40.00	50.00	20.00
Used	55.00	20.00	60.00
Absent	0.00	0.00	5.00

The frequency of contacts with the EU also matters, even though our expectation that civil servants in greater contact with the EU would embrace the MOTION metaphor more frequently was confirmed to a smaller extent. First, civil servants lacking everyday contact with EU institutions (Table 5) are less consistent about the EU than those who deal with the EU frequently (Table 6). Thus, the former use dominant metaphors much less than the latter.

Also, as expected, civil servants in touch with the EU embrace the MOTION metaphor more frequently. In this respect, MOTION prevails as both the dominant metaphor (32% in Table 6 to 14% in Table 5) and the combined dominant and important metaphor (53% in Table 6 to 43% in Table 5). However, the same argument can be made with respect to EQUILIBRIUM, where the difference between the civil servants in touch with the EU and those who are not is even sharper; only 5% of the latter (Table 5) use it as a dominant metaphor, while 37% of the former do so (Table 6). Moreover, a steep decline in the use of the CONTAINER metaphor can be observed among officials with frequent contact, since none of them used it as a dominant metaphor and only a quarter of them as an important metaphor (Table 6). This nicely contrasts with the fifth of those who were not in regular contact with the EU, using CONTAINER as a dominant metaphor, and almost two fifths who used it as an important metaphor (Table 5). Thus, learning about the EU through daily contact with Brussels seems to bring about the following dynamics: officials are losing their original beliefs that the EU has CONTAINER-like qualities, and are instead adopting either the EQUILIBRIUM or MOTION conceptualisation.

Table 5 – Officials with occasional contact with the EU (n=21), individual level

	<i>Container (%)</i>	<i>Equilibrium (%)</i>	<i>Motion (%)</i>
Dominant	19.05	4.76	14.29
Important	38.10	76.19	28.57
Used	42.86	19.05	47.62
Absent	0.00	0.00	9.52

Table 6 – Officials with frequent contact with the EU (n=19), individual level

	<i>Container (%)</i>	<i>Equilibrium (%)</i>	<i>Motion (%)</i>
Dominant	0.00	36.84	31.58
Important	26.32	42.11	21.05
Used	68.42	21.05	47.37
Absent	5.26	0.00	0.00

The prevalence of either EQUILIBRIUM or MOTION is associated with civil servants' domestic institutional affiliation: MFA officials are more likely to use MOTION while GO officials prefer EQUILIBRIUM. Table 7 summarises how the two fault lines (institutional affiliation and frequency of contacts) impact metaphor usage. Each of the four sub-sets of civil servants is characterised by two metaphors, which appeared as dominant metaphors, the respective frequencies being stated in parentheses. However, the frequency of important metaphors had to be taken into account in the case of GO officials whose contact with the EU was rare, since both EQUILIBRIUM and CONTAINER were used as dominant metaphors by one tenth of these officials.

Table 7 – The distribution of dominant metaphors

	<i>Occasional contacts with the EU</i>	<i>Frequent contacts with the EU</i>
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	CONTAINER (27%) MOTION (18%) N=11	MOTION (44%) EQUILIBRIUM (22%) N=9
Government Office	EQUILIBRIUM (10% or 70%) CONTAINER (10% or 50%) N=10	EQUILIBRIUM (50%) MOTION (20%) N=10

The differences in the use of dominant metaphors are quite sharp between the four sub-sets. Whereas the metaphor use of MFA officials whose contact with the EU was rare oscillates between CONTAINER and MOTION with a clear preference for CONTAINER, their counterparts in the GO tend to choose between EQUILIBRIUM and CONTAINER, emphasising EQUILIBRIUM. In addition, GO officials who have less contact with the EU are less consistent in their use of metaphors (10% for each metaphor) than MFA officials with little contact with the EU (27% and 18%).

The consistency of officials who regularly deal with the EU is much higher, and there is no substantive difference between MFA officials and GO officials in this respect (44% and 22% vs. 50% and 20%). They are also similar because both groups use MOTION and EQUILIBRIUM, yet they differ clearly in their choices between the two. While the MFA officials with frequent contact with the EU rely on MOTION, GO officials frequently in contact with the EU use EQUILIBRIUM to a much larger extent than their GO peers who do not deal with the EU frequently (50% to 10%).

Implications

What do these results tell us about Czech civil servants? To start with, in line with the MOTION metaphor, many see the EU as the embodiment of a permanent transformation with only a few fixed points. This concept is common sense among old EU members (Drulák 2004). However, the intergovernmental perspective of the EU, epitomised by the EQUILIBRIUM metaphor, is more deeply rooted than expected.

This may be linked to two issues. First, due to the lack of other (more convincing) evidence, expectations have been formed in a different context – on the basis of official speeches made by leaders of the EU candidate

countries before the EU accession. The expectations did not take into account the domestic Czech debate about European integration, which is highly divisive, and they might have been based on the strategic discourse, whose goal was to convince the EU about enlargement rather than to reflect openly on the EU.

Second, the EU has many faces, depending on the issue area. These faces range from a highly integrated entity (e.g. the Common Agricultural Policy, the common currency and the common trade policy) to a loose group of states (e.g. foreign policy, education and the Lisbon agenda). Thus, the answers of civil servants mirrored the aspect of the EU with which they deal rather than a synthetic general image of the EU as such, as may have been the case with political leaders. In this respect, it comes as no major surprise that officials at the GO, who deal with that part of the agenda almost exclusively in the hands of national governments, see the EU as a series of intergovernmental bargains. On the other hand, MFA officials, who deal with both the communitarian face of the EU (its common policies) and its intergovernmental side (Common Foreign and Security Policy), tend towards a mixture of the intergovernmental perspectives and the received wisdom about permanent transformation.

The agenda's influence on the cognitive world of administrative elites is also evident from the effects of frequent contact with the EU, which reinforces civil servants' conceptions of the EU. On this basis, we can say that civil servants rationally adjust their cognitive world, as reflected by their metaphors of the EU, to their administrative practice.

Nevertheless, only one dimension of this practice matters. Contrary to our expectations, neither the position in the administration nor the length of administrative experience had any impact on the conceptions of Europe. This may be due to the Czech institutions' state of flux, which lacks strong socialising mechanisms as compared to intensive exposure to the EU agenda (Drulák, Königová, 2005). However, such socialising mechanisms may still be present, although they do not particularly shape civil servants' subjective conceptions of the EU.

Remarkably, civil servants tend to avoid vocabulary that gives the EU state-like qualities: the CONTAINER metaphor clearly fares worst. This can be construed as a lukewarm attitude towards the federalisation of Europe. On the other hand, closer examination also shows that officials with more experience with the EU (also being quite consistent in their views) avoid this vocabulary the most. This implies that the more people learn about the EU, the less they believe it can be compared to a state or any other CONTAINER-like entity. Moreover, those who switch from CONTAINER to MOTION, rather than EQUILIBRIUM (like the MFA officials), are likely to support deeper integration, since this does not militate against the MOTION metaphor.

Finally, as their own metaphors have suggested, the civil servants strongly believe that the EU is a normative community whose influence and shaping power, exercised on both the inside and the outside, is primarily rule-based and rule-focused. This is connected with the very nature of the accession process within which the EU has emphasised the fulfilment of clearly set

conditions. In addition, this belief reflects widespread hopes and expectations that EU membership is a guarantee of “the rule of law and administrative efficiency” – as opposed to a somewhat bleaker transitional reality – which had been present in the Czech discussions about the benefits of membership.

CONCLUSIONS

The growing community of European integration analysts argue that metaphors matter. They have shown how the metaphors people use when speaking about the EU shape their understanding and expectations. This article demonstrates how the perspective of metaphors provides us with analytical tools that help us to better understand the cognitive world of those responsible for the day-to-day administrative implementation of EU policies.

The empirical results of our research, as presented above, allow for several tentative conclusions. Civil servants from two Czech Government institutions that are critical of the implementation of EU policies see the EU as either a series of intergovernmental bargains or as a steady transformation. The third concept, the EU as a state-like entity, is also used quite frequently yet haphazardly. Although these two concepts are not necessarily contradictory, each captures a very different part of the EU’s reality. The more civil servants deal with the EU, the more strongly they cultivate these two concepts. The presence of two significant images rather than one is presumably due to different EU agendas that the officials deal with. While MFA officials are involved in both common and intergovernmental policies, GO employees are exclusively responsible for intergovernmental policies. In addition, Czech officials tend to emphasise the rule-based nature of European integration, based on their experience of accession and expectations of membership.

Given the caveats, the external validity of these conclusions should not be overestimated, nor should it be discarded. The sample is not big enough regarding the Czech civil service as such, but it is significant with regards to the two institutions and the Czech EU agenda. In addition, the conclusions confirm, to some extent, the results of previous studies. Finally, the new insights that have been generated present well-founded hypotheses for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Kenneth Hanf along with the participants of the Oslo CONNEX Network of Excellence workshop, held on the 27th and 28th of May 2005, for their most helpful comments on an earlier version of this article. They are also grateful to Vít Štřítecký for his help with data collection and processing and to Richard Phillips for his critical reading of the draft version of this text.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ We use the concept of image as a general term encompassing opinions, administrative identities, attitudes, etc., as they represent the subjective and cognitive worlds of civil servants with respect to the EU, which are the centre of our focus.
- ² The magisterial study of European civil servants by Liesbet Hooghe is the best example (Hooghe 2001).
- ³ Morten Egeberg's distinction between the national, supranational and functional identities of national civil servants is a nice example (Egeberg 1999: 457–458).
- ⁴ From here on, we will use capital letters when referring to conceptual metaphors. Statements referring only to metaphors in general, without any adjectives, apply to both conceptual metaphors and metaphorical expressions. For explanation see the “Theoretical Background” section.
- ⁵ For example, we asked the interviewees what the major feature of the EU *is at the moment*, in their opinion, letting them choose from three options: (a) building a single space within the borders of the Union; (b) maintaining the equilibrium and arriving at compromises among various actors; and (c) on-going internal change. Later in the questionnaire, the same options are given, only this time asking the respondents to indicate what the “signature process” of the Union *should be in the future*. Similarly, we are asking what the EU of today needs: (a) to step up the integration pace in a number of areas; (b) to formulate its interests clearly; and (c) to strike a new deal among key actors.
- ⁶ The length of civil service is measured by the number of years spent at the ministry while the quantity of contacts is measured by the frequency of personal and e-mail contacts with Brussels. Both variables are then further dichotomised as we distinguish between short experience and long experience, and between occasional contacts and frequent contacts.
- ⁷ The coding was done not only on the basis of the metaphorical expressions listed out in Table 1 but also in view of the reasoning given for this particular word/phrase by the individual MFA and GO officials.

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The Perils of Performance: EU Foreign Policy and the Problem of Legitimization

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Abstract: This article argues that an important feature of contemporary EU foreign policy is the problem of legitimization. The article develops an account of EU foreign policy, from EPC in the 1970s to CFSP and the ESDP today, focusing on its function as a source of “damage limitation”. The article then goes on to look at the emergence of pan-European legitimizing strategies for EU foreign policy, concentrating on the EU’s “performance legitimacy”. The article identifies a disjuncture between the emphasis on the *external effectiveness* of EU foreign policy found in this legitimizing strategy and the *internal functionality* of EU foreign policy encapsulated in “damage limitation”. The article finds that relations between EU member states continue to trump their collective endeavour to act in the world. The article concludes that the limit of what the EU is able to achieve in international affairs should be located in the political sociology of the EU itself. Legitimacy provides a useful conceptual prism through which these internal limits and external actions can be connected.

Key words: EU foreign policy, European Political Cooperation (EPC), Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), legitimacy, identity, integration

INTRODUCTION

This article explores the evolution of the European Union’s (EU) foreign policy, from its origins in European Political Cooperation (EPC) in the 1970s to its expansion in the 1990s into the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The article analyses the changing role of legitimacy in the development of EU foreign policy. It is not seeking to provide an account of *how* and *why* EU foreign policy evolved from its origins in EPC to the wider role provided by CFSP and ESDP. This would require a sustained engagement with both geopolitical and institutional dynamics of Europe, and such “theories” of EU foreign policy have been debated at some length by others.¹ Instead, this article aims to uncover, at least in part, the evolving and as yet rather embryonic role that legitimacy plays in EU foreign policy. This role refers to the manner in which EU foreign policy is justified to its own architects in Brussels and in national capitals, to the domestic populations and to the wider world. It refers also to the *content* of these justifications.² The article aims to build upon existing work on the normative foundations of European integration. It draws in particular on work that has uncovered the assumptions about democracy and legitimacy that theories of European

integration have been based on.³ The article pursues this same path, but focuses on EU foreign policy specifically. The article draws attention above all to what it identifies as a major disjuncture in the evolution of EU foreign policy. We see on the one hand an expanding *pan-European* set of legitimizing claims: from the superior *performance* of the EU to its distinctively *ethical* approach to international affairs. On the other hand, we observe in the political sociology of EU foreign policy a set of predominantly *national* dynamics and concerns, formulated in this article as the enduring “damage limitation” function of foreign policy cooperation. This disjuncture between the scope of the legitimizing claims and the degree of integration undertaken in foreign policy is becoming increasingly evident as attention is turned to the EU’s international role and its legitimizing claims are being tested in the crucible of international affairs.

Conjoining the term legitimacy with both the EU and foreign policy may appear quixotic: the EU is beset with a series of legitimacy problems that go under the title “democratic deficit”, and foreign policy is traditionally a prerogative power of the executive, thus limiting its need for legitimacy.⁴ In fact, there are at least two good reasons why the concept of legitimacy is a useful prism through which we can analyse EU foreign policy. Firstly, this article follows David Beetham and others in supposing that legitimacy is not merely the “icing on the cake of power”. Rather, it is the yeast, which is a core ingredient that enables the cake to rise in the first place.⁵ It follows that legitimacy is not just an afterthought, i.e. what is used in order to mask the naked exercise of power. Instead, what an actor is able *to do* in the world depends in part upon its ability to legitimize its actions. Any expansion in the foreign policy of the EU thus poses the question of its legitimacy. This connection between agency and legitimate political power points to another valuable contribution of the concept of legitimacy: it draws together the study of EU foreign policy with that of European integration.⁶ It is in the nature of legitimizing practices that they depend upon the political sociology of the actor in question: democratic states legitimize their actions in different ways from autocratic states, and international institutions draw upon sources of legitimacy distinct from those of nation-states.⁷ An underlying assumption of this article is that the development and scope of the EU’s foreign policy is connected to the social and political foundations of the EU. More specifically, we can understand the contemporary evolution of pan-European legitimizing narratives of EU foreign policy through an analysis of the changing dynamics of national foreign policy strategies in Europe. The concept of legitimacy connects EU integration and foreign policy and provides an opportunity to explore how the internal dynamics of EU integration might serve as a constraint upon what the EU can achieve as an actor in international politics.

The article begins by analysing the EPC and its function of “damage limitation”. This function is explained with reference to the international and intra-European tensions of the 1970s. The article goes on to demonstrate the continued relevance of “damage limitation”. It is a key function of CFSP, ESDP and of flagship EU strategic documents such as the European Security Strategy (ESS) of 2003. The article then turns to the growing role played by

legitimacy in the development of CFSP and ESDP. It focuses in particular on the notion of performance legitimacy, or what Javier Solana dubbed “legitimacy through action”. The article identifies a tension between the internal functionality of EU foreign policy (damage limitation) and its legitimizing strategy of performance, which emphasizes above all the EU’s external effectiveness in foreign policy. This tension is evident particularly in ESDP, and the article dwells upon the problems the EU has experienced in its ESDP missions. The article concludes with a return to the concept of legitimacy and asks what performance as a legitimizing strategy can reveal about the political sociology of the EU and of foreign policy cooperation in particular.

1. EU FOREIGN POLICY AS “DAMAGE LIMITATION”

The goal of EPC was cooperation between EC member states, not the realization of common goals at the international level. As set out in the 1970 Luxembourg Report and the 1973 Copenhagen Report, the goals of EPC were to ensure a *better mutual understanding* of the major problem of international politics through regular information and consultation, to promote a *harmonization of views* and the *coordination of positions* and to achieve a *common approach* to specific cases.⁸ At issue was coordination rather than unity. Allen and Wallace observed of EPC that in its early stages of development, there was no mention of “common policy” at all. They pointed out that “there was no plan at all” and “only the flimsiest of guidelines for activity” existed.⁹ The role of EPC as a response to the challenges the international situation posed for European unity was also clear, given the absence of intra-European consensus on what direction the development of EPC should take. Allen and Wallace concluded that “the fortunes of EPC still seem ... to be more related to the nature of specific external stimuli than to any general integrative mood in Europe”.¹⁰ French President George Pompidou, in an interview in 1970 with Lucian Hubert-Rodier, made clear that EPC was intended to accommodate, and not transcend, national divergences,

Wanting to say that from one day to the next there will be a political union is pure illusion. There is no chance whatsoever at the current time that we will have the same political position. The problems of cooperation are precisely about meeting, discussing, informing each other, and *rapprochement*, to one day have that common policy.¹¹

EPC was thus born out of a rather defensive phase in European integration: states were concerned less with moving forward towards “ever closer union” than with holding the Community itself together. Wessels used the phrase of damage limitation in his observation of the purely *reactive* nature of EPC. It was not designed to project power abroad so much as to defend the EC against outside threats and challenges. In his words, “diplomacy can, as a rule, only consist of reactions to developments in outside states which cannot themselves be predetermined”. As a result, “EPC can primarily be directed only towards damage limitation and the

neutralization of conflict".¹² For this reason, it would be misconceived to judge the EPC on the grounds of its effectiveness in contributing to world peace. Instead, we should consider "whether foreign policy cooperation benefits those for whom it was originally intended: the member states of the EU".¹³ We can therefore think of the *function* of EPC in terms of an inwardly-directed form of "damage limitation". What mattered was not what EPC could achieve vis-à-vis the wider world nor in terms of its incarnation of anything quintessentially European. Rather, its usefulness was in diffusing tensions between EC member states. This is what is referred to throughout this article as the *internal functionality* of EU foreign policy.¹⁴

Evidence of such relatively modest goals can be found in the institutional make-up of the EPC. Its structure was firmly inter-governmental, a far cry from the supranational aspirations of the 1950s. The Luxembourg Report of 1970 clearly differentiated between the business of the EC and the political issues pertaining to EPC. The role of the European Commission was limited to making its views known only when the EPC work of foreign ministries directly affected the Commission's own business in some way. EPC enshrined this separation via some extreme procedural formalities: in 1973, foreign ministers were made to fly – on the same day – from Copenhagen to Brussels, so that EPC and Community matters would not be discussed in the same European capital.¹⁵ Another sign was the extent to which EPC worked through the existing foreign ministries of EEC member states. The more discerning of such ministries saw EPC as a chance to regain the prestige that European integration had stolen from national diplomacy. Allen and Wallace note that "the readiness, even enthusiasm, with which officials in foreign ministries and embassies abroad took to the development of political cooperation" suggested "a bureaucratic instinct to expand their functions".¹⁶ The Italian foreign ministry "almost immediately grasped the importance of exploiting the potential offered by EPC", whereas the political class "awoke to it only gradually".¹⁷ Hill explained that "the process of coordination [of EPC] calls for a good deal of traditional diplomatic skill and creates a new level of high policy for [foreign] ministers whose monopoly over external relations had increasingly been challenged over recent decades".¹⁸ This accounted for the enthusiasm of diplomats who had, in Simon Nuttall's words, been given "a European shop of their own to run".¹⁹

The historical context for EPC

Damage limitation was the function served by EPC because of the tensions and pressures that the EC was subjected to at the time. These tensions had their origins in the economic, social and political conflict that returned to Europe as the decades of postwar growth were coming to an end.²⁰ One problem was the re-nationalization of foreign economic policy, itself a response to the economic turbulence of the decade and to the return of class conflict in some European states.²¹ Another was the shifting tides of the Cold War. The 1970s were marked by a period of détente between the two superpowers. This caused some concern in Europe, where it was felt that the United States might scale down its commitment to European defence, leaving Western Europe vulnerable to Soviet attack.²² The different responses of

European powers to these shifting Cold War dynamics imported considerable tension into the Community, which it was hoped EPC might manage.

The general tenor of the period, particularly the concerns of European elites about the erosion of a common European economic and political interest, is well-expressed in the report produced for the EC member states by the Belgian prime minister, Leo Tindemans, in 1976. Tindemans had been given the task of defining “European Union” at a meeting of heads of state in Paris in December 1974. Significantly, he placed foreign policy cooperation and the EC’s role in the world more generally at the forefront of his report. He argued that

Our people expect the European Union to be, where and when appropriate, the voice of Europe. Our joint action must be the means of effectively defending our legitimate interests, it must provide the basis for real security in a fairer world, and enable us to take part in this dialogue between groups which clearly characterizes international life.²³

This assertion of the need for European unity was made on the back of a series of concerns and warnings Tindemans gave throughout his report. Tindemans noted that in multilateral negotiations, the Nine needed to ensure that they could negotiate as a single entity. He recognized the difficulties of forging common positions given the trade tensions and heightened international competition, and yet he insisted that “the divergences of opinions and interests among the Nine, which are unavoidable when dealing with so vast a subject [i.e. the formation of a new world economic order], are not insuperable”.²⁴ On another goal, that of ensuring close relations with the United States, Tindemans recognized that disagreements over *détente* and policy with Eastern European states and the USSR had made it difficult for European states to act in concert.²⁵ This was also the problem with respect to regional crises and to security questions, the two other goals of a common foreign policy. In a phrase that sums up the climate of the 1970s, Tindemans warned darkly that “the Community is crumbling beneath the resurgence, which is felt everywhere, of purely national preoccupations”.²⁶ He went on to note that Europe must “guard against isolation, against Europe turning inwards upon itself, which would reduce it to a footnote in history”.²⁷ The cost of failing to embrace European Union would be high: it would lead to “the crumbling away of the Community, voices isolated and often unheard on the world stage, less and less control over our destiny, an unconvincing Europe without a future”.²⁸

EPC was an attempt to answer many of these concerns at the diplomatic level. One intra-European dynamic that was particularly important for the launching of EPC was the Franco-German relationship. West Germany’s economic renaissance had by the 1970s seen the Federal Republic (FRG) return as the continent’s economic powerhouse. The most evident sign of the country’s growing confidence was *Ostpolitik*, the new foreign policy direction taken by Willy Brandt, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) chancellor elected in 1966. Brandt’s election had been at the cost of abandoning “the aging formulas of Socialist maximalism” and his

accommodation of the SPD to the reality of the Bonn Republic after years of CDU/CSU rule.²⁹ However, his decision to build closer ties between the FRG and Eastern Europe, the GDR in particular, provoked concern both in France and across the Atlantic. In the early postwar period, the SPD had isolated itself from power because of the hard-line position taken by its leader, Kurt Schumacher. Schumacher and the SPD promoted the “restoration of a sovereign, unified and politically neutral Germany” over any international entanglements with either pan-European or Euro-Atlantic structures.³⁰ This did not chime with the plans of any of the Allies for Germany’s future, and Adenauer’s Atlanticism was preferred to the SPD’s neutralist alternative. *Ostpolitik* was thus seen by French elites as a possible return to earlier SPD ideas of a neutral Germany cut loose from Western structures. France was also afraid that weakening tensions between the superpowers might undermine its self-declared role as an alternative to bloc diplomacy. France’s fear of a more assertive and less integrated Germany, combined with its desire to reassert France’s distinctive international identity through its European leadership, came together in Pompidou’s triple objective of “finality, enlargement and deepening”, the latter goal referring to EPC.³¹ Under the difficult conditions of the 1970s, dubbed by Pompidou the “age of uncertainties”,³² EPC was intended to guard against the re-nationalization of the foreign policies of EC member states by providing these states with an avenue for discussion, negotiation and compromise.

The continuing relevance of “damage limitation” in CFSP and ESDP

Neither the CFSP nor ESDP have developed under circumstances similar to the EPC in the 1970s. The “age of uncertainties” identified by Pompidou was not reproduced in the 1990s. Nevertheless, “damage limitation” of a sort continued to shape EU foreign policy. Whilst foreign policy cooperation was less frequently used as a means of diffusing intra-European tensions, it nevertheless remained an end in itself. It continued to be the case that for EU member states, relations with each other mattered more than the relations of the EU with the rest of the world.

CFSP was in its origins obviously an instance of “old-style” damage limitation. French concern over German reunification was its *raison d’être*. As Françoise de la Serre has argued, “the process which led to the introduction of a CFSP in the Treaty on European Union can largely be explained by the French desire to reinforce European integration in order to bind a reunified Germany to it”.³³ French President François Mitterand did not immediately embrace this policy. He held out initially in the forlorn hope that West Germany and the GDR might co-exist as independent states. This prompted him to make a number of seeming blunders: his much criticized visit to East Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall, his visit to Kiev in late 1989, and the apparent blessing of the Moscow coup in the summer of 1991.³⁴ Eventually though, Mitterand accepted the inevitability of German reunification and sought to make the best of it by securing German agreement on a common foreign and security policy. He also pushed a *quid pro quo* with Kohl: France would accept unification if Kohl accepted that a unified Germany would give up the Deutschmark and embrace European

monetary union. CFSP was born in the remnants of intra-European Cold War acrimony as one of the last examples of EPC-style damage limitation.³⁵

Subsequently, foreign policy cooperation has continued to function in a way that elevates the process itself over final outcomes. Instead of expressing the desire to move towards a definite pan-European final outcome in foreign and security matters, CFSP and ESDP have proceeded in an ad hoc manner, expressing temporary and shifting arrangements between the major EU states. This reproduces the inward-looking quality of foreign policy cooperation of the EPC. The decision to finally move forward on security and defence cooperation, usually heralded as a great step forward in European integration, is one example of this. In the 1998 decision at St Malo by the UK and France to launch ESDP, there was no final vision of a common “European Army”. This was also absent in Germany’s key role in promoting the ESDP agenda throughout 1999 and particularly during its European Presidency from January to June of that year.³⁶ Writing in 2000, François Heisbourg noted that “a certain studied imprecision about the eventual destination has... been essential to the process of ESDP”.³⁷ Echoing Heisbourg’s original argument, William Wallace claimed in 2005 that ambiguity was inscribed into the very heart of ESDP at St Malo in 1999: “the St Malo initiative was accepted by other governments in its initial stages on condition that its proposers [sic] did not spell out specifically where beyond Europe’s immediate borders common forces might be deployed; leaving discussion to focus on the force structures and institutions, without scenarios for deployment”.³⁸ On ESDP in general, Wallace wrote that “without open debate about strategic priorities and geopolitical interests, the restructuring of European armed forces was a *procedural exercise*, driven by formal commitments rather than recognition of need”.³⁹ Most strikingly, Heisbourg argued that what was significant about ESDP negotiations was not that final goals were left off the agenda because of disagreements between individual member states (which is the classic intergovernmentalist view of the EU’s “sedimentary” foreign policy⁴⁰). Rather, Heisbourg notes that these goals were simply not what the agreement was intended to address. In his words,

It is in the interpretation and the implementation of the Petersberg Tasks that the absence of a common European strategic vision becomes all too apparent. Nor is this absence due to open differences between the most “extravert” and “introvert” states. Indeed, *what is most striking is not the scope of explicit disagreement but, rather, the lack of open consideration of the extent of European interests and ambitions.*⁴¹

The suggestion here is not that ESDP was an example of “lowest-denominator” type foreign policy.⁴² Rather, the essence of ESDP was procedural. As with EPC, EU foreign policy cooperation is characterized by an internal, “navel-gazing” quality that elevates the relations between states over what they want to achieve in common.⁴³

A final recent example of “damage limitation” is the European Security Strategy (ESS). Whilst it was often cited as an example of the EU’s maturity as an international actor, it was also criticized for being rather vague. It was

“all things to all men”: it could satisfy both Atlanticists and those wishing for greater European autonomy in European security; it reconciled the EU with the US whilst also distancing itself from the hawkish unilateralism of the Bush administration.⁴⁴ A key function of the ESS was therefore to serve as an exercise in internal damage limitation for the EU. In her “evolutionary history” of the ESS, Bailes grasps this function quite well. She argues that

As a non-negotiated document produced within a highly legalistic institution, the ESS would have been a quite inappropriate vehicle for laying down binding decisions on the EU... In political terms, it could only achieve its *unity-building aim* by staying broad-brush enough for all the EU members to read their favourite agendas into it, leaving them room to assert their special interests during the follow-up... [The ESS] had a *confidence-building function* and also in some sense an inspirational one designed not so much to embody good policy decisions as to create the environment and mood for taking them.⁴⁵

In her conclusion, Bailes points to the “essentially instrumental role of the ESS” – it was “made to serve, not to direct and not even fully to reflect, the dynamics of ‘real politics’ in Europe”. Thus, “the ESS exists to proclaim and promote greater unity in facing still-emerging challenges, rather than directly to close the gaps or to heal the wounds of past disunity”.⁴⁶ The audience for the ESS was therefore primarily made up of EU states and, to a lesser extent, the United States. Various other analysts have presented similar accounts of the ESS. Grevi notes a propos that “as was the case in the aftermath of previous setbacks, European leaders rushed to reassert their commitment to the CFSP following the disarray over Iraq”.⁴⁷ Anne Deighton writes that

The December 2003 ESS was... not so much a formal strategy as the term is conventionally understood, but rather a form of sticking plaster for the EU member states to help cover their own differences, to find common ground, and to draw up a joint credo with which it could respond collectively to the Bush administration’s policies, and build upon the developments of the previous four years in the foreign policy, and specifically CFSP/ESDP sphere.⁴⁸

The ESS thus illustrates the continued importance of internal damage limitation as a function of EU foreign and security policy cooperation.

That EU foreign policy remains so internally oriented was recently demonstrated in a discussion amongst EU experts on the topic of the EU’s “grand strategy”. Tellingly, this discussion very quickly became a discussion about the meaning and direction of the European project itself.⁴⁹ The implications of this internal functionality in EU foreign policy will be explored in a later section of the article. The next section will consider a parallel development, namely the emergence of pan-European legitimizing discourses for EU foreign policy and the specific content of these discourses.

2. THE RISE OF EU FOREIGN POLICY AND THE LEGITIMACY OF PERFORMANCE

Throughout the history of EPC, foreign policy cooperation was considered a peripheral dimension in the wider scheme of European integration. Its function was one of damage limitation, and it was of interest only to those elites who were directly concerned by it. Since EPC originated in an attempt at diffusing intra-European tensions that were considered potential sources of a nationalist anti-EC backlash, its decision-making procedures were far removed from any public scrutiny or popular involvement. Pompidou for one had experienced at his own political cost the lack of popular resonance European integration had with domestic audiences. His referendum of 1972 on British entry into the EC failed to secure the endorsement he expected: 68% voted in favour, but with a 40% abstention rate, only a third of the electorate had supported Pompidou's strategy.⁵⁰

It follows that EPC developed in the absence of any public justifications or strategies of legitimization. Simon Nuttall writes of the "charmed circle" of EPC, and notes about EPC personnel that "their views were inevitably conditioned by the contacts they had with their European colleagues, *sometimes closer than with colleagues from other ministries at home*".⁵¹ Smith writes of the *esprit de corps* that came to animate the European Correspondents – officials given the task of liaising between EPC and national foreign ministries. In his words, "cohesion in the group of European Correspondents became especially close over the years, and many personal friendships were forged within it".⁵² Smith also notes that the dynamic for EPC's evolution over the years did not come from outside, but rather from "within the system itself", a sign of EPC's limited connection with the outside world.⁵³ Hill and Wallace characterize EPC as a policy of "don't tell the children", and note that the evolution of EPC "went largely unnoticed and unreported in national parliaments, hence also in national media".⁵⁴ Such secrecy was encapsulated in an EPC innovation, the "Gymnich meetings": private affairs held in country retreats, where ministers could interact with each other free from the prying eyes of the national media and obliged only to give at the end of it a "valedictory briefing". Hill and Wallace note that in the 1970s and 1980s, there developed "a chasm between the practice of foreign policy cooperation and popular perceptions of continuing national autonomy in foreign policy, parallel to the general chasm between technocratic and popular Europe".⁵⁵

This contrasts with the 1990s and the advent of CFSP, which was then followed by ESDP. This period is marked by the growing prominence of foreign policy to the wider process of European integration. In the early 1990s, expectations were raised about the prospects of a common European foreign policy emerging in the aftermath of the dissolution of the Cold War system, particularly as American interest in European affairs waned. These expectations were left unfulfilled, but it was significant that they had been directed to the EU and its assumed role in foreign policy rather than to individual national capitals. Christopher Hill wrote in 1993 that in the early 1990s, the EU had been tasked with a number of functions – from "global intervener" to "regional pacifier" and "bridge between rich and poor" – all of

which were proving to be beyond the EU's limited resources and instruments.⁵⁶ Many of these inflated expectations came from European politicians who saw in the early 1990s a chance to raise the EU to the level of a major player in international affairs. The most famous mistake involving these expectations is Jacques Poos' unfortunately timed statement regarding the breaking out of civil war in Yugoslavia. For Poos, this was "Europe's hour", although the EU was only able to fan the flames of war in Yugoslavia rather than to provide any solution.⁵⁷ However, it wasn't only Luxembourg that has played up the EU's role. French President Mitterand moved towards a new connection between European integration and the demands of post-Cold War European security. His surprise visit to Sarajevo on the 28th of June, 1992, was intended to "remind world opinion of the seriousness of the Bosnian crisis". It was also to send a dramatic message to French voters, to whom he had only a few weeks earlier declared that France would be holding a national referendum on the Maastricht Treaty. The message was that only a strong commitment to further integration would ensure that the EC would remain a zone of peace.⁵⁸ Foreign policy, to paraphrase the American historian of the national interest Charles Beard, had become an inescapable phase of European integration.⁵⁹

European inaction in relation to Bosnia exposed the CFSP as a triumph of rhetoric over substance and created much disillusion with the EU. However, foreign policy continued to rise up the European agenda. Simon Hix has noted that since the Amsterdam Treaty came into force in 1999, "the General Affairs Council has become so dominated by foreign policy that it rarely has time to resolve disputes in other policy areas, which was its original purpose at the pinnacle of the Council hierarchy".⁶⁰ More recently, Roy Ginsberg declared that that if the first fifty years of European integration were marked by internal developments, the next fifty years will be about the EU's role in the world.⁶¹ And Geoffrey Edwards remarked in early 2007 that there are signs of the growing authority of the EU's High Representative for CFSP, Javier Solana: in 1999, it was the High Representative who was conducting visits around the world while today, visitors come to Solana.⁶²

"Legitimacy through action"

Accompanying this greater attention to the EU's foreign policy role have been various attempts to publicly justify a more internationally active EU. Great attention has been paid, at least in academic circles, to the idea of the EU as a "normative power".⁶³ Another powerful legitimizing discourse has been built up around the notion of "performance". Performance refers to the outputs of foreign policy actions, and it becomes a source of legitimacy when these outputs are shown to be attainable not by any state or actor, but only by the EU.⁶⁴ The EU's claim to performance in foreign and security policy is thus a claim to expertise, a claim to providing some "value-added" in its foreign policy.

Two key components to the EU's value-added in international affairs are regularly invoked by scholars and practitioners. The first is the EU's suitability for conflict management tasks. Grandiloquently, Martti Ahtisaari has claimed that "the European Union was born as an initiative for conflict

prevention and crisis management”⁶⁵, and he argues that Nordic nations have “brought to the forefront the civilian aspects of crisis management as an integral and inseparable part of successful crisis management”, which in his view is “the *niche capability* that operational ESDP must exploit”.⁶⁶ In a 2001 article, Christopher Hill noted the centrality played by conflict prevention in accounts of ESDP. In his words,

[Conflict prevention] is seen by many as providing the common thread, in terms of values, objectives and instruments, which holds the system together and gives it purpose... it seems to have the quality essential in any successful political concept of showing how interest and ideals can be yoked to each other: no one could contest that we should both serve a great deal of resources and reduce the sum of human misery were we able to prevent conflicts such as those in Somalia or Bosnia from breaking out – or just manage to contain them.⁶⁷

In Hill’s view, conflict prevention has become the “new operational code” and “new orthodoxy” of European policy.⁶⁸

Beyond conflict prevention and crisis management, the EU specifically points to its ability to *combine military and civilian tools*. This is the EU’s distinctive contribution to conflict prevention and crisis management. In 2005, the European Parliament emphasized that “the defining characteristic and the additional value of the ESDP lie in the combination of civilian and military components”, and it noted that “the EU will in future be increasingly faced with the challenge of striking a good and proper balance between military and civilian components in order to fulfil the objectives and spirit of the European Security Strategy”.⁶⁹

Highlighting the EU’s ability to combine civil and military tools and tasks has been the leitmotif of many of its operations since 2003. After the completion of the election monitoring mission in Aceh, Indonesia, Peter Feith, the head of mission and former NATO special representative in Macedonia, argued that “this mission and the way the EU has dealt with the crisis, after the tsunami, shows that we have indisputable comparative advantage; we have a broad range of instruments, and all of these have been deployed and used over the past two years”.⁷⁰ Antonio Missiroli concurs: the EU’s added value lies in the EU’s “capacity to mobilize a wide array of policy tools well beyond the military”.⁷¹ In Solana’s words, the EU “has a unique crisis management capacity. Neither wholly civilian, nor wholly military, but simply global.”⁷² Alistair Shepherd noted, in relation to the suggestion of the European Convention Working Group on Defence that the EU should develop a pool of civilian and military civil protection capabilities: “it is particularly this type of civilian-military synergy where the EU could develop its unique approach to the current security environment”.⁷³ Giovanna Bono observes that “for many EU officials, the key distinguishing feature of the evolving EU military doctrine lies in its integration of civilian and military tools in external crisis management and its officially stated adherence to the principles of international law as defined by the UN charter”.⁷⁴ Writing about

Operation Concordia in Macedonia, Catriona Mace claims that “the ‘added value’ of EU crisis management is the Union’s ability to deploy a range of instruments, financial, civilian and military, in a coordinated manner”.⁷⁵

External effectiveness versus internal functionality

This legitimizing discourse of performance jars with the internal functionality of EU foreign policy. Looking at EU foreign policy in more detail, we find that a gap exists between the emphasis on the EU’s foreign policy outputs, and the national preoccupation with foreign policy cooperation as an end in itself. As noted above, the EU’s 2003 European Security Strategy is best understood as a product of damage limitation: a clear demonstration of European unity on global security issues was needed in the aftermath of the disastrous intra-European divisions over the US-led invasion of Iraq. This internal function has been identified as a reason why much of the ESS lacked the precision one might expect from a real security strategy. An area more damaging for the EU’s “legitimacy through action” discourse and where internal functionality once more trumps external effectiveness is the EU’s military missions. These have widely been fêted as a sign of EU foreign policy finally coming of age. It does not quite approximate a European army defending Europe’s borders, but in some respects, it brings ESDP up to the level of what some consider to be “modernist” foreign policy.⁷⁶

In fact, a closer analysis reveals a quite different picture. Anne Deighton writes of the “double agenda of Union foreign policy”, by which she means the EU’s need “both to sustain and reinforce solidarity within the Union itself while acting in the outside world”. This agenda is, in her words, analytically significant: it “necessarily underlies any discussion of decision-making, effectiveness and the division of labour”.⁷⁷ Damien Helly has remarked that the EU’s impact as an international actor is better thought of as a secondary consideration for the EU, in comparison to the primacy of foreign policy as a component of the internal integration project. He also notes that the symbolism of ESDP missions is particularly important for some states rather than others. In his view,

One has to bear these fundamental and structural challenges [e.g. the clash between the Commission and Council in crisis management and conflict prevention] in mind in order to avoid complacent comments and analyses about the Union’s successes and failures simply on the basis of several tiny ESDP missions that have been undertaken thus far. These missions may be highly symbolic *especially for certain member states*, [and] also for the development of ESDP structures, but there is little evidence that they are intimately connected to, and reflective of the stated needs of local populations and beneficiaries.⁷⁸

Considering the judgements and assessments made of the EU’s ESDP operations since 2003, there is a definite tendency to consider their merits in terms of their relationship to the EU and the ESDP rather than in terms of

their actual impact on the ground. Writing on the EUJUST *Themis* mission in Georgia, Helly recounts its operational failures. In April 2005, “the mission entered into an internal crisis because of a lack of progress”, and “the implementation phase [of *Themis*] has never really taken off the ground and Georgian leadership failed to demonstrate interest in the process”.⁷⁹ Operationally weak, *Themis* was nonetheless of significance for the EU. Helly concludes that “EUJUST *Themis* represented both the prolongation of a long-lasting European commitment to Georgia’s stability as well as a *historical, institutional and diplomatic innovation and challenge for the enlarged EU*”. He adds: “it was one of the numerous EU/EC instruments used in Georgia and at the same time a *test-case for future ESDP civilian operations*”.⁸⁰ This notion of ESDP operations serving as test cases for European diplomacy is a constant theme in the accounts of operations provided by both observers and practitioners. The message here seems to be that such operations are stages upon which the EU can rehearse its lines as an embryonic international actor and serve to promote *individual* member states, albeit in a pan-European garb.

The EU’s *Proxima* operation in Macedonia was also operationally unremarkable. Ioannides notes that “the [Macedonian] public’s lack of understanding of the mission’s objectives is due to the fact that *Proxima* did not produce tangible results and therefore did not attract the attention of the media”.⁸¹ Nevertheless, *Proxima*’s Head of Mission, Jurgen Schultz, claimed that the operation “will set the standards for future EU missions”. The lessons learned from *Proxima* were also internally oriented: how to hand over missions competently, the need for carrying out joint Commission-Council fact-finding missions, the use of benchmarking for evaluating performance and progress.⁸² Another example is EUJUST LEX in Iraq. Catriona Gourlay observes that “whilst the EUJUST LEX mission is undoubtedly a *constructive internal political project in the light of the rifts that exist within the EU over Iraq*, it is questionable whether it provides value for money”.⁸³ Other missions have similarly been driven by internal political considerations. Howorth notes that the British eventually supported the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) because “they were looking, as holders of the six-month EU Presidency in late 2005, for a practical way of demonstrating that the French and Dutch vetoes of the Constitutional Treaty did not spell the end of ESDP”.⁸⁴ Similar inward-looking assessments are made of other EU operations. On Operation Artemis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ulriksen et al. note that “France, backed by the UK, proposed an EU force, partly propelled by the dynamism of Franco-British cooperation in Africa since the mid 1990s, and partly as a way of helping heal the wounds of European disagreements over Iraq earlier in the year”.⁸⁵ If the DRC was the terrain upon which the renewed Franco-British *entente* of the St-Malo accords of 1998 was tested, then Macedonia was the terrain upon which Atlanticist and “autonomist” EU member states were reconciled.⁸⁶ The significance of Operation *Concordia* – in spite of its operational failure⁸⁷ – was that it was the first time the Berlin Plus arrangements were used. Significantly, there was no pressing operational need to use Berlin Plus in this case. Howorth writes that “from an

operational standpoint, ESDP's Concordia could have deployed without the back-up of Berlin Plus". However, "from a political perspective, the main EU Atlanticist nations instituted that the resolution of the Berlin Plus procedures should precede the mission".⁸⁸

All in all, it is difficult not to conclude that the EU's ESDP operations have by in large been external projections intended to satisfy or assuage internal considerations and conflicts. It is also striking to note the dominant role played by individual member states in pursuing certain missions. It would seem that the real "value-added" of ESDP lies at the national level, as it allows individual states to pursue their own objectives whilst overcoming the problem of weakened national foreign policy strategies.⁸⁹

CONCLUSION: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE PROBLEM OF LEGITIMIZATION?

This article has identified a disjuncture in EU foreign policy between its internal functionality and its pretension to external effectiveness. The internal importance of "damage limitation" as a function of foreign policy cooperation mines the EU's ability to perform as an international actor and in particular to pursue the "niche" role of crisis management. What this disjuncture points to is the connection between the political sociology of EU foreign policy and its capacity for action in the world. The political sociology refers to the integrative dynamics of EU foreign policy and the role of domestic populations, national governments and pan-European institutions.⁹⁰ This article has argued that there is no unified foreign policy that pursues a pan-European interest and that draws its forward momentum from a direct connection with a European "people". Instead, EU foreign policy is dominated by its inward gaze: it serves the function of diffusing tensions between EU member states, and it also serves as a source of legitimacy for individual member states. The real "value-added" of EU foreign policy remains at the national level.

Emphasizing this internal function, the article has considered in detail the legitimizing discourse of "performance" which has justified, alongside other discourses, both CFSP and, to a greater degree, ESDP. The article has shown how performance legitimacy, when examined up close, is in fact regularly undermined by the damage limitation function of EU foreign policy. It is also a product of national strategies that have turned towards the EU in response to problems that they face in maintaining the vitality of their own national foreign policy strategies. "Performance" is therefore pursued as an ostensibly pan-European source of legitimacy, a quality of the *sui generis* features of the EU. Its origins, however, are resolutely national. The value of the concept of legitimacy is that it connects the internal dynamics of EU foreign policy to its external actions. "Performance legitimacy" is a product of these internal dynamics, and a close examination of this legitimizing strategy has highlighted the tensions contained within a foreign policy that is nominally about the EU's role in the world but is in reality a means by which European states overcome their differences and compensate for their limited national roles. Focusing on the problem of legitimization the EU faces in its

foreign policy is thus a good way of grasping what that foreign policy really is and what function it serves.

* Christopher J. Bickerton is a PhD student at St Johns College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom. He would like to thank the three referees for their detailed comments on an earlier draft of this article. The comments proved very useful in rewriting and restructuring the article. He would also like to thank Giovanna Bono for help on an earlier version of the article. Any remaining errors are of course his own.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ See for example Smith, M. (2003), "The framing of European foreign and security policy: towards a post-modern policy framework". *Journal of European Public Policy*, 10 (4), pp. 556–575; Smith, M. (2006), "Comment: Crossroads or cul-de-sac? Reassessing European Foreign Policy". *Journal of European Public Policy*, 13 (2), pp. 322–327; see the various contributions in Carlsnaes, W., Sjursen, H., and White, B. (eds.) (2004), *Contemporary European Foreign Policy*. London: Sage; see also Smith, M.E. (2004), *Europe's Foreign and Security Policy: The Institutionalization of Cooperation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and the contributions to Hill, C. (ed.) (1983), *National Foreign Policies and European Political Cooperation*. London: George Allen and Unwin, and Hill, C. (ed.) (1996). *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*. London: Routledge.
- ² The connection between legitimacy and justification is explored by Coicaud, J.-M. (2002), *Legitimacy and Politics: A Contribution to the Study of Political Right and Responsibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ³ This article has been particularly inspired by Paul Craig's attempt to trace the normative structure of the European Union's institutions and the dominant discourses that explain their origins and functioning. Craig, P. (1999), "The Nature of the Community: Integration, Democracy, and Legitimacy". In: P. Craig, and G.D. Burca (eds.), *The Evolution of EU Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Other illuminating accounts of the EU's sources of legitimacy include Jachtenfuchs, M., Diez, T., and Jung, S. (1998), "Which Europe? Conflicting Models of a Legitimate European Political Order". *European Journal of International Relations*, 4 (4), pp. 249–268, Beetham, D. and Lord, C. (1998), *Legitimacy and the EU*. London: Longman; Scharpf, FF. (1999), *Governing in Europe: Effective and Democratic?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Lord, C. and Beetham, D. (2001), "Legitimizing the EU: Is there a 'Post-parliamentary basis' for its legitimation?" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39 (3), pp. 443–462, and Lord, C. and Magnette, P. (2004), "E Pluribus Unum? Creative Disagreement about Legitimacy in the EU". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 42 (1), pp. 183–202.
- ⁴ For a useful introduction to the EU's "democratic deficit", see Kohler-Koch, B., and Rittberger, B. (2007), "Charting Crowded Territory: Debating the Democratic Legitimacy of the European Union". In: B. Kohler-Koch, and B. Rittberger (eds.), *Debating the Democratic Legitimacy of the European Union*. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield. On foreign policy and legitimacy, see Hill, C. (2003), *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan. Specifically on the EU's "legitimacy deficit", see Laffan, B. (1996), "The Politics of Identity and Political Order in Europe". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 34 (1), pp. 81–102; Obradovic, D. (1996), "Political Legitimacy and the European Union". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 34 (2), pp. 191–221; and Hansen, L. and Williams, M.C. (1999), "The Myths of Europe: Legitimacy, Community and the 'Crisis' of the EU". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 37 (2), pp. 233–249.
- ⁵ This is a paraphrasing of David Beetham's point. See Beetham, D. (1991), *The Legitimation of Power*. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, p. 39. For similar accounts of legitimacy, see Claude, I. L. (1966), "Collective Legitimization as a Political Function of the United Nations". *International Organization*, 20, pp. 367–379, and Rothschild, J. (1977), "Observations on Political Legitimacy in Contemporary Europe". *Political Science Quarterly*, 92 (3), pp. 487–501.
- ⁶ For a useful account of how and why these two subfields have traditionally been kept apart, see Ohrgaard, J. C. (1997), "Less than Supranational, More than Intergovernmental: European Political Cooperation and the Dynamics of Intergovernmental Integration". *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 26 (1), pp. 1–29.

- ⁷ On this point, see for instance Alagappa, M. (ed.) (1995), *Political Legitimacy in Southeast Asia: the Quest for Moral Legitimacy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. On the legitimacy of the United Nations, see Claude, op. cit.
- ⁸ Cited in Wolfgang Wessels (1982), "European Political Cooperation: a new approach to foreign policy". In: Allen, D., Rummel, R., and Wessels, W. (eds.) (1982), *European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe*. London: Butterworth Scientific, p. 2 (my italics).
- ⁹ Allen David and Wallace William, "European Political Cooperation: the historical and contemporary background". In: Allen et al, *ibid.*, p. 21.
- ¹⁰ Allen and Wallace. In: Allen et al., op. cit., p. 31.
- ¹¹ Pompidou, G. (1975), *Entretiens et Discours*. Paris: Plon. Interview with Lucien Hubert-Rodier, July 1970, pp. 79–80.
- ¹² Wessels. In: Allen et al, op. cit., p. 11.
- ¹³ Wessels, op. cit., p. 5.
- ¹⁴ My thanks to Michael Smith for suggesting the phrase "internal functionality".
- ¹⁵ See Hill, C. (ed.) (1983), *National Foreign Policies and European Political Cooperation*. London: George Allen and Unwin, p. 57.
- ¹⁶ Allen and Wallace. In: Allen et al, op. cit., p. 29.
- ¹⁷ G. Bonvicini, "Italy: an integrationist perspective". In: Hill, op. cit., p. 75.
- ¹⁸ Hill, op. cit., p. 191.
- ¹⁹ Nuttall, S. (2000), *European Foreign Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 16.
- ²⁰ For a useful account of some of the social and political problems, see Bracher, K. (1972), "Democracy". In: R. Mayne (ed.), *Europe Tomorrow: 16 Europeans look ahead*. London: Fontana.
- ²¹ For an account of how these growing tensions impacted upon Franco-German relations, see Simonian, H. (1985), *The Privileged Partnership: Franco-German Relations in the European Community 1969–1984*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ²² The growing cost of the US's war in Vietnam was another reason for European concern, since it meant the Americans hoped Western European states would take up more responsibility for their own security. Nixon looked to French President George Pompidou for instance, to take up some of the slack in Europe. See Bozo, F. (1997). *La Politique Etrangere de la France depuis 1945*. Paris: La Decouverte, p. 60.
- ²³ Tindemans, L. (1976), "European Union". *Bulletin of the European Communities Supplement 1/76*. Brussels, p. 12.
- ²⁴ Tindemans, *ibid.*, p. 16.
- ²⁵ On the difficult relations between Europe and the US in this period, see Lundestad, G. (1998), "Empire" by Integration: *The United States and European Integration, 1945–1997*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ²⁶ Tindemans, op. cit., p. 11.
- ²⁷ Tindemans, op. cit., p. 12.
- ²⁸ Tindemans, op. cit., p. 14.
- ²⁹ For more details, see Judt, T. (2005), *Postwar*. London: Heinemann, p. 269.
- ³⁰ Judt, op. cit., p. 268.
- ³¹ Finality referred to completing negotiations over EC agricultural subsidies, and enlargement referred to British entry into the EC.
- ³² Bozo, op. cit., p. 63.
- ³³ Serre, F.d.I. (1996), "France: the impact of Francois Mitterand". In: C. Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*. London: Routledge, p. 32.
- ³⁴ Bozo, F. (1995), "France and Security in the New Europe: Between the Gaullist Legacy and the Search for a New Model". In: G. Flynn (ed.), *Remaking the Hexagon: The New France in the New Europe*. Oxford: Westview, p. 215. On his visit to Kiev, where Mitterand met Gorbachev, he urged caution over West Germany's plans for unification.
- ³⁵ For details of the quid pro quo, see Ash, T. G. (1999), *History of the Present*. London: Allen Lane/Penguin.
- ³⁶ On the details of the St Malo agreement and its follow-up, see Howorth, J. (2000), "Britain, France and the European Defence Initiative". *Survival*, 42 (2), pp. 33–55; Howorth, J. (2004), "Discourse, Ideas, and Epistemic Communities in European Security and Defence Policy". *West European Politics*, 27 (2), pp. 211–234, and Howorth, J. (2007), *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- ³⁷ Heisbourg, F. (2000), "Europe's Strategic Ambitions: The Limits of Ambiguity". *Survival*, 42 (2): pp. 5–15, p. 5.
- ³⁸ Wallace, W. (2005), "Is there a European Approach to War?" *European Foreign Policy Unit Working Papers*, (2), pp. 1–19, p. 10.
- ³⁹ Wallace, *ibid.*, p. 11 (italics added).
- ⁴⁰ On "sedimentary" foreign policy, see Nuttall, *op. cit.*
- ⁴¹ Heisbourg, *op. cit.*, p. 7 (italics added).
- ⁴² For an account of this problem, see Nuttall, *op. cit.*
- ⁴³ The phrase "naval gazing" is from Smith, "Crossroads or cul-de-sac?", *op. cit.*
- ⁴⁴ Becher highlights the problems that result in this. He argues that the ESS is problematically both pro- and anti- American at the same time. In his words, "Herein lies the greatest political weakness of the European Security Strategy, however, given the political mood of distancing Europe from US policies in European publics, to some degree combined with wider anti-Western cultural and economic emotions. Instead of making an effort to grasp US motivations and intellectual debates and influence them from within in support of desired good policies, many in Europe seem content with depicting the US as a convenient negative role model in an effort to build Europe's separate identity. This approach is utterly incompatible with the strategic analysis of the international system, the challenges and threats, Europe's interests, and the required responses on which the European Security Strategy rests." Becher, K. (2004), "Has-Been, Wannabe, or Leader: Europe's Role in the World After the 2003 European Security Strategy". *European Security*, 13 (4), pp. 345–359, p. 356.
- ⁴⁵ Bailes, A. J. K. (2005), "The European Security Strategy: An Evolutionary History". *SIPRI Policy Papers*. Stockholm: SIPRI, p. 14 (italics added).
- ⁴⁶ Bailes, *ibid.*, p. 23.
- ⁴⁷ Grevi, G. (2004), "European Security: No Strategy without Politics." *Ideas Factory Europe*. Brussels: European Policy Centre, p. 3.
- ⁴⁸ Deighton, A. and Mauer, V. (eds.) (2006), *Securing Europe? Implementing the European Security Strategy*. Zürich: Centre for Security Studies, p. 28.
- ⁴⁹ Roundtable convened by Michael E. Smith at EUSA, Montreal, 2007. Participants in the roundtable: Michael Smith, Richard Whitman and Ulrich Sedelmier. Comments from the floor in line with this argument: Antje Weiner and Wolfgang Wessels.
- ⁵⁰ Bozo notes that the referendum result marked the end of a period in French foreign policy, that had been overwhelmingly oriented towards Europe. Bozo, "Politique Etrangère de la France", p. 64.
- ⁵¹ Nuttall, *op. cit.*, p. 15 (italics added).
- ⁵² Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
- ⁵³ Smith, "Europe's Foreign and Security Policy", *op. cit.*, p. 100.
- ⁵⁴ Hill, C. and Wallace, W. (1996), "Introduction: Actors and actions". In: C. Hill (ed.), *The Actors in Europe's Foreign Policy*. London: Routledge, p. 6.
- ⁵⁵ Hill and Wallace. In: Hill (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- ⁵⁶ Hill, C. (1993), "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role". *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31 (3), pp. 305–328, pp. 310–315.
- ⁵⁷ On the role played by Western intervention in the war in Yugoslavia, see Woodward, S. L. (1995), *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution.
- ⁵⁸ Hobsbawm, E. (1994), *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991*. London: Abacus, p. 2–3.
- ⁵⁹ Charles Beard, cited in Waltz, K. (2001), *Man, the State, and War: a Theoretical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 80. Beard's phrase was "However conceived in an image of the world, foreign policy is a phase of domestic policy, an inescapable phase".
- ⁶⁰ Hix, S. (2005), *The Political System of the European Union*. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, p. 391. Hayes-Renshaw and Wallace note that the General Affairs Council was replaced in 2002 by the General Affairs and External Relations Council, as "a response to repeated criticism of the rather natural tendency of the foreign ministers to concentrate on the increasingly numerous foreign policy aspects of their remit, to the detriment of their role as Council coordinator". Though the GAERC has retained its coordination role, the extent of foreign policy business has meant that separate meetings are held, on two consecutive days or on a single day with separate sessions. General affairs are generally dealt with first and then foreign policy issues. Hayes-Renshaw, F. and Wallace, H. (2006), *The Council of Ministers*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, p. 36–37.

- ⁶¹ Remarks made at the European Union Studies Association conference in Montreal, May 2007.
- ⁶² Remarks made at the International Studies Association conference in Chicago, March 2007.
- ⁶³ For the seminal writings on this issue, see Duchene, F. (1972), "Europe's Role in World Peace". In: R. Mayne (ed.), *Europe Tomorrow: 16 Europeans Look Ahead*. London: Fontana Bull, H. (1982), "Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 21 (2), pp. 149–164; Manners, I. (2002), "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?" *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40 (2), pp. 235–258, and for a review of the debate, see Sjursen, H. (2006), "What kind of power?" *Journal of European Public Policy*, 13 (2), pp. 169–181.
- ⁶⁴ Beetham, D. and Lord, C. (1998), *Legitimacy and the EU*. London: Longman, p. 94. On performance legitimacy, see also Fritz Scharpf. According to Scharpf, output legitimacy arguments "presuppose a need for effective government with a capacity for achieving common purposes that are beyond the reach of individuals and families acting on their own, through market exchanges or through un-coerced cooperation in civil society". Scharpf, F. (2003), "Problem-Solving Effectiveness and Democratic Accountability in the EU". *MPIfG Working Papers*. No page number – an electronic source. Performance legitimacy is also a concern of Majone in his work on the regulatory state. See for instance, Majone, G. (1998), "Europe's 'Democratic Deficit': The Question of Standards". *European Law Journal*, 4 (1), pp. 5–28.
- ⁶⁵ Ahtisaari, M. (2004). In: N. Gnesotto (ed.), *EU Security and Defence Policy: The First Five Years (1999–2004)*. Paris: EU-ISS. See also Hill: "it can be argued that [the EU's] very historical identity is fundamentally that of a conflict prevention system". Hill, C. (2001), "The EU's Capacity for Conflict Prevention". *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 6, pp. 315–333, p. 323.
- ⁶⁶ Ahtisaari, op. cit., p. 159.
- ⁶⁷ Hill, "The EU's Capacity for Conflict Prevention", op. cit., p. 315.
- ⁶⁸ Hill, *ibid.*, "The EU's Capacity for Conflict Prevention", op. cit., pp. 315–316.
- ⁶⁹ Parliament, E. (2006), "Resolution on the European Security Strategy". In: EU-ISS (ed.), *EU security and defence: Core documents 2005*. Vol. 6. Paris: EU-ISS, pp. 69–70. Similar claims to expertise exist outside of the ESDP framework. At the time of the 2004 EU enlargement, which brought in eight post-Stalinist states (along with Cyprus and Malta), various EU luminaries – such as Robert Cooper – claimed that what the EU was doing in Eastern Europe was its own, peaceful and highly successful version of "regime change", a sign that the EU was better equipped for such tasks than the US, which had been unsuccessful in its own intervention in Iraq.
- ⁷⁰ Feith, P. (2006), Press conference on the occasion of the end of the EU-led Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM). Brussels: Council Secretariat.
- ⁷¹ Missiroli, A. (2003), "The European Union: Just a Regional Peacekeeper?" *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 8, pp. 493–503, p. 496.
- ⁷² Solana, J. (2006), Annual Conference of the European Union Institute for Security Studies – speech by Javier Solana. In: EU-ISS (ed.), *EU security and defence: Core documents 2005*. Paris: EU-ISS, p. 267.
- ⁷³ Shepherd, A. J. K. (2006), "Irrelevant or Indispensable? ESDP, the 'War on Terror' and the fall-out from Iraq". *International Politics*, 43 (1), pp. 71–92, p. 85.
- ⁷⁴ Bono, G. (2004), "The EU's Military Doctrine: An Assessment". *International Peacekeeping*, 11 (3), pp. 439–456, p. 441.
- ⁷⁵ Mace, C. *Ibid.*, "Operation *Concordia*: Developing a 'European' Approach to Crisis Management", pp. 474–490, p. 474.
- ⁷⁶ Smith, "The Framing of European Foreign and Security Policy", op. cit., p. 558.
- ⁷⁷ Deighton, op. cit., p. 12.
- ⁷⁸ Helly, D. (2006), "Assessing the Impact of the European Union as an International Actor". In: A. Deighton and V. Mauer (eds.), *Securing Europe? Implementing the European Security Strategy*. Zürich: ETH Zürich, p. 84 (italics added).
- ⁷⁹ Helly, D. (2006), "EUJUST *Themis* in Georgia: an ambitious bet on rule of law". In: A. Nowak (ed.), *Civilian Crisis Management: the EU Way*. Paris: EU-ISS, p. 100.
- ⁸⁰ Helly, *ibid.*, p. 101 (italics added).
- ⁸¹ Ioannides, I. (2006), "EU Police Mission Proxima: testing the 'European' approach to building peace". In: A. Nowak (ed.), *Civilian Crisis Management: the EU Way*. Paris: EU-ISS, p. 82.
- ⁸² Ioannides, *ibid.*, p. 82.
- ⁸³ Gourlay, C. (2006), "Community instruments for civilian crisis management". In: A. Nowak (ed.), *Civilian Crisis Management: the EU Way*. Paris: EU-ISS, p. 64 (my italics).

⁸⁴ Howorth, "Security and Defence Policy in the European Union", op. cit., p. 213.

⁸⁵ Ulriksen, S., Gourlay, C., and Mace, C. (2004), "Operation *Artemis*: The Shape of Things to Come?" *International Peacekeeping*, 11 (3), pp. 508–525, p. 511.

⁸⁶ "Autonomist" refers to those EU member states in favour of a European security and defence policy autonomous from NATO. Atlanticist refers to those member states who would prefer security and defence integration to take place within a NATO framework.

⁸⁷ The Macedonian government asked for the operation to be wrapped up, in order to help Macedonia in its attempt to gain formal candidate status for EU membership.

⁸⁸ Howorth, "Security and Defence Policy in the European Union", op. cit., p. 232.

⁸⁹ My thanks to Giovanna Bono for emphasizing this point to me in a commentary on an earlier version of this article.

⁹⁰ For a detailed analysis of the EU focusing on the political sociology of Europe, see Bartolini, S. (2005), *Restructuring Europe: Centre Formation, System Building, and Political Structuring between Nation State and the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Moving Politics Beyond the State: The Hungarian Minority in Slovakia¹

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Abstract: Whilst elaborating identity politics in the new European space, theoretically, the empirical focus of this article is on the changing relations between majorities and minorities in Central Europe, generally, and in Slovakia, specifically. The underlying premise is that European integration alters the meaning of “the nation”, the state and territory, and that there is a discernible shift from politics at the state level to a regional one, and with that a change in identity politics vis-à-vis new institutions and geographies. The question is whether this shift is accompanied by the re-emergence of ethno-regions, i.e. political/geographic entities beyond and “across” state level. Democracy and identity within the state form a contradictory relationship, whereby democracy suffers from the monopolisation of political and cultural activity by the dominant group. The Slovak-Hungarian relationship is a prime example of this dynamic. Thus, this article proposes the following points: a) that democracy may need “rescuing” from the confines of the nation-state and hence, b) a number of hypotheses about politics beyond the state. These hypotheses are then tested against a small survey conducted among the Hungarian minority in the Slovak-Hungarian border regions. The evidence provided here suggests that the EU opens new possibilities to move politics beyond the state, and in the process it removes some identity-related challenges to democracy within the state.

Key words: post-Communism; nation-state; Europeanisation; minorities and transnationalism

ETHNO-POLITICAL RELATIONS IN POST-COMMUNISM: THREE STAGES

The historical achievement of nationalism is the nation-state, which binds “the nation”, the territory and the state into what must be considered the most successful form of political community in the modern world. The core group of this community and the subject of nationalism’s political and cultural aspirations – the nation – can best be viewed as a “large social group integrated by a combination of objective relationships, such as territory, economy, politics, history and culture, and their subjective reflection in collective consciousness” (Hroch, 1993). It is not a revelation that the controversy of nationalism lies in the fact that the nation-state is hardly ever a single nation state. Most states comprised of more than one national group are actually non-nation-states (Migdal, 2004), but in nearly all cases one national group assumes the dominant position in the distribution of cultural values, thus forming a majority, which determines the official culture of the state. Non-conformity or self-definition as a separate cultural entity from the official culture of the state constitutes a national minority, often referred to as an ethnic group.

The modern state has rested for a long time on social and cultural homogeneity, hence the perception that unity means homogeneity. In multinational states (where the population consists of two or more culturally distinct national groups)², the process of homogenisation can be conflicting. This is mostly due to the assumptions of dominant nations and their nation-building elites that the state is their own nation-state, which implies the exclusion of other cultures from ownership of the state (Brubaker, 1996: 103). Too much emphasis on construed national identity tends to inhibit the internal integration of national groups within the state and aggravate the relationship between the majority and minorities. By the same token, taken into the larger context of the EU, we can argue that too great an insistence on national identity inhibits political integration of the new European polity.

Both the nation and the ethnic group are communities characterised by a sense of belonging and loyalty to a group of a perceived “sameness”. Thus, a group’s identity³ is usually based on common ancestry and/or a shared historical past. The distinction between the nation and an ethnic group lies in the fact that ethnicity is a cultural trait in which the people are bound primarily by a common ancestry (language, territory, religion) and does not necessarily entail loyalty to the legal structure of one’s citizenship (Harris, 2002: 3). In the present context, it needs to be stressed that state borders do not define ethnicity; they transcend them. This explains the strength of ethnic affiliation in migrant communities and among ethnic groups across borders and continents (Harris, 2002: 52). The rather subjective character of ethnicity, however, does not make it apolitical. The ethnic principle is at the heart of the national self-determination doctrine, which holds that any self-differentiating people have the right to self-government. In Eastern and Central Europe, where the ethnic principle served as the founding principle for states carved out of the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, ethnicity is still considered the most legitimate foundation for political claims – whether by dominant or minority national groups. The political and cultural claims of national groups, vis-à-vis the state and vis-à-vis each other, are understood here as “ethnic politics”⁴. This article seeks to illustrate that the power and political relevance of ethnic identity, over and beyond the cultural realm, has not diminished anywhere in the world and especially not within the European Union with its emphasis on democracy, minority rights and regional decentralisation (Keating, 2004: 373).

The ethno-political relations within the state reflect the fundamental challenge of democracy. The notions of popular sovereignty and participation from below, rights, expectations and the protection of interests are not only democratic principles only; they are also principles of nationalism, which are rooted in the idea that all political authority stems from “the people”. Post-Communist transitions to democracy brought this interplay of democracy and nationalism into sharp focus theoretically and politically. However, transitions by their very nature are dynamic processes, and they move through a number of subtle transformations.

This article is divided into three parts. The remaining sections of this first theoretical part identify three intricately differentiated stages of post-Communist identity politics, whereby the third, transnational stage is

hypothesising future developments. Before these hypotheses are put to the test and analysed in the third part, the politics of the Slovak-Hungarian relationship are reviewed in the second part. The conclusion argues that the traditional nation-state must be challenged for its repeated failure to produce a lasting reconciliation between ethnic groups and that “Europeanisation” may be a way to move forward.

First stage: Post-Communist nationalism

Enough has been said and written about the salience of nationalism in transition from communism to democracy:

- a) The mobilisation of the ethno-territorial character as an integral part of democratisation has dominated the transition to such an extent that some states, i.e. Czechoslovakia (as well as Yugoslavia, and of course, the Soviet Union) could not withstand its force and disintegrated.⁵
- b) The states that had a tradition of independent statehood to fall back on, i.e. Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, managed (for reasons too complex to discuss here) to sustain the democratisation process without being “derailed” into post-Communist nationalism, as was the case with Slovakia.
- c) In all cases, however, we observed state nationalism from the dominant national groups and a threat to minorities, in some cases a subjugation of minorities (i.e. Slovakia, Latvia, and Estonia).

The national mobilisation of one group leads to the politicisation of another group’s identity and to the overall increase of populist discourse⁶ among all national groups that brings the emphases on belonging to a particular culture into the centre of the political arena. The dominant group may appear increasingly more threatening, and that may lead to the involvement of an ethnic kin state across the borders. Depending on historical experience, this dynamic sends a ripple of fear back and forth, whilst gathering momentum radicalises politics to a dangerous and at times explosive extent. Elites, for all their exploitation of the group’s identity, in terms of political capital, are not wholly responsible for this dynamic – they could not succeed without building on the foundations of historical memory, which is easily invoked when pointing to new insecurities. Regions of historical and ethnic complexity (mutually dependent factors) are particularly prone to this dynamic, which has been well formalised by Rogers Brubaker’s theory of the “triadic nexus” (Brubaker, 1996).

In his attempt to explain the rise of “new nationalism” in post-Communist Europe, he identifies an interlocking dynamic between “nationalising” the nationalism of newly independent states, the autonomist nationalism of national minorities and the trans-border nationalism of the “external homelands”, to which they belong by shared ethnicity but not by citizenship. The role of the “external homeland” in any analysis of majority-minority relationship in Central Europe is crucial. Slovakia and Hungary have been prime examples of this dynamic. Each government and opposition, at various times in their political fortunes and misfortunes, relied on historical events to mobilise their respective groups.

The “triadic” paradigm was particularly relevant to the early stages of post-Communist transitions to democracy, but its critical capacity to characterise inter-ethnic relations in the latter stages of post-Communism may have diminished. Ethnic groups are relatively stable categories, but their identities and interests respond to the opportunities and constraints of institutional processes within the state. This, in turn, responds to the changes in domestic and international developments. The majority-minority relationship, as the most symbolic inter-ethnic relationship, depends on many variables: the policies of the residence state, the political, historical and socio-economic position of the minority, the political environment in the “external” homeland and the international position of both. Claims that minorities make in relation to their residence and ethnic kin states usually vary according to historical legacy and future calculations. The latter is possibly weightier than the former. Since the establishment of democracy, the main objective of the Central European states has been European integration, and hence, a fourth actor – the EU – has entered the majority-minority-homeland equation.

The second stage: “Europeanisation” and the deepening of democracy

The early years of post-Communism could be characterised by the simultaneity of identity-related politics accompanying democratisation at best or the subordination of the democratisation process to “national” issues at worst (as exemplified by Slovakia and, more dramatically, by the ex-Yugoslav republics). The second stage of post-Communism became characterised by the intensification of democratisation from beyond the state through the process of Europeanisation. This is where we are at present. The current Europeanisation stage signifies a considerable improvement in inter-ethnic relations within and between states in the Central European region. It also signifies something of a democratic consolidation and a commitment to democracy, practiced and exercised at various levels – national, sub-national and beyond the state at the EU level. As with all transitions, this stage is also prone to different levels of success, stagnation or even regression.

Europeanisation is taken to mean a process of transformation of the domestic structures of a state by European frameworks, norms and rules. This process necessitates a series of adaptations by national and sub-national actors to economic, social and political changes originating at the European level. Some have managed to mediate through institutions of the European Union, by way of implementing EU rules and policies, in – and this must be stressed – an otherwise almost unchanged domestic arena, but others have not. Domestic structures entail the formal institutions of the state and its national legal system and administration but also the perception and public discourse about national and ethnic identity and the meaning of citizenship and the role of the state and political traditions. The latter is the focus of this paper.

Evidence shows that in states with a significant ethnic division and the presence of ethnic parties, e.g. Slovakia, Europeanisation affected the structure of political competition in a way that bears directly on the relationship between national groups within the state and less directly on perceptions about national identity and its changing function within the new

European framework (Harris, 2004). Europeanisation does not just add another dimension to the discussion about the politics of the state; it changes the debate about the available solutions to political problems.

Europeanisation is a very broad and overused concept (Harris, 2004; Börzel, 2003; Olsen, 2002; Radaelli, 2000). Here, its relevance is limited to its significance for the majority-minority relationship in newly integrated states and confined to the highlighting of a number of points:

- a) Democratisation and Europeanisation are overlapping processes; in fact, in the latter years of accession negotiations, they have become mutually dependent.
- b) Laffan (2001) argues that the EU is a social construct that is being grafted onto the nation-state. The significance of this can hardly be overestimated in cases where Europeanisation follows soon after the relatively recent establishment of independent statehood and where there are still many unresolved issues concerning nationhood and minorities⁷, as I argue below. Laffan further identifies three pillars of the EU as an institutional field: regulative, normative and cognitive. The latter, a product of social subjectivity encompasses meanings, perceptions and symbols through which identity and social reality are constructed. This is the focus of the article.
- c) Europeanisation raises new questions about the purpose and meaning of national identity in the context of European integration. These questions concern the exclusivity of national identity that reinforced the project of the nation-state and the capacity of national identity to offer a contribution towards the reinforcement of the European political project in the area of identity, which it so obviously lacks.

The evolution of identity politics in Central Europe is marked by a degree of ambivalence toward the EU, typically during the Europeanisation stage. This is understandable given the speed and a certain inevitability of the accession. Depending on one's point of view, it is also somewhat risky for further developments within the EU. The third stage – “transnational identity” – that is expected to follow will depend on the progress of the EU over the next few years.

Third stage: “Transnationalism” and the changing context of identity politics

EU Membership does not yet define personal identities; however, it increasingly defines state identity. It has become a constitutive feature of statehood (Herrmann, Risse, Brewer, 2004: 263) and defines the social and institutional space within which states act. This is where we left the second Europeanisation stage of identity politics – the internal integration of national groups within the state (thus, the intensification of liberal, democratic and civic values from within (and partially from beyond) the state). At this stage, it is not clear how this affects the personal identity of the European citizen and how strongly this bonds people to the EU and its institutions – possibly more than the strictly intergovernmental approach to the EU suggests and less than pro-integration elites would like to claim.

Hence, it is nevertheless clear that the EU must be considered an integral part of domestic politics in its member states, no matter how small the impact of the EU on identity construction is. This is even more so with new member states, where the evolution of new party politics has been tightly connected to European integration.

European integration has disturbed the traditional relationships between the state, the nation, sovereignty and democracy: it is creating a multifaceted political entity with a diffused sovereignty. It has split state competencies into various levels of governance, and it even seeks to exercise an influence over democratic processes from beyond the state boundaries⁸. The operative prefix here is multifaceted. The assumptions are that identities and interests of national groups will also adjust and, where appropriate, assume multiple affiliations between the place of residence and kin territory, and that this will (and in some cases, it already does) involve institutional arrangements and policies that cross state boundaries. These “transnational territories will emerge as a significant framework for economic, social and political change”⁹. This would lead to the politics of transnationalism – that is, a form of affiliation that is less defined by the relationship of the individual to state citizenship and more by solidarity based on other factors, i.e. region, or ethnic kin. The empirical evidence in this article seems to confirm the strength of this form of solidarity among the Hungarian minority in the Slovak-Hungarian border region. However, at this early stage of European integration, it is less persuasive when it comes to economic, social and political changes. Transnationalism defies the conventional meaning of the state and does not fit easily into the existing state dependent theories of integration, nationalism or democratisation. It is often referred to as “new regionalism”, that is, “self-rule based on territory, but without exclusive territorial control over territory, as implied by the classical nationalist doctrine” (Keating, 2004 and 1998).

One ought to be aware of the subtle difference between sub-state regionalism, i.e. Scotland or Wales, and regionalism in Central Europe, which usually denotes an ethno-region¹⁰. This is the reason why the term transnationalism appears to be more suitable for this article. With some reservations, we could be looking at a border region (a trans-state or trans-border identity) which ignores the overwhelming ethnic content of affiliation. Ethno-regionalism comes nearer to the mark but gives a false impression of ethnic homogeneity in these territories, which is not always the case¹¹.

The impact of transnational integration can, at this stage, provide only some tentative suggestions. I shall continue with a series of interrelated hypotheses, which are likely to characterise the third, transnational stage of identity politics in Central Europe. I will then turn to the Slovak case.

1) *The main challenge of the accession is reformulating the meaning of the nation, the state and the territory both perceptually and in reality.* The state’s sharing of competencies with Brussels diminishes the role of the nation as the dominant owner of the state with intended consequences for minorities, whose position should become less threatened and more secure in political and practical terms.

2) *European integration, if it is to continue on its intended path of civilising and democratising the European continent, changes the traditional meaning of borders.* Borders, far from the assumed clarity of purpose to delimit one society from the other, signify something of a paradox. In terms of identity, they are deemed to offer inclusion and cohesion; politically, they are a physical expression of sovereignty and they symbolise a completion of the project of the nation-state, as well as delimiting the state's territorial and institutional reach. Historically, borders (particularly in Central Europe) have been subject to a constant renegotiation, always producing overlapping and contradictory ethnic zones (Balibar, 2004), which have led, more often than not, to increased insecurity, ethnic and social divisions, exclusion and political conflict.

Within the EU, borders take on a new significance¹². Again, rather paradoxically, the significance is actually in their absence. The new lack of borders, particularly in the region where borders were associated with historical animosity and/or communist army check points, constitutes one of the most profound changes in the history of the Central European region with tremendous consequences for majority-minority relationships, interstate relations and identity formation as we understand them in a more traditional nation-state-dependent context. This is probably best expressed in the words of the Slovak MEP (SMK) Edit Bauer: "No borders as such! It is an historic moment of unforeseen circumstances."

3) *New arrangements increase trans-border cooperation, which reinvigorates the kinship identity and produces the rise of ethno-regions.* Here the story becomes rather complex and adds to the surplus of speculations in the absence of sufficient empirical evidence. One story is becoming clear: the blurring of boundaries between national, international and regional. There is a fluidity of spaces within which politics are conducted, and that logically leads to a fluidity of affiliations and varied consequences.

THE SLOVAK-HUNGARIAN RELATIONSHIP

The relatively high level of ethnic heterogeneity makes the position of minorities one of the most important socio-political issues in Slovakia¹³. It must be stressed immediately that it is also the only Central European state where an ethnic party, the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (henceforth, the SMK or the Hungarian Coalition), has been one of the most stable and dominant political parties in the government (1998–2006), even if currently in opposition. Due to the combination of the historical significance of Hungary and the political weight of the Hungarian minority at the centre of Slovak politics, the national question in Slovakia is largely exemplified by this inter-ethnic relationship above any other.

The major importance of the Slovak – Hungarian relationship (for both sides, incidentally) reflects a number of historical facts and their mutually incompatible interpretations as well as some very contemporary problems. Two of the most significant historical markers, around which Slovak national identity has been historically constructed, are the Hungarian and Czech

nations. Since Slovakia's independence (1993), the perceptions of the relationship between the nation, the state and democracy are all focused on the Hungarian minority, which represents Hungary in the Slovak national consciousness. When it comes to the Hungarian state, their ethnic kin seem to take on a similar role – an extension of the Hungarian state – and thus, become a subject of the Hungarian national consciousness, particularly its pre-occupation with post-World War I arrangements by which these minorities were “lost” to Hungary. Moreover, the incorporation of Hungarian minority representatives in Slovakia's power structure symbolises, simultaneously, maturing or regressing democracy and an important criterion by which Slovakia's admission into the EU was assessed.

The nationalistic slant of the Mečiar administration was one of the reasons for the initial rejection of Slovakia from the first wave of entrants into the EU. This was the period of the implementation of a discriminatory State Language Law (1995), the negative reforms in the provision of cultural subsidies and unsuccessful efforts to enforce Slovak education into Hungarian schools. The post-1998 administrations succeeded in creating a better framework for the resolution of minority issues despite many political crises, permanent frictions and mutual misgivings about broken promises – from all sides, including the Hungarian Coalition (Harris, 2004). In the 2002 and 2006 electoral periods, the position of the SMK in the government was very strong, with 20 seats in the Parliament and three ministries (agriculture, environment and development) as well as the Deputy Prime-Minister for Human Rights, Minorities and European Integration and the First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament.

The latest general elections, in June 2006, similar to the 2002 elections, were also accompanied by a degree of nationalist rhetoric and the usual inter-party haggling¹⁴, which, despite the presence of the strongly nationalist SNS, resulted in the formation of the leftist-nationalist coalition SMER-SNS-HZDS and cannot be blamed on ethnic tensions. The inclusion of the SNS appears to be questioned by both minorities and ordinary citizens. This less than desirable result is the consequence of a number of factors that are a testament to the immaturity of Slovakia's political system and false perceptions about democratic negotiations and compromise rather than to identity-related issues: a) very low turnout (54%, 71% in 2002); b) the post-accession release of the EU's political conditionality which kept certain political parties out of the government in return for membership. This reward-based strategy by the EU to stabilise political changes and promote liberal-democratic norms has initially, in the pre-accession period, been very effective in Slovakia¹⁵, particularly in minority issues; c) overall dissatisfaction with elites accused of arrogance, a lack of transparency and the abuse of economic power. The combination of those factors brought victory to the nationally orientated SMER party which then proceeded to form a government of least resistance¹⁶ including Mečiar's HZDS. On the other hand, the readiness with which ethnicity re-emerges as a political tool every time political elites vie for voters' attention should tell us something about the entrenchment of ethnic division in political practice.

The positive shifts in minority policies notwithstanding, politically, the Slovak-Hungarian relationship remains tense. The absence of constitutional changes, which would guarantee the continuation of these shifts, questions Slovakia's ability to deal with minority issues to the satisfaction of the Hungarian minority. No actual laws to address outstanding problems have been passed in the Parliament, with the exception of the Minority Language Law (1999), which brought changes to the previous, much-criticised Language Law of 1995 (Harris, 2002 and 2004) and enabled the ratification of the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*¹⁷. The Hungarian SMK rejected the new parliamentary law because of the inadequate usage of minority languages, whilst the opposition abstained from voting for the opposite reason, but the law was passed anyway.

Many other issues remain open, i.e. the change to the preamble of the Constitution (1992), which refers to "the Slovak nation", thus implicitly excluding minorities from ownership of the state (Harris, 2002: 115–119), as well as other demands concerning the constitutional guarantees, the boundaries of administrative districts and the legally and emotionally complex issue of the revocation of the *Beneš Decrees*¹⁸. All in all, the Hungarian representatives, during nearly nine years in the forefront of Slovak politics, achieved a number of minor compromises on some issues but no significant victories. Paradoxically, despite regular disagreements, the assessment of the SMK's influence on the democratic process is overall very positive, particularly the assessment by the Slovak political parties (Harris, 2004; Krause, 2003).

Interestingly, there is an observable and rising dissatisfaction with the political representation of the Hungarian minority by the minority itself. The reasons are many. The following sections are informed by interviews (see below)¹⁹. First there, is the lack of choice whereby one party now represents the minority, which in actuality is an amalgam of 5 different political parties who have all abandoned their individual aims in favour of all-Hungarian representation. Whilst this may have served the electoral purposes of the 1998 elections, when Mečiar's government increased the electoral threshold in an attempt to minimize the opposition, the SMK is now often accused by more liberal and left orientated wings of the minority of short-sighted policies and the maintenance of ethnic tension rather than any resolution of economic problems.

The unemployment rate (13 to 20%) in the Southern, overwhelmingly Hungarian, region has been mentioned by all interviewed. It has been blamed largely on communist neglect and Mečiar's nationalising policies but also on the inability of the SMK to attract more investments. Thus, "the Hungarian Coalition is a conservative party and that is not what this region needs – identity rhetoric is a replacement of the real issue" (Oravec, the Mayor of Štúrovo). On the other hand, "there is no alternative to the SMK in the current climate" (Tóth, The Director of the Forum Minority Research Institute, Šamorín). It should be noted that "the increased concern for socio-economic issues rather than ethnic ones, particularly by the minority elites is a positive development towards de-ethnicisation of Slovak-Hungarian

relations” (Pál Csáky, the former Deputy Prime Minister [1998–2006] and the new leader of the SMK).

EUROPEANISATION AND MINORITIES

The national question claimed a prominent position in the political life of all post-Communist states due to either historical or recent developments. Europeanisation also meant the adoption of *minority legislation* in line with *European norms* (Tesser, 2003), and, on the whole, national elites adopted them as a part of the EU’s political conditionality attached to their accession. It would be naïve, however, to assume that the formal adoption and implementation of minority legislation would guarantee an instant change in majority-minority relationships. Not only are these relationships a result of long-standing historical processes, but the internationalisation of the minority issues left the national elite with little choice but to proceed with rigorous minority policies, often ahead of domestic developments.

A degree of political cynicism associated with minority rights must not be underestimated. Whilst Slovakia would probably have been less inclined to adopt the *European Charter on Minority Languages*, Hungary, with a significant number of kin abroad, supported extensive minority protection. Simultaneously, though, whilst both Slovakia and Hungary were in the process of accession negotiations with the EU, Hungary also adopted controversial legislation on the *Legal status of Hungarians living in neighbouring countries* (*Krajanský Zákon, Status law*, 2001) extending “partial” citizenship rights to their minorities, with the exception of Austria (Stewart, 2002). This legislation, after cautious criticism by the EU (*Venice Commission*, 2002), was eventually changed within the limits of international law and within what was considered a good neighbourly relationship between Slovakia and Hungary.

Whilst the majority of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia admit to some symbolic value of the *Status Law* (concessions for cultural and educational venues in Hungary for students and pensioners), the truth is that membership in the EU makes the law and its benefits, particularly in the area of employment, *de facto* redundant. Nevertheless, the frictions caused by this process only exacerbated a historically delicate relationship between the two nations and emphasised the durability of ethnicity as an electoral tool.

Most representatives of the Hungarian minority interviewed for this article considered the *Status Law* political manipulation orchestrated by the Hungarian Right for the purpose of its waning pre-election campaign and aided by the most nationalistic wing of the Hungarian Coalition. They regretted that the Coalition let itself be drawn into it. On both sides, nationalist elites appear resistant to the fact that the Hungarian minority is precisely that – a minority in a neighbouring state. While at times the excessive concern for ethnic kin by the Hungarian nationalist elites seemed exaggerated, the Slovak depiction of the *Status law* as another attempt to reassert the greater Hungary was even worse.

It is worth considering whether a politically integrated Europe is not, unwittingly, reinvigorating ethnicity through the back door. The erosion of the nation-state’s ability to endorse civic affiliations, particularly in the

newly independent states where the post-Communist nationalist mobilisation has not yet subsided, could lead to the strengthening of ethnic ties rather than establishing a larger political community. The architect of the *Status Law* and the ex-Prime Minister of Hungary, Victor Orbán, endorsed this sentiment when he claimed that “from the Hungarian point of view, the EU is a possibility to unify the Hungarian nation without the modification of borders” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 17. 10. 2003).

It is obvious that in the Central European context nationalism remains an active yet latent force that can be easily mobilised at national levels and that shifting the focus from the national to the European level may give these historically inspired group identities less opportunity to dominate the political process. According to some representatives of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, since the accession, “the minority feels a greater sense of trust, and interethnic relations are improving as they have been for the last seven years because the EU offers a degree of stability” (Fridrich Nagy, Deputy Mayor and the Member of the Regional Parliament, Dunajská Streda).

When it comes to the construction of identities, economic issues should not be underestimated for identities are “formed and reformed in everyday life” (Fridrich Nagy). Where employment opportunities have increased, and where there are more Slovaks moving into Hungarian areas (e.g. near the capital Bratislava due to rising property prices in the capital), communities are becoming less ethnically divided (Fridrich Nagy). By the same token, European integration promises the possibilities of the exchange of labour resources between Hungary and Slovakia; the relative lack of labour force on the Hungarian side of the border may be set off by the high unemployment on the Slovak side (Edit Bauer, MEP). In this case, “the Hungarian communities will become less dependent on the Slovak state and add to the overall aim of the regional regeneration by the EU to equalise economic life throughout the whole region” (László Nagy, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, National minorities and Position of Women).

AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION²⁰

As has been suggested, the Slovak-Hungarian relationship embodies a number of factors that are of supreme importance in the investigation of changing relations between national groups: the strong cultural, historical and political ties between the Hungarian minority and Hungary and their strong political position in the newly integrated Slovakia. For this reason, the border regions of Southern and Eastern Slovakia offer a suitable opportunity to investigate the propositions above, which form the organising framework of the following survey.

This ethnographic survey tried to capture perceptions about politics and a sense of belonging among the members of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia a year after the EU accession. The micro-sample of 110 people is of course too small to represent the more than 500,000 members of the Hungarian minority. The most obvious criterion for this minority is persons whose primary language is Hungarian. Obviously, there are many people in

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Slovakia who self-identify as Hungarian but do not use Hungarian as their primary language, just as there are many who speak Hungarian in private but do not consider themselves Hungarian²¹. Thus, respondents were chosen from schools where Hungarian is the language of instruction, from people who work in Hungarian cultural organisations (and are by their own admission committed to the preservation of their minority) and from politicians who represent the Hungarian Coalition in the national Parliament or local level. 47 of the respondents were lower six-form students (17 years of age) of two Gymnasia with Hungarian as the language of instruction from the capital, Bratislava, and Štúrovo, the predominantly Hungarian border city in the South. The other 63 respondents consisted of the following: teachers at those Gymnasia, council workers in Štúrovo, employees and librarians working at the Forum Institute (Institute for minorities) in Šamorín, which is a mixed town near Bratislava, a number of MP's from the Hungarian Coalition and a few representatives of the Hungarian minority in the city of Košice in the eastern part of the country (also attached to the Forum Institute).

Geographically, Štúrovo is the nearest city to the Hungarian border, even sharing the Danube River with the Hungarian city of Esztergom (they were one city prior to the establishment of Czechoslovakia in 1918 following the Trianon agreements). In recent times, a restored bridge open to crossing with a minimal border control joined the cities. Šamorín is also near the border but closer to Bratislava with a more mixed population. Both towns belong to what is called Žitný Ostrov (Wheat Island, after the predominantly agrarian nature of the Southern region, also called the Hungarian belt). Košice, in the East, has a strong Hungarian presence that goes back to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and to the Hungarian annexation of Eastern Slovakia during WWII. Since 1945, the Hungarian presence in Košice has been decreasing. The capital, Bratislava, is historically a multiethnic city near the Austrian and Hungarian borders. As will become apparent, the geographical position is important for reasons associated with the economy and the influence of the “motherland” Hungary.

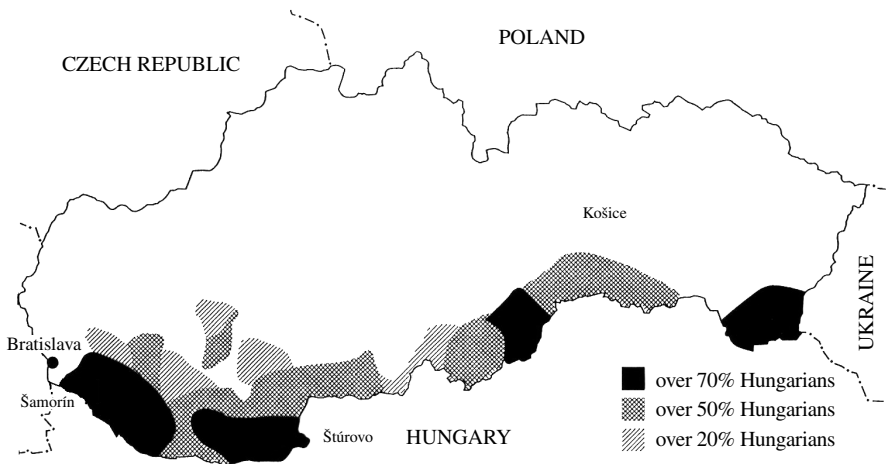


Table 1. – On a scale of 0–5, do you feel that Slovakia’s membership in the EU has altered the relationship between the Slovak majority and the Hungarian minority? (0 – not at all, 5 – significantly)

POLITICALLY	0–3	4–5 (significantly)	Comments
All regions and ages	100	10	the most used category: 3

ECONOMICALLY	0–3	4–5	Comments
All regions and ages	90	20	the most used category: 3

Table 2. – In terms of your identity, which of the following categories do you feel most comfortable with? In order of relevance: 1– most relevant, 2 – relevant, 3 – rather relevant, 4 – less relevant, 5 – not relevant. You can tick more than one category.

Category	0–3 (relevant)	4–5 (not relevant)	Comments
Hungarian living in Slovakia	103		Most responses: “rather relevant”
Slovak of Hungarian background	2		
Hungarian (no state affiliation)	83		This could be in response to the “no” vote to dual citizenship in Hungary
Slovak (state affiliation)	–		
European (ethnically Hungarian)	87		
European	5		
Other			

Table 3. – In terms of political activity (i.e. local politics and national politics) are you more interested in: your locality/region, the Slovak capitol Bratislava, the Hungarian capitol Budapest or Brussels? In order of importance: 1– most important, 2 – important, 3 – less important, 4 – not important

Place of interest	1–2 Important		3–4 Less important		Comment
	Residence Štúrovo	Residence Bratislava/ Šamorín Košice	Residence Štúrovo	Residence Bratislava/ Šamorín Košice	
Locality/region	45	51			
Bratislava	23	46			
Budapest	31	19		16	Further from the Hungarian border Budapest appears less important.
Brussels	21	31		9	

Table 4. – On a scale of 0–5, has EU membership affected your sense of security? (0 – not at all, 5 – significantly)

All regions and Ages	0–2 (no)	3	4–5 (yes)	Comment
Politically	66	22	22	There appears to be a small improvement in security in political and cultural terms.
Economically	83	14	13	
Culturally	70	25	15	

Table 5. – Do you think that developments in your region have a long-term influence on the relationship between Slovakia and Hungary?

	Yes/possibly	Don't know	Not really	Comment
All regions and Ages	98	12		

ANALYSIS

The above survey is not a sociological study but seeks to give an impression of issues that could be considered relevant to identity politics of a politically and geographically concentrated minority in a state where national issues remain high on the political agenda. A number of classifications are in order.

First, a minority in the Central European context usually denotes an historical minority (autochthonous) who have resided in the same territory for generations but their state affiliations have changed due to the repositioning of borders following the establishment of new states after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires or the Communist regime. This is very different from Western Europe, where the term “minority” usually refers to immigration (“new minorities”, as they are called in Slovakia). Both types of minorities face specific problems and require specific legislative arrangements for their resolution.

Second, the Hungarian minority is concentrated in certain areas of the country, which they feel should form a coherent administrative district. This is particularly the case with the Southern border region (*Žitný Ostrov*). However, this region is divided between two administrative districts (*Trnava and Nitra*) with two major consequences for political competition:

- a) The dissatisfaction of the Hungarian minority who feel that self-governing regions (VÚC, Vyššie územné celky) have been drawn according to a principle of diminishing Hungarian influence (MEP [SMK] Edith Bauer) in the areas with an overwhelmingly Hungarian population²². In this respect, they lack the ethnic and geographic coherence that ethno-regions would suggest.
- b) Political competition between parties at the state level tends to migrate into the regions. The best example was the declaration of an anti-SMK coalition between many Slovak parties for the regional elections (see note 27). There is only one Hungarian party and a number of Slovak political parties who are always willing to mobilise on the purportedly excessive Hungarian influence in the mixed regions. This is even more so now,

when the Hungarian Coalition is fighting many battles. First, it acts as an opposition party within a fractious party system (to whose fractiousness it often contributes); second, it acts as an ethnic party in the post-accession country where, as the last elections demonstrated, its presence in the government is no longer considered a foreign policy issue connected to successful European integration; and finally, it is struggling to reconcile the growing ideological and socio-economic chasms within its own electorate.

What do the results of the above survey tell us about the third stage of the post-Communist transition – “transnationalism”?

The identity of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is overwhelmingly ethnic: some 84% of the respondents view themselves primarily as a “Hungarian living in Slovakia”. This is further confirmed by the 80% who identified themselves as “European but ethnically Hungarian” (Table 2). What is interesting about this is that political affiliation appears to be rather European (80%) than Slovak (the Slovak state is viewed strictly as a place of residence) (75%). However, in the responses to the question of political interest, Europe is in third place after locality (the majority of respondents) and the national level (Bratislava) (Table 3). The external homeland, that is Budapest, takes precedence over the national level only in Štúrovo, which is geographically the closest to the Hungarian border. Further away from the border, or nearer to Bratislava (where the locality is actually the capital), Budapest ceases to be important. This says probably more about media influence than about where political interest lies. The most important finding in this context is that locality/region carries the weight of political interest and engagement – politics are moving away from the centre.

In this respect, we are probably observing a slow regionalisation of the Hungarian minority within the EU context. In order to make a more meaningful statement about the relation of Europeanisation and regionalisation among other national groups, whether in Slovakia or elsewhere, one would have to conduct a similar survey among the Slovak population in mixed and mostly Slovak regions. In the absence of such a comparative survey, a degree of caution is required when claiming the emergence of an ethno-region in the Southern “Hungarian belt” between Slovakia and Hungary. On the other hand, there is no denying that the Hungarian minority’s cultural and political life takes place in their region and that European identity takes precedence over the Slovak territorial one.

This can be interpreted in a number of ways. State affiliation is marginalised in favour of ethnic affiliation, either for historical reasons or as a reflection of actual daily existence. Whilst the Slovak state is accepted, it is being supplemented by the EU, which appears to offer an acceptable political identity. This is consistent with beliefs that historical minorities in Eastern/Central Europe prefer larger, less national political units²³ and that Europeanisation opens different political spaces and opportunities within which national groups operate. Here, again, it would be beneficial to conduct a survey on the other side of the border to gain a deeper understanding of how Hungarian citizens feel about their border region and

where their affiliations lie. I contend that Europeanisation means different things to minorities than it does to the dominant national groups within their nation states, as rising euroscepticism in Central Europe demonstrates.

Just as important are the findings of the fifth question concerning the relationship between regional developments and the long-term influence on the relationship between Slovakia and Hungary, whereby 90% of the respondents believe it to be positive. If democratisation is also about peaceful coexistence among national groups, then we ought to concede that transnationalism, open borders, and politics, which are decentralised beyond the dominance of the nation-state, are a way forward.

“THE OLD REGION IN A NEW FORM?”²⁴: A CONCLUSION

The history of Central Europe has produced divergent accounts of identity politics within the post-Communist and Europeanisation stages of the democratisation processes. The Europeanisation stage has altered the political context within which the majority and minorities co-exist and how they perceive their roles within their nation-states. Interests and identities are shaped and affected by a rights-granting and economy-regulating entity – no longer the state alone but its extension and in some areas of legislation and distribution its replacement – the EU. Even though ethnic identities appear to be very durable, they are affected by policies and institutions which have been extended beyond the nation-state.

European integration affects the meanings associated with the nation, the state, the borders and citizenship while producing a plethora of contradictions, opportunities and challenges. Whilst the role of the state (and by implication, the majority) has not been shaken out of its dominance yet, transnationalism creates unprecedented prospects to move politics beyond the state and “rescue” democracy and the relationship between national groups from its confines.

Minorities are about memory, identity and solidarity; border regions in Central Europe are all of these, but they are also spaces where memories can be transcended, identities multiplied and transformed and where democracy, governance and European integration are played out. The traditional nation-state as the home of democracy ought to be challenged for its repeated failure to produce a lasting reconciliation between national groups. The intention here has been twofold. The first intention is to argue that democracy needs a novel shape and that the assertion of border regions may be the first instance where the EU project can be truly tested by shifting the political context of a majority-minority relationship beyond the boundaries of the nation-state and into a wider European space. The second intention is to highlight the potential for further research about the relationship between Europeanisation and minorities and establish in the long term whether the third stage of the post-Communist transition, European transnationalism, will indeed aid the construction of stable political communities in Central Europe.

APPENDIX

Interviews conducted in June 2005:

Pál Csáky:	Deputy Prime Minister for Human Rights, Minorities and European Integration (SMK), 1998–2006, recently elected the leader of the SMK.
Kornélia Csala:	The Director of “Hungarian Cultural Home”, a civil society cultural organisation in Košice.
Edit Bauer:	MEP (SMK).
Mária Kulcsár:	Head of the office of the Hungarian Information Centre, the Forum Institute, Košice.
László Nagy:	The Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and the Position of Women (SMK).
Fridrich Nagy:	Deputy Mayor, Dunajská Streda and Member of the regional parliament (Trnavská Župa).
László Óllős:	President of the Forum Institute, Šamorín.
Ján Oravec:	Mayor of Štúrovo.
Károly Tóth:	The Director of the Forum Minority Research Institute, Šamorín.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The article is based on a research project funded by the British Academy (SG – 37978) “The changing context of minority politics: The impact of European integration on the Hungarian minority in Slovakia”, June 2004–June 2005.
- ² National minorities, whilst not easily distinguished from ethnic groups, are nevertheless usually assumed to be indigenous, historical or territorial culturally distinct groups of a larger size. Whilst definitional distinctions between “multinational”, “multicultural” and “multiethnic” remain imprecise, in political parlance, “multinational” usually refers to a state where there is a constitutional recognition of the (co)existence of a number of national groups, i.e. what federal states such as Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia were before their disintegration. All states are at the same time increasingly more multicultural in terms of the variety of ethnic communities and protection policies they seek (including migrant communities). A multiethnic state, on the other hand, is a state where there are a number of national minorities with varying degrees of political and cultural protection by the state; Slovakia probably fits that category. See also: Kymlicka and Norman (2000) and Sasse and Thielemann (2005).
- ³ For an in-depth discussion of the concept of “identity” as used in this article, see Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 6–9).
- ⁴ For a similar definition of ethnic politics that stresses the collective actions inspired by ethnic identity, see Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 5).
- ⁵ Nationalism was obviously not the only reason for the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. However, nationalism was an integral part of post-Communist democratisation processes. See mainly Harris (2002) and furthermore: G. Nodia (1996) and Beisinger (1996). For a more historical perspective of the relationship between democracy and nationalism, see Mann in Periwal and Gellner (1995: 44–65).
- ⁶ There are many forms of populism, but usually it denotes a form of political discourse that either stresses “the belief in the value of belonging to a group or culture” (I. Berlin) or sets itself against the prevailing liberal institutions and assumptions of individuality. It is an imprecise concept because it is parasitic on other ideologies, but in nearly all cases, populism is a style of politics that tends to appeal to “people” and extols their virtues and/or suffering over “others”, thus justifying political action. See mainly: Ionescu and Gellner (eds.) (1969) and Taggart (2000).
- ⁷ For the impact of the EU’s enlargement on national policies in Central Europe, see Vermeersch (2003).
- ⁸ Lord and Harris (2006), in their defence of democracy beyond the state, argue that there is a mutual interdependence between democracy beyond the state in the new Europe and democracy within the state.
- ⁹ For the impact of European integration on national groups and regions, see mainly: Keating (2004 and 1998).
- ¹⁰ A territory on two sides of the state border that is based on ethnic kinship.

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- ¹¹ Deets and Stroschein (2005: 293) refer to “minority within minority” in their discussion about the contentiousness of territorial autonomy.
- ¹² A comprehensive overview of debates about territory and borders in Europe can be found in Rumford (eds.) (2006), Special Issue of Comparative European Politics 4: 2/3.
- ¹³ 14–18% of the population declares itself to be other than Slovak. Slovakia thus counts as one of the most ethnically heterogeneous countries in Europe. With the exception of the ex-Soviet Republics, Slovakia is in 4th place after Macedonia, Spain and Croatia (Dostál in Kollár and Mesežnikov, eds. 2000: 175–189).
- ¹⁴ The 2006 pre-election campaign which started on regional and local levels was steeped in inter-party manoeuvres to minimize the opposition. An anti-SMK coalition has been declared by some Slovak parties for the purpose of regional elections in the Nitra regional parliament where the Hungarian Coalition has the majority (SME, 11 June 2005). Similarly, the SMK is apparently exerting some pressure on their own voters to vote for their candidates in preference to Slovak candidates in local councils in mixed regions. For the role of ethnic parties, see also Chandra (2005).
- ¹⁵ For EU conditionality both as a concept and as a practice, see mainly: F. Schimmelfennig (2003 and 2007) and Lord and Harris (2006, chpt. 5).
- ¹⁶ Z. Bútorová (2006) demonstrates that the new Slovak government, particularly the SNS, does not have the support of the majority of the population.
- ¹⁷ The main post-Cold War agreements on minority rights are: the 1990 Copenhagen Documents (“the respect for and protection of minorities”) and the 1995 Council of Europe’s Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.
- ¹⁸ This refers to the post WWII decrees of the Czechoslovak President Beneš, on the basis of which the confiscation of Hungarian properties in Slovakia and the expulsions of the 3 million Sudeten Germans from the Czech lands were legally justified. The Hungarian and Sudeten German minorities were accused of being “collectively guilty” of collaboration with the enemy (Nazi Germany). None of these decrees have actually been revoked, and there are no restitutions for the confiscated Hungarian properties available under the current Slovak legislation.
- ¹⁹ Interviews conducted in June 2005: for the list of interviewees, see the Appendix above.
- ²⁰ The empirical research has been conducted in Slovakia during the year 2005. The survey took place in June 2005.
- ²¹ In certain parts of Slovakia (mainly the East and the South), Hungarian is spoken by many people who nevertheless do not consider themselves Hungarian, i.e. people who used to live in the sub-Carpathian region which was annexed to Hungary during the war; many are Romanies, people who have married into Hungarian families or people who simply live among Hungarian speaking neighbours. For a more detailed debate, see: Deets and Stroschein (2005).
- ²² The creation of at least one all-Hungarian district remains one of the unfulfilled demands of the Hungarian Coalition. See Harris (2004) and the comments of the above interviewees.
- ²³ The Hungarian minority was always opposed to Slovak independence, which was one of the reasons for ethnic tensions in post-independent Slovakia.
- ²⁴ Words borrowed from László Óllós, President of the Forum Institute in Šamorín.
- ²⁵ For the notion of democracy as if imprisoned by the overwhelmingly ethnic character of the nation state, see also Habermas (1992 and 2001).

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Explaining Patterns of Delegation in EU Humanitarian Aid Policy

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Abstract: This article analyses delegation patterns in the European Union's humanitarian aid policy. Rational-choice principal-agent accounts form the first theoretical perspective from which this topic is investigated. Sociological institutionalism is brought in next to round out our understanding of delegation in the field of EU humanitarian aid. Three issues are addressed. Why did EU member states delegate authority over humanitarian aid decision-making to the European Commission? How do member states maintain control over the Commission once responsibility has been transferred? And what are the implications of delegation for supranational autonomy?

Key words: Principal-Agent theory, rational-choice institutionalism, sociological institutionalism, EU humanitarian aid policy

INTRODUCTION

This article analyses patterns of delegation in EU humanitarian aid policy. Rational-choice Principal-Agent (P-A) accounts offer the first theoretical lens through which this topic is investigated. Within the field of EU studies, case study analysis using P-A has mainly focused on internal and especially regulatory policy domains. Scholars who have used insights from P-A analysis to study EU external relations have mainly concentrated on external trade policy, with some exceptions.

Matrix: P-A analysis of EU policy domains

	<i>Internal</i>	<i>External</i>
<i>Regulatory</i>	Competition policy (Schmidt, 1998) Internal market (Pollack, 2003a)	External trade policy (Meunier, 2000; Kerremans, 2004)
<i>Distributive</i>	Cohesion policy (Blom-hansen, 2005)	<i>Humanitarian aid policy</i>

Pollack (2002: 212) asserts that additional case studies are needed to test P-A hypotheses on patterns of delegation in the EU. Taking a cue from Pollack, existing P-A models will be used to analyse EU humanitarian aid policy, thus for the first time applying P-A to an external, distributive EU policy domain (see matrix above). In addition, humanitarian aid provides an interesting case on which to test P-A models because, as opposed to trade, which is an exclusive Community competence, humanitarian aid is an area of shared competences. While a substantial part of the European

humanitarian aid budget has been entrusted to the European Commission, responsibility for humanitarian aid has only been partially transferred, and each member state conducts a national humanitarian aid policy parallel to the activities undertaken at the EU level.

Tallberg (2002: 42) posits that leaving P-A explanations of delegation unchallenged “neither lends credibility to the claims of P-A theorists, nor encourages theoretical refinement”. Aspinwall and Schneider (2000: 25–26) phrase it even more forcefully, as they believe that “it is crucial that theorists take into account alternative theoretical explanations to the puzzles they are addressing, and this applies primarily to rational choice theorists, who should be forced to relax their universality claims.” In this article, sociological institutionalism is brought in to enrich our understanding of delegation in the field of EU humanitarian aid. The following issues are discussed, first from a rational-choice P-A and then from a sociological institutionalist viewpoint: rationale of delegation, design of delegation, and implications of delegation for supranational autonomy.

I. RATIONAL-CHOICE PRINCIPAL-AGENT

A. Rationale of delegation: functional demands

Why did EU member states (principal) delegate to the European Commission (agent) the responsibility for carrying out humanitarian aid tasks on their behalf? According to rational-choice P-A analysis, institutional choices are guided by the functions an institution is to perform and the anticipated effects of a given institutional arrangement on policy outcomes (Pollack, 1997: 101–102; Tallberg, 2002: 25). From the transaction-cost perspective on which P-A models are built (Doleys, 2000), delegation takes place when expected benefits outweigh expected costs.

Benefits of delegation

Demand for policy-relevant expertise

Political actors know the outcomes they want to obtain but are uncertain about which specific measures will achieve these results. Such policy uncertainty provides a motivation for delegation to a specialized agent with the policy-relevant expertise necessary to perform the task. The specialist knowledge and competences of the Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Office ECHO are harnessed for making decisions in the technically complex domain of humanitarian assistance. Member states do not exclusively rely on the Commission as a supranational expert. However, with a staff of 200 desk officers in Brussels and 100 field experts, ECHO is better equipped in terms of human resources than national humanitarian aid departments.

ECHO has created tools which should allow it to serve as a reservoir of well-founded know-how necessary to design quality humanitarian responses such as methodologies used to identify areas facing high humanitarian needs, “forgotten crises” and disaster prone countries. In addition, ECHO has steadily increased its field presence to improve the analysis of humanitarian crises. Specialists in key humanitarian sectors (such as health, water and sanitation, provision of food, shelter) are located in around 40

offices throughout the world. ECHO has also established a Framework Partnership Agreement with the organizations implementing EU humanitarian projects¹ to ensure that they have a proven track record in relief and are financially reliable.

Efficient and rapid decision-making

Rather than governments negotiating the details of all policy proposals in the Council, it might be more cost-efficient to adopt general guidelines. The specific contents of these guidelines would then be worked out through the Commission's implementation measures (Tallberg, 2002: 26–27). In addition to a reduced workload for principals, delegation can help in ensuring “the swift and efficient adoption of implementing regulations that would otherwise have to be adopted in a time-consuming legislative process by the member governments themselves” (Pollack, 2005: 33). Humanitarian emergencies necessitate a quick response. As delegation speeds up decision-making, humanitarian action, by its very nature, seems to require a transfer of responsibility to an executive agent. Furthermore, because of the limited predictability and volatility of humanitarian crises, relief is not easily regulated through forward-looking legislative instruments.

Credible commitment

Principals may delegate authority to establish a credible commitment to their long-term aims, which might conflict with their short-term ambitions. Elected officials in governments, for reason of seeking re-election, may face the temptation to renege on promises. Commissioners are appointed for at least five years. The absence of day-to-day electoral pressures is all the more applicable to *fonctionnaires* who may stay at the Commission for their entire career. Agents are therefore believed to have fewer incentives to deviate from long-term goals even when those no longer enjoy popular support (Majone, 2001: 111).

In 1996, EU member states adopted a Regulation which stipulates that EU humanitarian aid decisions must not be “guided by political considerations” and must be taken “solely according to victims’ needs” (Council, 1996). Because external aid also constitutes a potentially influential foreign policy tool, member states’ short-term interests might lead them to allot humanitarian funds to high-profile crises allowing for donor visibility or on the basis of security considerations or historical ties. Delegating to an independent Commission office lends credibility to member states’ commitment to provide relief equitably. Instructions from member state principals in the Council on how ECHO should spend the humanitarian funds with which it has been entrusted are not allowed.

A concrete translation of ECHO's commitment to provide genuinely needs-based aid is its support for so-called forgotten crises, emergencies which face high humanitarian needs but receive limited media coverage and attract an insufficient number of donors. The Commission has been allocating a growing share of its resources to such silent crises, from 20% in 2003 to 30% in 2005. As consultants evaluating ECHO's work phrased it: “Bilateral humanitarian aid focuses on the more visible and more political

disasters that are in line with political priorities. DG ECHO's humanitarian aid to the less visible and unattractive forgotten crises allows the Member States' bilateral aid to respond to the so-called 'CNN-Crises'." (Daldrup et al., 2006: 17)

Economies of scale and scope

Delegation to a supranational agent allows principals to profit from economies of scale and scope. As a world leading humanitarian donor, ECHO may attain more pronounced international visibility and impact than any individual member state donor could achieve on its own. Potential economies of scale include mobilising a critical mass of funding, carrying out a large volume of activities, accumulating expertise and building up a common body of data, and establishing uniform procedures for managing humanitarian aid. Potential economies of scope emerge because the Commission sponsors humanitarian aid operations with a wider geographical and sector coverage than any of the member states.

Avoid free-riding

When states can benefit from a global public good such as the worldwide fulfilment of humanitarian needs, whether or not they contribute to its provision, the free rider problem might arise. The main source of ECHO funds is the European Community budget to which all member states are obliged to make a fixed contribution. By transferring the responsibility for humanitarian aid to the EU level, no national government is capable of defecting from its commitment to provide assistance while letting other EU states bear the financial burden.

Enhance acceptability

Member states might resort to delegation because this prevents blame from falling on them if a humanitarian operation goes wrong (Martens, 2005: 656–657). Delegation to the Commission can also serve as a legitimiser. Recipient countries are sometimes reluctant to allow international humanitarian action, arguing that it constitutes a breach of their sovereignty. The EU as a supranational body has no record of colonialism and has therefore been relatively acceptable to the South. Activities launched by the Commission, which is perceived to operate autonomously from governments and in a relatively non-political manner, might carry fewer overtones of charity, dependence, or interventionism than would humanitarian operations conducted directly by, say, the United Kingdom or France.

Costs of delegation

Collective principal

The Council is a collective principal constituted of the 27 EU member states. The pooling of sovereignty required before a collective principal can delegate a task to a supranational agent brings with it the risk of producing "a collective policy for the Member States that is different from the ideal point determined at the national level" (Lake and McCubbins, 2006: 367).

The difference between delegating responsibility for relief to national humanitarian aid agencies and to ECHO is that the decision-making structures at the EU level take into account the policy preferences of other states, possibly causing a discrepancy between a member state's goals and ECHO's final output. The rules determining how decisions are made in the collective principal matter here. Humanitarian aid is governed by qualified majority voting, which means that an individual member state cannot veto a decision which is not in line with its preferences.

Agency losses

Central to P-A theory is the idea that the preferences of principals and agents are not perfectly aligned and that agents try to pursue their private interests (Kiewiet and McCubbins, 1991: 5). Principals develop control mechanisms to constrain opportunistic agency behaviour, but such devices are imperfect (Hawkins et al., 2006: 32). Therefore, agents possess a margin for "residual non-compliance" (Tallberg, 2002: 42). Because EU countries cannot completely control ECHO, there is bound to be some slippage between the desired goals of the member states and the actions of their agent.

Agency dysfunction

Traditional P-A accounts recognize dysfunction only to the extent that it is caused by agency opportunism. Yet other factors can lead to discrepancies between an agent's mandate and its performance. Firstly, principals themselves might be at the source of an agent being unable to deliver on its assigned tasks. An example is member state pressure on the Commission to allocate humanitarian funds to satisfy political goals rather than the most acute needs, as was the case in Kosovo (1999). This type of measure challenges the Commission's reputation as a neutral aid provider. Such principals undermine the benefits to be reaped from delegation in terms of greater credibility and acceptability of ECHO humanitarian operations.

Secondly, while specialization allows agents to build up policy-relevant expertise, it can also lead to a lack of organizational coherence (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 37). Responsibility for EU external aid is split between DG Development, DG External Relations, DG EuropeAid, and DG ECHO. Directorates-General compete for funds and turf, and coordination efforts to ensure coherence of the overall EU aid strategy remain hesitant.

Thirdly, dysfunctional behaviour may be triggered "when bureaucracies are given huge, aspirational tasks" but "a complex world defies the bureaucracy's tidy boxes and neatly circumscribed division of labor" (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 44). Pathologies in performance may emerge when agents are asked to implement goals that are difficult to juggle (Gutner, 2005: 11). The Commission's mandate to provide apolitical relief might clash with its ambition to promote human rights via aid conditionality. To put it sharply: if assistance is denied because of human rights abuses, what about the right to food, shelter and health care?

Fourthly, while standard modes of operation allow an organization to competently perform its tasks, sometimes procedures become ends in

themselves and start obscuring the organization's overall mission (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 39). Reportedly, the Commission's obsession with accountability causes delays in the disbursement of humanitarian funds and has a counterproductive effect on ECHO's core goal of flexible and rapid humanitarian response (Interview Médecins Sans Frontières 18/08/2005).

Fifthly, dysfunction might result from the Commission's dual role as agent and principal (Gutner, 2005). ECHO delegates responsibility for on-the-ground implementation of humanitarian operations to NGOs and UN agencies. Dysfunction might occur due to the latter's underrated achievements or their pursuance of their own interests possibly in contradiction with the Commission's or member states' preferences.

B. Design of delegation: checking agency behaviour

Principals fear that the agent will use the room provided by delegation to pursue its self-interest – believed to consist of budget or competence maximization – possibly at the expense of their own preferences. Therefore, principals establish control mechanisms to minimize agency losses. Control devices consume principals' resources (Kiewiet and McCubbins, 1991: 27), and “principals will adopt a given control mechanism only if the cost is less than the sum of the agency losses that it reduces” (Pollack, 1997: 105). Moreover, as Tallberg (2002: 28–29) points out, the very rationale of delegation may prevent principals from establishing rigid control mechanisms, since “certain functions delegated require that agents enjoy substantive levels of discretion in the execution of their powers”. Principals face the choice between minimizing the risk of agency slippage through strict oversight procedures or allowing the agent sufficient independence to carry out its responsibilities efficiently (Kassim and Menon, 2003: 125).

Obligation for ECHO to provide information on its activities

To curb agency losses, principals need to be well-informed on agents' conduct (Pollack, 1997: 106). Control is complicated by the agent's informational advantage. Agents know more about their actions than principals do, which makes it difficult for the principal to uncover unwanted agency activity after delegation. While specialization is a reason for delegating, it simultaneously exacerbates the problem of hidden information. “If the principal must learn everything that the agent knows and observe everything the agent does, the gains from specialization diminish accordingly. At the extreme, with perfect knowledge and monitoring, it is almost as if the principal has performed the task itself” (Hawkins et al., 2006: 26).

In order to acquire information on the Commission's performance, the 1996 Council Regulation on humanitarian aid requires the Commission to submit an annual report to the Council with a summary of the operations financed in the course of the given year. However, relying on self-reporting is problematic in a context of informational asymmetry. Lake and McCubbins (2006: 350) pointedly remark: “The problem of hidden information which permits agency slack to arise in the first place cannot be solved simply by mandating the agent to tell the principal all that he knows.”

Ex ante administrative procedures defining the scope of ECHO activity

Principals strategically design procedures in order to increase the likelihood of obtaining the desired policy outcomes from their agents. They draw up a contract which specifies the scope of agency activity, the instruments the agent is to use, and the procedures to be followed (Hawkins et al., 2006: 28) in “a preemptive attempt to reduce the incidence of shirking by effectively limiting the bureaucracies’ *capacity* to shirk” (Doleys, 2000: 538).²

Scope

The 1996 Regulation emphasizes that humanitarian activities are not intended to realize political goals. This can be seen as a commitment to the humanitarian imperative, i.e. the moral duty to help crisis victims irrespective of political considerations. At the same time, the political neutrality of EU humanitarian aid can be linked to the member states’ desire to limit the Commission’s role in ‘real’ foreign policy.

Instruments

Member states conferred upon the Commission large discretion to decide upon the best way “for allocating, mobilizing and implementing” humanitarian aid (Council, 1996). The Regulation *does* explicitly limit the Commission’s humanitarian activities to civilian operations, excluding the use of military means for humanitarian purposes. With blatantly political measures, let alone military ones, we clearly move beyond the domain of ECHO competences to enter the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Security and Defence Policy, areas where member states have been reluctant to delegate authority to a supranational agent.

Decision-making procedures

Over time, ECHO’s discretion has expanded to the benefit of timely humanitarian assistance and at the expense of tighter member state scrutiny. In the 1996 Regulation, the Council agreed on the need to establish flexible and fast decision-making procedures for the financing of humanitarian operations. However, in 1999, a large-scale evaluation pointed out that decision-making procedures were ill-suited to sudden emergencies, in which ECHO took too long to release funds and adapt to swiftly changing realities in the field (Franklin Advisory Services, 1999). In 2001, a fast-track procedure was introduced, which enabled the Director-General of ECHO to make primary emergency decisions within 24 to 48 hours of maximally €3 million and for a maximum of 3 months without prior consultation with member state principals. While this fast-track procedure provides ECHO with great decision-making autonomy, it is limited to small sums and has so far only been used for natural disasters, suggesting that with regard to politically sensitive emergencies, member states are less willing to grant their agent independence. Even after the adoption of the fast-track procedure, humanitarian NGOs as well as the Commissioner for humanitarian aid have complained that red tape still slows down ECHO in efficiently meeting its humanitarian mandate (*De Standaard*, 24 July 2006).

Discretion-based delegation

The 1996 Regulation resembles “discretion-based delegation”, under which the principal formulates the general goals to be achieved and then leaves it to the agent to find the best method to fulfil the assigned task, rather than “rules-based delegation”, which describes in detail what the agent should do (Hawkins et al., 2006: 28-29). Discretion-based delegation is useful when – as is the case for humanitarian aid – policy uncertainty is high, the delegated task requires specialized knowledge, or flexibility is important. However, it creates greater opportunities for agency opportunism. Unsurprisingly, member state principals submitted the Commission’s humanitarian work to stringent *ex post* control. This is called the substitution effect, viz. if *ex post* opportunities to monitor are effective, *ex ante* limits on discretion are less necessary (Huber and Shipan, 2004: 24).

Ex post oversight procedures to monitor ECHO

McCubbins and Schwartz (1987: 426–434) distinguish between “police-patrol oversight”, in which principals personally engage in detailed vigilance of agency action, and “fire-alarm oversight”, where principals rely on interested third parties to monitor agency activity. Kiewiet and McCubbins (1991: 33–34) add that principals can supervise their agents through “institutional checks”, whereby one agent is charged with monitoring the activities of another agent or is given the power to block its decisions.

Police-patrol oversight

Pollack (1997: 114) defines comitology³ as the primary police-patrol oversight method over the European Commission. The Humanitarian Aid Regulation provides for the establishment of the Humanitarian Aid Committee (HAC). The HAC functions as a management committee or a regulatory committee, enabling member state representatives to exert genuine control over ECHO. In reality, the HAC has never rejected an ECHO proposal. However, this need not automatically imply that the committee is merely a rubber-stamping mechanism.

The first explanation for the 100% approval rate is the fact that ECHO’s proposals are generally found to be well-designed and need little alteration (Interview HAC representative 10/04/2006). This confirms the benefits to be gained from delegation to a supranational body, functioning as a reservoir of expertise and as a neutral entity providing objective proposals. Conversely, it is in the Commission’s interest to invest in high-quality work as authority is granted only to the extent that the agent appears to perform the delegated task in a satisfactory manner.

In addition, the HAC might have more influence than is at first assumed through “rational anticipation” (Pollack, 1997: 111). ECHO anticipates principals’ wishes and adjusts its behaviour accordingly. It puts forward proposals which it deems acceptable to all member states (Mowjee and Macrae, 2002: 17; Interviews HAC representatives 12/04/2006 and 08/05/2006). P-A holds that agents strive to escape oversight by principals. However, control mechanisms might actually be to the agent’s benefit. The HAC works as a self-protection device for ECHO. Contacts with national

HAC representatives allow ECHO to stay in touch with member state sensibilities. This enables the Commission to avoid transgressing what is considered acceptable by principals and being punished afterwards.

Fire-alarm oversight

Aid beneficiaries and EU citizens

Populations affected by humanitarian crises constitute a first potential fire-alarm. However, recipients in third countries have no official channels to influence ECHO policy-making. Chances that EU citizens – who have more opportunities for shaping donor policies through party or pressure group politics for instance – will sound the fire-alarm on humanitarian issues are compromised by lack of personal involvement.

Humanitarian NGOs

Thanks to their in-the-field operationality, NGOs may provide principals with useful information on ECHO behaviour. Yet there is no reason to assume that their interests coincide with those of principals. NGO advocacy in general is collegial with ECHO policies rather than directed against them. Despite occasional friction, contacts between ECHO and VOICE (Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies), a lobbying network of European NGOs active in humanitarian aid delivery, seem to be characterized by trust. One VOICE member, when describing a meeting with ECHO, stated “I walked in and had the feeling as if I was meeting friends” (VOICE, 2004: 13). One might wonder in particular whether NGOs’ fire-alarm potential is not thwarted by their financial dependence. NGOs, which receive 50 to 60% of ECHO’s budget, need Commission funding for carrying out their activities and hence are likely to be mild in their assessment of ECHO. Then again, European NGOs can usually rely on considerable private funding and choose between various sources of public funding. Apart from ECHO, member governments provide support to humanitarian NGOs. Furthermore, the relationship between ECHO and its NGO partners is one of mutual dependence with ECHO relying on NGOs for the execution of humanitarian projects.

Media

The media can play a role in holding donors such as the Commission accountable for their humanitarian efforts or lack of them (the so-called CNN-effect). Yet the media’s fire-alarm function is uneven because for a crisis to be covered, it has to be newsworthy (Smillie and Linear, 2003: 14; Olsen, 2004: 90). A “photogenic” crisis like the 2004 Tsunami is easier to “sell” than the problem of the Sahrawi refugees living in camps in the Algerian desert and depending entirely on humanitarian aid since 1975. Moreover, media coverage is often patchy and brief or even incorrect due to a lack of direct investigation (Smillie and Linear, 2003: 14). The media might also be “used” by the donors that they could hold accountable. It has been suggested that donors have manipulated the media to justify disproportionate spending in high-profile emergencies like Kosovo or Afghanistan (Smillie and Linear, 2003: 14). In addition to these general

constraints, an explicit target of the Commission's humanitarian aid policy is forgotten emergencies (30% of ECHO's budget in 2005), which lack media attention.

Institutional checks

European Parliament

The Parliament has the power to dismiss the Commission (Article 201 TEC). While it has never actually done this, the threat of dismissal is not void. The Santer Commission episode⁴ as well as the Parliament's critical attitude before approving the Prodi and Barroso Commissions show that the Parliament is willing to flex its muscles vis-à-vis the Commission. The European Parliament has the final say over the annual budget granted to ECHO⁵. Periodically differences have arisen between the humanitarian needs that ECHO would like to meet and the budget actually made available (Interview ECHO 24/04/2006).

The Parliament's scope for influencing humanitarian policy through co-decision⁶ is limited as it is not necessary to adopt new legislation for every allocation of humanitarian resources. Moreover, implementation power resides with the Humanitarian Aid Committee, which brings together the Commission and member states to the exclusion of the Parliament. In July 2006, a procedure was adopted which confers on the Parliament the formal right to intervene in comitology. An absolute majority of the Parliament is able to block quasi-legislative implementing measures in domains governed by co-decision⁷.

Apart from short bursts of interest during high-profile emergencies, scrutiny by the European Parliament of humanitarian aid policy – which constitutes only around 10% of total EU external aid – remains weak. The potential for parliamentary oversight is further constrained because there is no separate sub-committee dealing with humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian issues travel between the Development Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee depending on the beneficiaries' ACP affiliation or lack of it. Some parliamentary questions also seem to indicate that MEPs lack the relevant knowledge to form a sound opinion on ECHO decisions. This confirms that the informational advantage arising from the technicality of the agent's decisions can shield the agent from intrusive monitoring. Humanitarian NGOs, which do possess expertise, can lobby MEPs to formulate questions on humanitarian aid policy. In this way, oversight mechanisms (NGO fire-alarms and parliamentary overview) can reinforce each other in supervising agency behaviour.

European Court of Justice (ECJ)

If a member state can demonstrate to the ECJ that the Commission has acted beyond its mandate, the offending Commission act may be declared void "on grounds of lack of competence, infringement of an essential procedural requirement, infringement of [the] treaty or any rule of law relating to its application, or misuse of powers" (Articles 230 and 231 TEC). Furthermore, any natural or legal person who can demonstrate that a Commission action is of "direct and individual concern" to him/herself can

lodge a complaint before the ECJ. The ability of individuals to file a complaint on Commission behaviour before the Court constitutes an additional fire-alarm (Pollack, 1997: 109) and provides a further example of how various constraint mechanisms (citizen fire-alarms and judicial overview) can interact.

European Court of Auditors

The Court of Auditors (Articles 246 to 248 TEC) has the mandate to examine Commission departments' financial and managerial performance. While it has been noted that audit offices often concentrate on financial probity and value for money and not on the humanitarian policy itself (Collinson and Buchanan-Smith, 2002: 3), the reports on ECHO activity by the Court of Auditors⁸ go further than mere financial scrutiny. Of course, it remains a moot point whether financial auditors, who might not possess the necessary expertise in humanitarian aid delivery, are in a position to comment upon the content of humanitarian operations.

Mechanisms to sanction ECHO

The extent to which principals can control an agent depends not only on the efficacy of monitoring but also on the ability to apply sanctions (Pollack, 1997: 105). Sanctioning punishes deviant agency behaviour. Moreover, the mere threat of sanctioning might prevent agency shirking (Doleys 2000: 538).

A first sanction is cutting the agent's budget (Pollack, 1997: 112). In the first half of the 1990s, member states channelled a growing proportion of their humanitarian aid budget through the Commission. By 1994, ECHO had become the world's largest humanitarian donor, managing more than half of the funds devoted by Europe (Commission and member states) to humanitarian aid. However, human resources and administrative capacity in Brussels could not handle the increased workload. Lennon (2001: 138) remarks: "The failures of the overstretched Commission to spend the funds allocated and poor supervision of funds spent have led to a serious revision of the tendency of member states to donate a growing share of their bilateral aid through the EU." ECHO's budget gradually declined, from €764 million in 1994 to €441 million in 1997. Since the beginning of the new millennium, ECHO has made efforts towards more professionalism and better management. This demonstrates that the power of the purse provides principals with considerable leverage over an agent's behaviour. The recent increase in ECHO's budget (from €492 million in 2000 to €652 million in 2005 and then to an annual €900 million agreed upon for 2007–2013) might be partly attributable to member states' restored confidence.

A second sanction is to dismiss agency personnel perceived to be drifting from principals' preferences (Pollack, 1997: 112). For the Commission, the power of dismissal can only be exercised once every five years. Moreover, while member states have some influence over the choice of the Commissioner, they have no input in the recruitment of ECHO personnel. Yet, member states have some leverage over Commission staff through their

influence over the career prospects of those wishing to return to work in the national political arena after their term at the Commission.

The most radical sanction is the revision of the agent's mandate by amending the regulation that delegates authority to it (Pollack, 1997: 109–110). Article 20 of the 1996 Regulation on humanitarian aid stipulates: “Three years after entry into force of this Regulation, the Commission shall submit an overall assessment of the operations financed by the Community under this Regulation to the European Parliament and to the Council, together with suggestions for the future of the Regulation and, as necessary, proposals for amendments to it.”⁹ This provided member states with the opportunity to “clip the Commission's wings” if it was found acting in an undesirable way (Pollack, 1997: 112). However, in a first pillar domain like humanitarian aid, the Commission has the exclusive right to initiate legislation. The Commission decided not to submit a proposal for a modified Regulation. Without a prior Commission initiative, principals in the Council cannot change ECHO's humanitarian mandate.¹⁰

Such a substantial barrier to re-contracting seems a condition for credible commitment. The self-commitment by principals to a given policy via delegation is only credible if the supranational agent does not face the immediate threat of a revision of its mandate, which might lead to a withdrawal of part of its authority or to its replacement.

C. Agency autonomy shaped by the Principal-Agent relationship Communicating vessels: stronger delegation equals stronger control

The Commission gradually expanded its humanitarian activities without explicit competence in the Treaties. Humanitarian aid entered the EU realm as one instrument for development policy towards ACP countries in the 1969 Yaoundé II Convention. From the ACP countries, the geographical scope of EU humanitarian aid extended progressively to all third countries. The 1991 decision to create ECHO was an internal Commission decision without formal member state input. EU humanitarian action only received a legal basis in 1996 when the Council adopted a Regulation which attributes important competences to the Commission. The Constitutional Treaty, if ratified, would turn humanitarian action into a treaty-based EU competence. Member governments were thus faced with “a strategic context in which the basic rules of the game ha[d] been dislocated by supranational shirking” and adjusted to this new political reality by ratifying the moves of the supranational institution (Tallberg, 2002: 39–40). The fact that member states *a posteriori* legalized a situation which was the result of Commission competence maximization points to an independent agent able to pursue its own agenda.

Nevertheless, while legally enshrining the Commission's responsibility for humanitarian aid, the 1996 Regulation was also used by member states to step up control over the Commission (Mowjee, 1998: 259; Ascroft, 1999: 187–188). Prior to 1996, member states were simply informed of ECHO's funding decisions at quarterly meetings (Brusset and Tiberghien, 2002: 56). The Council Regulation established a comitology committee which can block the Commission's measures by qualified majority. The final text also

requires the Commission to notify member states within no more than one month of the approved humanitarian aid operations. This obliges ECHO to provide information on its activities on a much more continual basis than the once a year basis originally suggested in the Commission's draft.

Indirect principal influence via rational anticipation

The Commission's reluctance to amend the Humanitarian Aid Regulation might suggest that control mechanisms set up by principals have no significant impact. Yet a closer analysis shows that they have been quite effective in inducing change in ECHO's agency. In late 1999, ECHO engaged in an internal reform process to improve the management of humanitarian aid. Moreover, while the mandate as set out in the 1996 Regulation remained unchanged, the way it was filled in shifted. ECHO began focusing on immediate, life-saving relief in emergencies, withdrawing from activities tilting towards development or crisis management.

ECHO's self-imposed censure through the tightening of management procedures as well as the more restrictive interpretation of its mandate seem to contradict the predicted mission creep attempted by supranational agents. Yet change without explicit member state intervention (such as an amendment of the agent's legal mandate) can occur through the process of rational anticipation. The control exercised by member states, the European Parliament, and the Court of Auditors together with the institutional fragility of ECHO (initially set up for a trial period of 7 years ending in 1999) and ECHO's declining budget in the second half of the 1990s undeniably imposed constraints on the Commission. These were further intensified by the collapse of the Santer Commission in 1999, an experience which presumably was all the more traumatic for ECHO since one of its own senior staff members had been found guilty of malpractice in 1998. In a "dramatic" period in EU politics, ECHO, rationally anticipating the probability of sanctions, needed to pull itself up by its bootstraps in order to avoid the ultimate sanction – its shutting down. Tellingly, the reforms undertaken closely correspond to the shortcomings in ECHO's functioning identified in the reports by the Article 20 Evaluators, the Development Council, the European Parliament, and the Court of Auditors, which were issued around the turn of the millennium. In this sense, agents seem to be looking first and foremost for turf *protection* rather than turf *expansion*. In order to secure institutional perpetuation, they might even avoid further competence expansion, which explains ECHO's "voluntary" turf reduction.

II. SOCIOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONALISM

A. Rationale of delegation: legitimacy and appropriateness

According to sociological institutionalism, principals delegate authority not so much to reduce the transaction cost of decision-making but because delegation is seen as legitimate and appropriate. In the words of Barnett and Finnemore (1999: 703), "organizations may be created and supported for reasons of legitimacy and normative fit rather than efficient output; they may be created not for what they do but for what they are – for what they represent symbolically and the values they embody". Institutional choice is

the result of “institutional isomorphism” (McNamara, 2002), i.e. the diffusion of organizational models which are widely accepted as appropriate even though they are not necessarily the most efficient.

Did member states delegate responsibility over humanitarian aid to the European Commission not because of functional benefits but because they complied with widespread norms and taken-for-granted institutional formats? The post-Cold War period, which saw the outbreak of a multitude of both natural and man-made humanitarian disasters, witnessed a new attitude towards humanitarian aid provision. While previously, humanitarian action was considered to be a minor aid instrument in the margins of international relations and carried out by a relatively small set of specialized humanitarian workers, from the beginning of the 1990s, humanitarian aid came to be seen as a new duty incumbent on the international community. Western governments stepped up both the budgets allocated to humanitarian action as well as their involvement in the provision of humanitarian aid (Macrae et al., 2002: 30). However, this increased international humanitarian engagement seemingly did not go hand-in-hand with the spread of a particular preferred institutional set-up for conducting humanitarian aid policy. There are no indications that EU decision-makers drew on the UN example when deciding on the EU’s humanitarian aid architecture. The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs, created in 1991, was charged with ensuring the coordination between the work of the various UN humanitarian agencies while ECHO was first and foremost designed as a funding body responsible for concluding contracts with NGO and UN partners carrying out EC sponsored humanitarian projects. In EU member states, humanitarian aid agencies tend to be departments of foreign affairs ministries while ECHO is explicitly insulated from the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Therefore, diffusion from the member state to the EU level is also unlikely.

The Commission had been involved in providing relief since the late 1960s on an ad hoc basis with responsibility scattered among different Directorates-General. As the scale of humanitarian activity increased,¹¹ and as they were confronted by the evidence of inadequate preparation for the humanitarian crisis in Iraq after the first Gulf War and by the looming crisis in former Yugoslavia, the Commissioners then in charge of external relations agreed on the need to establish a structure exclusively dedicated to the management of humanitarian aid. The main objective was to improve efficiency and internal coordination in the delivery of EU humanitarian assistance (European Commission, 1991). Rather than relying on a fixed institutional template, the form of the Community’s humanitarian body had to be adjusted to its tasks. The possibility was preserved of altering this institutional format in response to changing circumstances. In the 1991 decision to create ECHO, the existence of ECHO was restricted to a trial period of 7 years after which an in-depth evaluation would take place with the possibility of discontinuing ECHO. The 1996 Council Regulation allowed for a revision of the existing legal and institutional arrangements three years after its adoption.¹² The efficiency concerns proposed by P-A models seem to have been the main drive for creating a humanitarian aid office at the EU level.

Sociological institutionalism might agree that member states delegated authority to a supranational agent to gain in terms of efficiency but would then argue that they were “instructed” to do so by the dominant rationalist Western culture, which attributes great value to technical expertise, specialization and efficiency (Finnemore, 1996; Haas, 1992; Meyer and Rowan, 1977). Delegation to increase efficiency has become a habitual, socially-ingrained practice. Principals who delegate are not just responding to functional demands: “the perception that delegation to NMIs [non-majoritarian institutions] is the best option for dealing with certain problems is socially constructed, and that process is always analytically prior to the decision to delegate” (Thatcher and Stone Sweet, 2002: 12). Conversely, rational-choice scholars would point out that the legitimacy of an international organization may very well be the result of its functional benefits. In the words of Pollack (2006: 11), “[sociological institutionalist] claims about delegation as normative isomorphism, while plausible as *prima facie* explanation of particular acts of delegation, are exceedingly difficult to distinguish from their PA counterparts, since a high degree of normative legitimacy for an institution may simply reflect an accurate assessment by the public of its functional benefits.”

The fact that member states delegated only part of the responsibility over humanitarian aid to a supranational agent poses problems for sociological institutionalists. Behaving appropriately in a selective way seems more in line with the strategic goal-seeking predicted by rational-choice. On the one hand, from a transaction-cost perspective, it is illogical for member states to bear the double cost of both a supranational and a national humanitarian aid service. On the other, for a principal aiming to maintain control over its agent, it makes sense not to entirely dismantle its own capacities. If a principal strongly reduces its expertise in a particular domain to optimally benefit from delegation, the agent becomes even more indispensable. This increases the cost of reversing the delegation, even when the agent starts challenging the principal’s preferences. A growing differential in the level of expertise also leads to greater agency autonomy because “the principal increasingly lacks the expertise to assess the agent’s behaviour in detail” (Büthe, 2006: 8).

B. Design of delegation: cooperative problem-solving rather than control

P-A holds that principals will develop a whole range of checks on agency behaviour. Meyer and Rowan (1977: 359), on the contrary, predict that member states will avoid controlling as inspection can uncover deviations that undermine the agent’s legitimacy and as such also the legitimacy of the principal’s own act of delegation. The debate has focused on the issue of comitology. Rational-choice scholars conceive of comitology as a mechanism designed by principals to supervise the Commission in its implementing duties (Pollack, 2003b; Franchino, 2000). Sociological institutionalists argue that comitology committees are not so much used by member states to exert strategic control over the Commission but are forums for deliberation among experts collectively searching for the technically optimal solution to problems in a given policy domain. Some authors go

even further than defining comitology as joint problem-solving on technical issues and emphasize processes of socialization and persuasion which lead national delegates to adapt their preferences to EU policy goals (Joerges and Neyer, 1997a/b).

Pollack (2003b: 140–141) hypothesizes that if rational-choice predictions are correct and comitology procedures matter in circumscribing Commission discretion, the Commission will prefer the lighter advisory procedure to the more stringent management procedure and the latter to the most restrictive regulatory procedure. The Council will want stricter comitology procedures than the Commission. The Council and Commission will be willing to accept the cost of negotiating over comitology procedures in order to secure their preferred committee type. If sociological institutionalism is closer to the truth and deliberation rather than formal rules shape policy outcomes, member governments and the Commission will not bother to engage in detailed calculations on which comitology form can be expected to maximize utility.

With regard to the Humanitarian Aid Regulation, the rationalist vision of interinstitutional disagreement over comitology procedures is confirmed. The Commission's initial draft proposes that "the Commission will be assisted in certain cases in its decision making by a committee of advisory character" while the final Regulation adopted by the Council established a committee whose powers go far beyond giving advice. Reportedly, the Humanitarian Aid Committee was established in reaction to suspicions of fraud in ECHO (Interview HAC representative 12/04/2006). The 1996 Regulation which provided for the creation of the HAC was issued at a time when ECHO was under fire for poor management, long delays in disbursements of funds, insufficient control of its partner organizations, and lack of rigor in analysis, project management and evaluation (Brusset and Tiberghien, 2002: 56). Originally, the HAC was conceived as having a control function, a fact which is further confirmed by its opting for stringent management and regulatory procedures.

Then again, how much do these interinstitutional disputes on procedures tell us about the actual functioning of committees? The description of HAC meetings certainly provides some support for comitology as a search for consensual problem-solving. Rather than being the subject of intense control, the Commission chairs the meeting and largely sets the agenda. A formal vote is taken, but HAC delegates have so far always voted in favour. The HAC serves as a forum for exchanging experiences on how different European donors respond to emergencies. Information tended to flow from ECHO to member state representatives rather than in both directions (ICG, 2001: 3), confirming the predictions of P-A theory on the importance for principals of securing information on agency behaviour. More recently, however, member states have agreed to inform ECHO on national humanitarian aid allocations.

Nevertheless, the HAC has so far not been successful in serving as a platform for anything more than (rather hesitant) information-sharing between national and ECHO representatives and has contributed little to the development of a truly Europe-wide humanitarian policy. Member states

have been reluctant to accept any form of EU-driven soft regulation or open coordination aimed at a harmonisation of national humanitarian policies (Interview ECHO 20/09/2005). While it is true that interaction between HAC representatives is cooperative rather than conflictual, this friendly atmosphere does not automatically lead to Europeanization. Representatives in the HAC tend to see themselves and their colleagues as government representatives rather than as independent experts, diminishing the probability that shared professional allegiances will trump national concerns. One national delegate stressed that ECHO has to justify its decisions since the money it allocates comes from the member states and emphasized that, if they wanted to, member states could block ECHO decisions and hence that member states (not the Commission) are the ones who have the final say (Interview HAC representative 12/04/2006).

C. ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF AGENCY AUTONOMY

Sociological institutionalism asserts that an agent's scope for autonomous action is not only determined by delegated powers, control mechanisms, and resultant zones of discretion. Barnett and Finnemore (2004: 22–27) identify four sources of authority which international organizations can enjoy and which confer on them both autonomy and the potential to get others to defer to them. *Delegated authority* emerges from an explicit mandate from member states. *Expert authority* arises from the fact that international organizations generate and control specialized information relevant to a particular policy area. *Rational-legal authority* derives from international organizations' missions, i.e. a valued social purpose, and the way they pursue that mission, i.e. impartially and technocratically while following impersonal rules. *Moral authority* stems from an organization's claim to represent the universal interests of the community rather than the partial, self-seeking interests of individual member states.

ECHO's authority derives not only from delegation in the context of the Humanitarian Aid Regulation (delegated authority) and its expertise on humanitarian relief (expert authority). It also ensues from its use of objective bureaucratic rules (rational-legal authority). Providing needs-based humanitarian assistance seems a prime example of a mission considered good, an act of "self-effacement" in which bureaucracies "present themselves as impersonal and neutral – as not exercising power but instead serving others" (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 21). Moreover, authority results from its claim to defend the interests of crisis victims worldwide (moral authority). Barnett and Finnemore (2004: 23) state that "in no small measure, the moral authority of IOs [international organizations] is dependent on a contrary discourse of states protecting their own national and particularistic interests". ECHO staff is indeed of the opinion that the commitment to provide aid where needs are highest even if media attention is absent "makes ECHO 'special', particularly when compared with Member State humanitarian efforts, where there is a tendency to focus upon high profile emergencies and 'compete for publicity'" (Bretherton and Vogler, 2006: 131).

Sociological institutionalism also ascribes a constitutive role to organizations. International organizations create social reality because (1)

they define what is considered a problem and what is not, (2) they choose which actors have responsibility for responding to the difficulty encountered, and (3) they identify what the proper solution is to the challenge in question (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 34). First, ECHO runs a classification scheme that distinguishes between high-needs areas, forgotten crises, etc. ECHO's decision not to classify a situation as a humanitarian emergency, and hence not to allocate money, can leave people without help. Second, by framing humanitarian action as non-military, non-political, and non-development-oriented, ECHO creates boundaries for who gets to do humanitarian work. Humanitarian aid as defined by ECHO is not the responsibility of European military forces but has to be carried out by NGOs, the UN, or the Red Cross. Inversely, by asserting "this is not a humanitarian project but a political undertaking or a development activity", ECHO protects its resources from being used for activities which it does not consider to be a part of its core mandate. Third, by indicating in relative detail in its financial decisions what type of humanitarian activities it deems necessary and will sponsor, ECHO shapes what is to be the appropriate response to a humanitarian disaster.

At first sight, P-A models cannot explain why, in a rational world, it would be in the Commission's interest to pursue its mission of apolitical humanitarian aid devotedly even if it means getting into a conflict with member states. From a typical P-A perspective, agents avoid engaging in actions which might irritate principals and bring down sanctions on the agent (Pollack, 2006: 4). Sociological institutionalism emphasizes that state preferences are not the only component determining the behaviour of international organizations. Bureaucratic culture – i.e. "the solutions that are produced by groups of people to meet specific problems they face in common" which then "become institutionalized, remembered, and passed on as the rules, rituals, and values of the group" (Barnett and Finnemore, 2004: 19) – also shapes agency action. According to Alter (2006: 318), international organizations are guided more by professional norms than by concerns about principals' preferences, "sometimes dying on their sword rather than be seen as caving to political pressure". For example, in 1999, the Council agreed to supply heating fuel in former Yugoslavia to alleviate harsh winter conditions but only to those municipalities controlled by Serb opposition forces. The rationale was that the populations of these towns run by opposition parties would recognize the benefits of closer proximity to the West and thus become convinced of the advantages of a regime change. ECHO refused to finance this explicitly political programme, arguing that such conditional assistance would violate its mandate to provide relief impartially (Fox, 2001: 282).

P-A scholars assume that agents' interests are defined by their desire to expand or protect their turf and budget. Sociological institutionalists assert that organizations' concerns about competence and budget maximization do not dominate their interests and that organizational goals are strongly dominated by professional norms and moral values. It could be argued that bureaucratic culture and norms matter precisely because they are a way to secure an agent's resource and competence base. Because the continuation

of ECHO's competences in the field of humanitarian aid is dependent on its reputation as a provider of apolitical aid, it is in the strategic interest of the Commission to live up to the moral duty of impartially alleviating human suffering. Not observing its apolitical humanitarian aid mandate might prove to be, to phrase it in transaction-cost language, costly to the Commission because its power is not absolute, but conditional precisely on its reputation of being a provider of professional and impartial aid. It might even be in the Commission's interest to take decisions which go against the grain of member state principals' preferences but which allow the Commission to maintain its authority as a provider of aid transcending the political fray – the reputation which motivated the delegation in the first place.

CONCLUSION

The philosophy of apolitical humanitarian aid is hard to reconcile with the rationalist view of actors fully motivated by material interests. Nevertheless, P-A goes a long way in explaining patterns of delegation in EU humanitarian aid policy. P-A models seem fruitful as soon as a substantive act of delegation can be observed by which principals grant conditional authority to an agent and design devices to check agency opportunism. This confirms Snidal's (2002: 74–75) observation that while rational-choice focuses on actors' goal-seeking, these goals “are not restricted to self-regarding or material interest but could include other-regarding and normative or ideational ‘goals’”.

In answer to the question of why member states choose to delegate humanitarian tasks to the Commission, the symbolic diffusion of widely accepted institutional formats as posited by sociological institutionalism does not offer a more convincing explanation than the efficiency and credibility arguments developed by P-A analysts. In answer to the question of how to delegate, the various control and sanction mechanisms identified by P-A scholars are all used in varying degrees by principals to constrain the behaviour of the Commission in the execution of EU humanitarian policy.¹³ With regard to ECHO autonomy, however, the P-A account might seem somewhat meagre. While P-A can accommodate delegated and expert authority, arguably more precisely than the sociological framework, even a devoted P-A adherent like Pollack (2006: 14) admits that legal-rational and moral authority as well as the prospect of a constitutive role for international organizations lie outside P-A analysis.

ENDNOTES

¹ ECHO is not an operational donor but relies on specialized humanitarian organizations (e.g. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Médecins Sans Frontières, Red Cross, etc.) to carry out projects in the field.

² This type of contract works in two ways. It allows principals to be more confident that the agent will not overstep its mandate. It also provides some guarantee for the agent that principals will not interfere with the decisions delegated. ECHO is careful not to transgress its zone of discretion and offend member states by venturing in more political waters. Conversely, member states seem cautious not to intrude on ECHO's humanitarian “territory”.

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- ³ The Treaty (Article 202 (3) TEC) obliges the Council to “confer on the Commission, in the acts which the Council adopts, powers for the implementation of the rules which the Council lays down”. These implementation powers delegated to the Commission may be subject to “certain requirements” laid down by the Council, commonly referred to as “comitology”. The so-called Comitology Decision (Council Decision 87/373/EEC replaced by Council Decision 1999/468/EC) specifies three types of committees. Advisory committees provide the Commission with the greatest autonomy and member state representatives with the weakest influence. The management committee procedure is more restrictive from the Commission’s viewpoint. The regulatory committee procedure offers member states the greatest measure of control over the Commission.
- ⁴ Criticism by the Parliament because of fraud led to the voluntary resignation of the Santer Commission in 1999.
- ⁵ ECHO has three sources of funding: the general EC budget, the European Development Fund (EDF) for humanitarian relief in ACP countries, and the emergency reserve. The Parliament’s budgetary powers are limited to the general budget and the emergency reserve. The Council sets the EDF budget via agreements that are ratified by national parliaments. In 2005, out of a total budget of €652 million, €494 million (75.8%) came from the general budget, €23 million (3.5%) from the EDF, and €135 million (20.7%) from the emergency reserve.
- ⁶ Before 1997, the legislative input from the European Parliament was even more restricted as it was involved in humanitarian aid legislation only through the cooperation procedure. Since the Amsterdam Treaty, humanitarian aid has become an area governed by co-decision.
- ⁷ The 1999 framework decision on comitology (Council Decision 1999/468/EC) allowed the Parliament to issue a resolution if it was of the opinion that the proposed measures exceeded the Commission’s implementing powers. The Commission had to take the Parliament’s opinion into account but was free to choose whether it would act upon the Parliament’s comments or not.
- ⁸ The Court of Auditors’ special report 2/97 covers humanitarian aid provided by the EU between 1992 and 1995. Special report 2/2001 deals with ECHO’s management of emergency humanitarian aid for the victims of the Kosovo crisis. Special report 3/2006 concerns the Commission’s humanitarian aid response to the Tsunami.
- ⁹ The 1991 Commission Decision on the establishment of ECHO limited the existence of the Humanitarian Aid Office to an initial trial period of 7 years, after which its performance would be subjected to a thorough evaluation (European Commission 1991).
- ¹⁰ The European Parliament (Article 192 TEC) and the Council (Article 208 TEC) can request for the Commission to submit a proposal for new legislation. Even while having a monopoly on the initiation of legislation, extensive political pressure by a majority of member states or MEPs to propose a new regulation would have been hard for the Commission to staunchly ignore. Yet member state principals and other EU institutions agreed on the lack of overriding reasons to modify the 1996 Council Regulation or do away with ECHO.
- ¹¹ Humanitarian assistance allocated by the European Commission more than doubled between 1986 and 1991.
- ¹² It is worth noting that the 1996 Council Regulation does not mention ECHO but designates the European Commission as a whole as the authority responsible for the implementation of EU humanitarian aid.
- ¹³ The sociological institutionalist perception of comitology as a forum for deliberation is, to an extent, confirmed. Evidence does suggest, however, that the P-A account of comitology as a control device cannot easily be dismissed.

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The Bosnian Peace Process: The Power-Sharing Approach Revisited

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Abstract: This article argues that the post-Dayton political organisation of Bosnia represents an exemplary illustration of the difficulties associated with the empirical application of the pluralist model of “consociational democracy”. The country’s political system has been predicated on the existence of consensus and the spirit of cooperation among the three ethnic groups without, however, offering any electoral or political incentives to their leaderships to cooperate. Also, the inclusion of several elements to the Dayton accords of a partition approach to conflict resolution has even encouraged the ethnic leaderships to maintain their nationalistic programs and their endeavours to exploit the aforementioned power-sharing arrangements. Indeed, the structural deficiencies of the Dayton agreement have permitted nationalists to continue implementing their ethnic agendas and have accounted for the slow progress towards the implementation of the Bosnian peace process. Therefore, this article elaborates on the international policies in Bosnia, aimed at transforming the country into a viable multiethnic state, and highlights the significance of motivations for implementing the peace process.

Key words: Bosnia, Dayton, consociational democracy, nationalists

Eleven years after the end of the civil war, ethnic tension in Bosnia is still as high as ever. All sides openly challenge the country’s political system that was determined by the Dayton accords. While the Bosniaks (and many Croats) press for the abolishment of Entities and the strengthening of central institutions, Serb nationalists demand their secession using Montenegro’s independence as an example. Even the international community itself has viewed the Dayton framework as unfeasible and has attempted to improve it through its silent transformation into an on ongoing, partially modifiable process (“Dayton as a process” approach).

In terms of conflict resolution theory, the political organisation of Bosnia according to Dayton represents an empirical application of the pluralist model of “consociational democracy”. This model was developed by Arend Lijphart in the late 1960s. It means “government by elite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy” (Lijphart, 1969: 216). It deals with stabilising an ethnically divided society through the agreement of leaders from different ethnic groups to jointly rule the common polity and take decisions by consensus (Lijphart, 1975: 99). It is built on the notion of “power-sharing” among different ethnic groups and on the following four principles: a grand governing coalition, proportional representation, mutual right to veto and

ethnic autonomy (Lijphart, 1979: 500–502). Lijphart has pronounced the “favourable conditions” for the success of consociational democracies on several occasions. According to Bogaards (1998: 475–496), the gradual change in number and content of Lijphart’s list of prescribed conditions indicates an absence of theoretical coherence in this part of his work. Nonetheless, Lijphart (2000: 425) counteracts this argument by stating that he has worked for more than 30 years on the subject of consociational democracy and that “many seemingly contradictory statements are not true contradictions but attempts to improve and refine earlier formulations”.

Political realists and integrationists alike have fiercely criticised the consociational paradigm. Political realists argue that power-sharing arrangements will eventually lead to renewed hostilities among adversaries due to the exacerbation of the security dilemma (Kaufmann, 1998: 122–123). On the other hand, the integrationists (*inter alia*) contend that the consociational model entrenches ethnic divisions and does not provide motivations for inter-ethnic cooperation (McGarry & O’Leary, 2006: 276; Spears, 2000: 108–112). For other analysts, the success of consociational democracies depends on the critical role of conflict group leaders (Nordlinger, 1972: 40), while the preservation of peace requires the existence of some sort of convergence of expectations among them (Wagner, 1993: 259). Whereas a fraction of political realists promote partition as the most adequate policy choice for the settlement of ethnic civil wars (Kaufmann, 1996: 136–175), integrationists argue for the effectiveness of territorial (e.g., federalism and regional autonomy) and electoral incentives (Horowitz, 1985).

Lijphart (2004: 98) has refuted most criticism regarding consociational democracy by remarking that very few of his critics have provided a serious alternative to the power-sharing model. More importantly, other models for organising ethnically divided societies offer even fewer empirical applications. For instance, the Horowitz-inspired “alternative vote” system was only partially tested in the short-lived Fijian constitutional system, which was adopted in 1999 and collapsed in 2000. Furthermore, several cases – such as Belgium, Northern Ireland and Czechoslovakia – demonstrated that power-sharing arrangements are not a “one-size-fits-all” model. In these cases, the function of every institution differs to a greater or smaller extent. Thus, constitution writers could play a crucial role in the success or failure of a consociational democracy (Lijphart, 2004: 99). Therefore, that the power-sharing model has been selected in a case is as important as the way the model has been put into practice.

In Bosnia’s case, it is conventional wisdom that the local power-sharing arrangements have failed to work. The country’s political system has been predicated on the existence of consensus and the spirit of cooperation among the three ethnic groups without, however, offering any incentives to their leaderships. Not only is the Dayton framework a power-sharing arrangement, in which conditions for a workable political system are not in place; it is also a bad implementation of the Lijphart model. This is because the Dayton accords include several elements of a partition approach to conflict resolution that have encouraged the wartime ethnic leaderships to

maintain their nationalistic programs and endeavour to exploit the aforementioned power-sharing arrangements.

The present article highlights the structural deficiencies of the Dayton agreement as well as the nationalists' efforts to exploit these deficiencies in pursuit of their own programs. The first section explores the inconsistencies of the Dayton accords. The second section illustrates how the nationalist parties adjusted their policies to post-war realities. The main argument here is that it was the structural problems of the Dayton Accords that permitted the leaderships of the three communities to keep implementing their agendas, and not the other way around. In other words, the nationalists could not discredit the Accords on their own if the latter had been consistent and workable to begin with. This fact has been increasingly acknowledged by Serbs and certain Croat nationalists that have turned into "defenders" of the Dayton framework providing Entities and cantons with certain state-like prerogatives. Lastly, the third section discusses the attempts of the international community to make the Dayton framework function, and it measures these policies against the demand for reconsidering the peace agreement. Overall, this article highlights the importance of incentives and convergent expectations for the functioning of power-sharing institutions.

THE DAYTON PARADOX

Territorially, the Dayton Accords attempted to bridge the divergent interests of the three ethnic communities, with realities on the ground and the principle of the "Contact Group plan" for the 51–49 percent division of the country between the Croats and the Muslims,² on the one hand, and the Serbs, on the other. Politically, the agreement endeavoured to reconcile Serbian and Croatian demands for Bosnia's partition along ethnic lines, with the Bosnian Muslim demand for the preservation of Bosnia's integrity and the restoration of its ethnic balance. Eventually, the Accords were filled with elements of both approaches for settlement, i.e., partition and reintegration. The product of the negotiations was a delicate compromise and a tentative step between these two opposite approaches to conflict resolution.

Whereas the Dayton agreement affirmed Bosnia's unity, it also foresaw the country's division into two legal Entities, the Croat-Muslim Federation (Federation) and Republika Srpska (RS). Bosnia's state level institutions maintained authority over foreign policy, foreign trade, customs, monetary policy and inter-entity communication, transportation and law enforcement (Annex 4, Article 3.1), but all other government functions and powers were internally relegated to the two Entities (Annex 4, Article 3.3). Indeed, both Entities were vested with extensive powers to retain their own separate armed forces and the right to develop special parallel relationships with neighbouring states (Annex 4, Article 3.2). Overall, the Entities secured considerable sovereignty rights and independence vis-à-vis the Bosnian state. They were thereby allowed to function as "states within a state".

The Dayton Accords envisaged the establishment of several common, superimposed institutions that would carry out the central government's responsibilities in the domains of its competencies. This included a tripartite

presidency, a council of ministers and a bi-cameral legislature. The political legitimacy of these institutions was based on stated requirements for ethnic proportionality within them, and subsequently, the peace process unintentionally privileged the formation of ethnically orientated parties at the expense of civil or ethnically mixed parties. In addition, the determination of the Entity of origin of the ethnic representatives in the most important of these institutions, namely, the Presidency and the House of Peoples (that is, the upper house of Bosnia's legislature), denoted that the state officials could be selected in each Entity solely from the main ethnic groups. In that sense, as long as the Serb member of the collective presidency was elected in RS and the Croat and Bosniak members were elected in the Federation, candidates for these posts had little incentive to seek the support of voters from other ethnic groups. This arrangement meant that the Serbs of the Federation and the Croats and Muslims of RS were excluded from representation. Above all, granting ethnic communities at both executive and legislative branches the right to veto any decision or law that would conflict with their perceived national interests reinforced the picture of a country segmented into ethnic zones and decisively weakened decision-making power at the state level. Consequently, all aspects of the Bosnian state's operation were constitutionally contingent on the willingness of the three ethnic groups to use their veto right responsibly.

The loose Bosnian confederation was also asymmetric as one of its two Entities, the RS, was centralized while the Federation was highly decentralized. Although the constitutions of the two Entities were not initially included in the Dayton Accords, they became part of the peace settlement nonetheless, since they were amended by the Entity legislatures following the initiation of the peace process.

The Federation has been a wartime marriage of convenience between the Croats and the Muslims aiming at forming an alliance that would go on the offensive against the Serbs. In the Dayton talks, mediators maintained the Federation in the Bosnian state structure, apparently because the territorial division of the country into two entities seemed less complicated than its split into three regions. The Croats, however, feared that they would be overwhelmed if they entered into a joint structure with a larger partner. Hence, the formation of the Federation came at the price of its substantial decentralisation. While it had its own presidency, government and bi-cameral parliament, provisions for ethnic representation of both Croats and Bosniaks compromised the effectiveness of these institutions. Besides, if any ethnic community invoked concern over vital interests, the concurrent majorities of both Bosniak and Croat legislators would have to be mustered in the Federation's House of Peoples so that the relevant law could be adopted. More importantly, the powers of the Federation's institutions were limited because most authorities were relegated to ten cantons – five Bosniak, three Croat and two mixed clusters of municipalities – that were created within the Federation. These cantons assumed responsibility for the domains of education, culture, police, energy, tourism, public services, media and social welfare (Bose, 2002: 78–79). They were also vested with their own constitutions, governments and assemblies. Therefore, the Federation was no

less dysfunctional and vulnerable to paralysis by nationalistic policies than the state in which it was established.

The constitution of Republika Srpska, on the other hand, highlighted the Entity's statehood and centralised character. To illustrate, Article 104 outlined the duty and the right of all citizens to defend the "sovereignty and independence" of the Entity (Bose, 2002: 70).

To conclude, the ambiguity of the Accords was intended to facilitate consensus-building among the warring parties during the negotiations, but in practice, it represented a major obstacle in the peace implementation process. This happened because it was added to the picture of a power-sharing model of governance that was simultaneously severely deficient in incentives for cooperation among the ethnic parties. The next section accordingly turns its attention to the way that the nationalists adjusted their policies to the realities of Dayton.

THE POLICIES OF THE NATIONALISTS

Over the last decade, dozens of parties have emerged in Bosnia – mainly due to the establishment of multiple levels of government and the frequent occurrence of elections – the majority of which have a more or less nationalist agenda. This article focuses on the three main nationalist parties – the Party for Democratic Action (SDA), the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) – that have enjoyed the support of their respective ethnic communities since 1990. For it was these parties that led their ethnic constituencies into war, orchestrated their national war strategies, come first among their co-nationals in every electoral process until 2006 – with the notable exception of the SDA in the 2000 state elections – and exercised power in the greatest part of the post-Dayton period.

The SDA

The SDA was founded on 27 March 1990 by a group of Muslim leaders headed by Alija Izetbegović. In the past, Izetbegović had steered much controversy with the publication of his "Islamic Declaration", an analysis of Islamic society and Islamic government (Malcolm, 1996: 219–222). Nevertheless, the majority of Bosnian Muslims were particularly apathetic Muslims. They abstained from attending mosques, they celebrated Orthodox and Catholic holidays and they were proponents of a multicultural Bosnia (Vulliamy, 1994: 63–64).

Izetbegović supported the preservation of Socialist Yugoslavia, and when its collapse seemed inevitable, he opted for Bosnia's independence as the best strategy for safeguarding its integrity and multi-ethnicity. Izetbegović's pragmatic policies helped the SDA gather support not only from the international community but also from many Croats and Serbs who were opposed to the division of Bosnia between Belgrade and Zagreb. As a result, although Bosnian Muslims could not beat the Serbs on the battlefield, they did not lose the war. This was due to Izetbegović's success in securing domestic and international support for his policies.

From the Bosnian Muslims' perspective, the Dayton framework was far from satisfactory. They approved the peace settlement because their military

inferiority made it difficult for them to acquire more than 51 percent of the territory (including Sarajevo and Gorazde), which was monitored and protected by a NATO-led force. The agreement also implied lifting the arms embargo against them, accompanied by an American commitment to “train and equip” their armed forces and to offer substantial financial assistance to Bosnia, a great part of which would be destined exclusively for them (Sharp, 1997/98: 116). Above all, the Accords’ uncertainty allowed them to believe that they could still pursue their struggle for a unified state by other means than resuming war.

Once overt American support had been secured and a military balance of sorts was established, the Bosnian Muslims were mainly preoccupied with maintaining the territorial and political integrity of the state. The SDA, nevertheless, no longer hid its aspiration to have a Muslim-dominated state. Several Bosnian Muslim officials appealed openly for a more Islamic society – i.e., for a ban on alcohol, pork and short skirts and a change of the street signs’ colors to Islamic green – and the SDA removed all Croat and Serb officers from the commands of six of the seven corps of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ABH) (Bugajski et al., 1996: 70). Considering that most of the Bosnian Muslims were proponents of a secular society, the rise of this type of “Bosniak” nationalism threatened the very people it claimed to protect. It also restricted the support of moderate Bosnian Croats and Serbs for the SDA’s struggle for a united Bosnia.

The SDA was also reluctant to comply with Dayton’s provision for removal of all foreign forces and their equipment from the country. During the civil war, the Bosnian Muslims benefited from the assistance of some 3,000 volunteers who had come from Islamic countries to fight in ABH. Once the war was over, the Islamic fighters were given Bosnian citizenship and passports and were allowed to occupy the vacant properties of Croat and Serb displaced persons (ICG, 2001b: 10–12). The mujahedeen presence in the country constituted a source of fear and insecurity for Croats and Serbs. It was an obstacle for returning refugees and a source of contention between the SDA and the international community.

The SDA’s effort to defend a unitary Bosnia was also hindered because many Bosnian Muslims interpreted in Dayton’s ambiguity a de facto recognition of the primacy of internal divisions. Bosniak nationalists impeded the return of Croat and Serb refugees to their territories. While the latter could in most cases return safely to the areas that were controlled by the Bosniaks, they were discriminated against in finding employment (ESI, 1999). In that sense, Bosniak nationalism contributed to the country’s fragmentation.

The Bosniak policy for the preservation of the integrity of the state was additionally confronted with the Croats’ disinclination to support Federation structures and powers. In particular, the Bosnian Croats appeared determined to pursue their own state-building project and to preserve their wartime quasi-state “Herceg-Bosna” as a third entity inside Bosnia-Herzegovina. Failure to establish a functioning Federation was best manifested in Mostar. During wartime, the Croat nationalists expelled all non-Croats from the western part of the city, while the Muslim nationalists forced all non-

Bosniaks to depart from eastern Mostar. The Bosnian Croats impeded the plans for the city's reintegration and encouraged the circle of violence to continue unrestrained by the prevalence of general impunity (ICG, 1997). For the SDA, Mostar's case was not only about the implementation of the Federation; it was equally about the survival of the Bosniak people that lived there. The Bosniak part of the city was extensively destroyed by the war and was also dependent on the Croatian part for most public institutions such as hospitals (Gosztonyi, 1996). Additionally, it was squeezed between Serbian and Croatian territories and, thus, it relied on the Croats for access to central Bosnia. Nevertheless, in 2002, the two communities paradoxically adopted each other's position on the status of Mostar. While the HDZ supported the city's reunification, the SDA adopted the Croats' previous position and argued for the preservation of the status-quo. This change of posture reflected the change that had taken place in the ethnic composition of the city. The Croats were subsequently in the majority and the two communities reviewed their security considerations (ICG, 2003b).

The SDA lost its pre-eminence in Bosniak politics as well as its access to power in 2000 amid accusations of corruption and revelations of scandals. In these elections, the SDA came second to the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the largest civic party in the country, which nonetheless owed most of its power to the Bosniak electorate. The SDP managed with the support of the international community to form a governing coalition, the so-called Alliance for Change comprised of 10 parties, and additionally counted on the parliamentary support of several Serb parties in RS. Apparently, the coalition was not based on the genuine convergence of party programs and merely reflected a marriage of convenience for the acquisition of access to power. The allied partners soon highlighted their differences, and the Alliance for Change disintegrated before the 2002 elections (ICG, 2002: 3). In these elections, the SDP became the main recipient of the people's disaffection and suffered a serious defeat, losing half of its seats in the state parliament. The SDA capitalised on the deficiencies of the SDP and, by accusing the SDP of following anti-Bosniak policies, reacquired its central position in Bosniak politics. This time, however, Sulejman Tihić, who in 2000 had replaced the ageing Izetbegović in the party leadership, headed the SDA. Tihić attempted to diminish the party's pro-Islamic orientation and portrayed himself as being in favour of the international policies in Bosnia. Although he favoured the adoption of a new state constitution that would not include any Entities and cantons in the picture (ICG, 2003a: 16–18), Tihić pragmatically settled for a far less ambitious goal and participated in the US-sponsored inter-ethnic constitutional talks of 2005–2006 with the intent to bring about only limited changes to the country's political system. Nevertheless, Tihić's conciliatory stance was not entirely appreciated by the Bosniaks. Haris Silajdžić, leader of the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina (SBiH) and fervent advocate of the Entities' abolition, rejected the agreed constitutional revisions as "cosmetic" and stepped out of the negotiations. Furthermore, Silajdžić promised that if he was elected into the collective presidency, the RS would cease to exist and, thus, he won (with a landslide) the Bosniak seat in the 2006 elections (Alic, 2006). Therefore, despite the

Bosniak nationalists' struggle for Bosnia's unity, their preference for a radical reorganisation of their country's political structure goes against the international community's gradual approach and plays into the hands of Croat and Serb nationalists who resist the reform process.

The SDS

The SDS was formed on 12 July 1990 under the leadership of Radovan Karadžić. Karadžić stood for the preservation of Socialist Yugoslavia as a single state. When that proved impossible, he supported the efforts of Slobodan Milošević to unite all Serbs into "Greater Serbia". While Bosnia moved towards independence, the SDS prepared for the secession of Bosnian Serbs and their integration into Serbia. The Bosnian Serbs began the civil war and managed, with the assistance of Belgrade, to occupy nearly 70 percent of the country's territory within a few months. Nonetheless, the international community did not wish to acknowledge the results of this aggression; therefore, none of the peace proposals granted the Serbs what they had won on the ground.

The Dayton accords did not fulfil the Bosnian Serbs' expectations. Nevertheless, their consent to the agreement was dictated by these factors:

- i) their desire to secure control on what they still held while the military balance shifted to their disadvantage;
- ii) the fact that the agreement acknowledged the existence of a distinct Bosnian Serb entity;
- iii) their belief that the Dayton agreement's lack of clarity permitted them to pursue, by non-military means, the de facto division of Bosnia; and
- iv) the determination of Milošević – who negotiated on their behalf – to trade a deal on Bosnia in exchange for lifting sanctions against Yugoslavia.

Notwithstanding that Karadžić was forced to resign from the post of RS President, he established around him the so-called "Pale clique" – that is, a small group of fifteen key figures based in Pale – that controlled all aspects of society including the media, the economy, the police and even much of the distribution of humanitarian aid (ICG, 1996). The 'Pale clique' chased after the idea of consolidating the division of Bosnia between the two Entities and turning the provisional "Inter-Entity Boundary Line" (IEBL) into a permanent border. Given the ambiguity of the peace agreement on whether Bosnia should become an ethnically divided or unitary multiethnic state, the Bosnian Serbs complied with all Dayton provisions that encouraged partition (i.e. separation of armed forces, readjustment of IEBL, conclusions of an arms control agreement, and negotiation of confidence- and security-building measures) (McCausland, 1997: 19–20; Schear, 1996: 92) but hindered the implementation of those stipulations that promoted the country's reintegration (i.e. freedom of movement, refugee repatriation, establishment of common institutions and adoption of common legislation) (Steiner, 1997: 35). In that sense, the SDS attempted to complete the homogenisation of the Bosnian Serb population through policies of "majoritisation" such as:

- i) encouraging Bosnian Serb emigration from the Federation and resettlement in vacated Croat and Muslim properties in the RS and in Brčko;

- ii) exercising pressure on the remaining Croats and Muslims to depart from the RS; and
- iii) blocking returns of Croat and Muslim displaced persons and refugees to their previous homes in the Bosnian Serb entity (Schear, 1996: 93–95).

The Entities' access to international assistance was nevertheless conditional upon their compliance with the Dayton provisions. The Bosnian Serbs were precluded not only from the US "train and equip" program but also from virtually all external public economic aid. Whereas the Federation was being reconstructed, the RS's decline continued and the overwhelming majority of Bosnian Serbs remained unemployed and in poverty. Because the SDS maintained tight control over the media and exploited this climate of fear and insecurity, effective opposition to its policies came from inside the party – specifically, from Biljana Plavšić, the person who Karadžić himself had chosen to assume the RS presidency. In June of 1997, Plavšić accused the Pale clique of corruption and argued for cooperation with the international community so that the Bosnian Serb Entity would acquire access to international reconstruction funds (Cirafici, 1999: 80–91). In addition, she claimed that the Dayton agreement preserved RS's autonomy by the provisions that offered the Serbs representation in every joint Bosnian institution. Thus, she suggested that the Bosnian Serbs should wholly endorse its implementation. Plavšić proclaimed early parliamentary elections in the Bosnian Serb Entity and her newly created party, the Serb People's Alliance (SNS), succeeded – with US economic assistance and the manifest intervention of SFOR – in blocking the SDS from again winning a majority of seats in the National Assembly (Chandler, 1999). The international community afterwards did everything in its power to prevent the SDS from reacquiring political power. The SNS and a group of smaller parties were assisted in forming a governing coalition headed by Milorad Dodik, and the embargo on aid to the RS was lifted. When Nikola Poplašen, the joint candidate of the SDS and the Serb Radical Party (SRS), defeated Plavšić in the 1998 Entity presidential elections, the international community assured the survival of the Dodik government. The High Representative (HR) did not hesitate to remove Poplašen from office in March 1999 because the latter wanted to unseat Dodik from the entity's premiership (ICG, 1999). In the aftermath of the 2000 elections, the HR followed a similar line of action. He permitted the participation of the SDS in a governing coalition with the Party for Democratic Progress (PDP) on the condition that the new government would be comprised only of independent experts with no party affiliation. He also demanded that the leadership of the SDS sign a declaration in support of implementing the peace process (Kebo, 2001).

The exclusion of the SDS from the RS government between 1997 and 2002 did not substantively alter the RS approach to the peace process. The SDS was the largest party in the RS parliament and maintained control of the Entity presidency and the majority of its municipalities. Moreover, the SDS was influential inside the ranks of the Orthodox Church, the police, the army and the intelligence service (ICG, 2001a: 12–13). The SDS realised that the international community was committed to making Dayton work and

ultimately adopted a more pragmatic program. It no longer sought to bring about the partition of Bosnia. Instead, it proclaimed itself as being for Bosnia's integrity and the preservation of the status quo that guaranteed the "statist" prerogatives of the RS (ICG, 2003a: 23–24). The Bosnian Serbs continued to resist adopting measures that would strengthen central state institutions, did nothing to facilitate the returns process and offered no assistance to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for the arrest and prosecution of indicted Serbs.

Paddy Ashdown, then Bosnia's HR, decided in June 2004 to do away with Serbian obstructionism by dismissing 61 top Bosnian Serb officials from office, most of whom were SDS members (Gordana, 2004). Dragan Čavić subsequently assumed leadership of the SDS and attempted to follow a more moderate and cooperative policy. He proposed the content of the agreement for the country's police reform, and he endorsed the constitutional amendments that strengthened the state's central institutions. This shift in SDS's policies was not appreciated by all party members. Čavić was particularly criticised for having acknowledged the crimes that were committed by Serb paramilitaries in Srebrenica. The Serb "patriots" were disaffected and found refuge in Dodik – the previous favourite Serb politician of the international community – and his Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD). SNSD won the Serb race in the 2006 presidential elections with a highly nationalistic campaign for the organisation of a referendum of independence for the RS (Gordana, 2006). What is more, Čavić was subsequently replaced in the SDS leadership by Mladen Bosić, a hardliner who went back on SDS's original consent for constitutional reforms (Mustajbegovic, 2007).

The HDZ

The overwhelming majority of Bosnian Croats have supported the HDZ in every electoral process up until 2006. This party was formed on 18 August 1990 under the leadership of Stjepan Klujić. While the HDZ was initially a mere "sister party" of the HDZ in Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, Croatia's President at the time, decisively intervened in the Bosnian Croat politics to take the Bosnian party under his control and virtually transform it into a subordinate branch (Stark, 1995: 207). As a result, the Bosnian HDZ adopted Tuđman's program for the creation of "Greater Croatia" and struggled for the secession of the Bosnian Croats and their integration into Croatia. Although the majority of Bosnian Croats lived in harmony with the Bosniaks and the Serbs in Central Bosnia and were against Bosnia's dissolution, no party succeeded in gathering their support and challenging the HDZ supremacy in the Bosnian Croat politics.

HDZ acquiescence to the Dayton agreement was inspired in part by the promise of the international community for substantial economic and military assistance and in part by the agreement's multiple ambiguities. Indeed, not only did the Bosnian Croats avoid honouring their commitment to dismantle Herceg-Bosna, but they also strengthened their quasi-state's structures and proceeded vigorously with its integration into Croatia (Morrison, 1996: 144). To the extent that the international community

acknowledged the right of the Serbs to maintain the RS, the Bosnian Croats believed that the preservation of Herceg-Bosna was legitimate (Woodward, 1997: 102). Moreover, the sustainability of their quasi-state was a valuable source of revenue because it allowed the Bosnian Croats to impose taxes and duties on all border crossings with Croatia (Calic, 1996: 133). In this regard, the HDZ resisted the transfer of authority away from their parallel institutions to new municipal or cantonal structures and impeded the reintegration of Mostar, the symbolic capital of Herceg-Bosna, and the Bosnian Croats perpetuated a climate of violence and insecurity in order to prevent the establishment of the Federation (Morrison, 1996: 145). As a result, the HDZ held to its pre-war partition plan and drove the same policies of “majoritisation” as the Bosnian Serbs.

To the extent that the Croatian Ministry of Defence financially sustained Herceg-Bosna, Tudjman’s death on 10 December 1999 and his party’s defeat in the Croatian presidential elections of the following month implied the cessation of all assistance to Bosnian Croat parallel institutions (Lovric, 2000). In the meantime, the international community went on the offensive to put an end to illegal Croat parallel structures. SFOR troops closed down the branches of the Hercegovacka Banka, the de facto central bank of Herceg-Bosna, and the Federation’s authorities were assisted in taking control of all public companies in the Croat-dominated areas (Jukic, 2001). As a result, the Bosnian Croat nationalists were deprived of their last sources of revenues for the sustenance of parallel institutions, and Ante Jelavić, HDZ’s president at the time, was forced in the fall of 2001 to announce the end of Croat self-rule.

The emergence of a group of moderates, headed by Bariša Čolak, in the party’s leadership, made an impressive change in HDZ policies. The party argued for the strengthening of state institutions with the establishment of a single army, interior ministry and intelligence agency (ICG, 2003a, 19–21). The HDZ also participated in the inter-ethnic constitutional talks and consented to the revisions that were agreed upon. Nevertheless, a fraction of the party opposed the constitutional amendments on the grounds that they would make the Croats worse off than they were already. The dissidents formed, in April 2006, a new party, the “HDZ 1990”, which voted against the legislative approval of the constitutional revisions in Bosnia’s House of Representatives (Haupt, 2006: 45–47). The HDZ split and the controversy of its heirs (over who was the genuine defender of Croat interests) favoured the SDP, the country’s largest civic party. In particular, the SDP surprised many when it won the Croat seat by mustering votes from Croats in Central Bosnia as well as moderate Bosniaks in the 2006 presidential elections (Lippman, 2006: 32–33).

Having thus far presented Dayton’s ambiguities and how the nationalists exploited it, the following section will discuss how the international community has endeavoured to make Dayton work.

THE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIES IN BOSNIA

The overwhelming presence of the international community in Bosnia could not account for the agreement’s multiple ambiguities, as the nationalists’

obstructionism demonstrated. Hence, the international community decided in 1997 to indefinitely extend its mandate in Bosnia. Moreover, it vested the HR with the power to pass laws and decisions at any constitutional level and the authority to dismiss any non-cooperative elected representative, party officer or public official. The so-called “Bonn powers” of the HR have been unlimited not only because he/she could dismiss even presidents and prime ministers but also because he/she is not accountable to any national institution and subsequent HRs have interpreted their powers on their own (Knaus & Martin, 2003: 61).³ Indeed, the Office of the HR has made such use of its power that it has dismissed over 100 public officials, including Poplašen and Jelavić, and has endorsed over 500 binding decisions and laws. The removal of all obstructive officials from office was intended to sever the nationalist parties from their most radical elements as well as demonstrate that objection to the peace process was not a real option. Indeed, all three parties have been headed by more moderate leaderships than in the past as a result.

Furthermore, the international community has attempted for many years to “correct” some defects of the agreement with subsequent modifications, which stopped short of re-opening the talks on the overall content of the Accords. In other words, the international response to the nationalists’ obstructionism has been the silent transformation of the Dayton agreement into an on-going, partially modifiable process moving the country’s political system towards a more centralised model of governance. The HR laws and decisions have aimed at the initiation of essential reforms and the strengthening of central institutions. The HR has achieved, *inter alia*, the transfer of substantial competencies from the Entity to the State level with the establishment of seven additional state ministries, the reunification of Mostar, the abolishment of all references to statehood from the constitution of RS, and the revision of both Entities’ constitutions following the ruling of the Constitutional Court regarding the equality of all three ethnic groups throughout the entire country.

The Entities-versus-State balance of jurisdiction has been changing in the state’s favour, and Bosnia’s integrity seems to have been preserved. Yet, the *modus operandi* of the HR has definitely not been democratic, and the peace process has frequently advanced without the will of the Bosnian local authorities. The latter, unable to effectively react to the HR’s imperial governance, have become passive towards the country’s political and economic reforms, prompting many researchers to argue for the absence of local ownership from the Bosnian peace process. Moreover, the country’s system of government has been dysfunctional and too expensive to maintain due to the coexistence of multiple levels of governance (Tzifakis & Tsardanidis, 2006: 67–84). As long as the state’s administrative division represents the essence of the peace settlement, its revision is definitely beyond the scope of the “Dayton as a process” approach.

The international community seems to have progressively acceded, during the last five years, to a policy variant in which the Dayton process has increasingly been subordinated to the requirements of the country’s Euro-Atlantic integration (Chandler, 2005: 336–349). The international rhetoric has been reformed, and the ethnic parties have been called to cooperate to

bring the country in line with the European norms and the requirements for accession into the Euro-Atlantic structures rather than for the sake of implementing the peace process per se. Moreover, Europe has gradually assumed greater responsibility over Bosnia. The EU delegated the HR with the additional role of the “EU Special Representative” (EUSR) and it deployed police (EUPM) and military (EUFOR-*Althea*) missions to replace their respective UN (IPTF) and NATO (SFOR) counterparts. In this regard, the international community seems to have placed its hopes for the implementation of the peace process on the conditionality of the EU (and NATO) accession procedures.

The country’s Euro-Atlantic orientation has indeed induced the nationalists to accept the establishment of a state ministry of defence, a state intelligence agency and an integrated customs service. The three ethnic groups also agreed in November 2005 to participate in the inter-ethnic constitutional talks, which aimed to strengthen the central institutions. The three communities – i.e. the following seven parties: SDA, SDS, HDZ, SDP, SNSD, PDP and HNZ – agreed to the expansion of the central government’s size by two ministries, the strengthening of the prime minister’s powers and the replacement of the collective presidency by a single president and two vice presidents who would rotate in these posts and would still represent the three ethnic communities (Haupt, 2006: 42–46). Nevertheless, Bosnia’s House of Representatives did not approve the constitutional amendments with a two-thirds majority, and the agreement turned into an empty letter. While the SBiH argued that the changes endorsed the country’s current Entity system, the HDZ 1990 claimed that they put the Croats in an unequal position. The results of the October 2006 elections were a blow to the seven-parties-coalition for the constitutional amendments. The new SDS leadership proclaimed its opposition to the agreement, and the SNSD moved to a more nationalistic position, which is against the weakening of the RS (Mustajbegovic, 2007).

A similar impasse has emerged over the implementation of the police reform. The Serb nationalists have not been eager to accept the full transfer of authority to central institutions, or the determination of new police areas that would cross the IEBL. The SDS proposal in October 2005 – that was agreed upon by all parties – previewed the integration of the Entity police forces that was to take place within five years and intended to open the way for the EU-Bosnian talks regarding the signing of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) (Haupt, 2006: 35–37). However, the Serbs have subsequently boycotted the work of the Police Reform Directorate and rejected its report, which was published in December 2006. Moreover, the SNSD, SDS and PDP – i.e. the largest Serbian parties – have expressed their opposition to the termination of the RS ministry of internal affairs and its police structure. The RS Assembly additionally decided to submit any solution on the police reform to approval by referendum (Fena news, 11/04/2007). The Bosniak parties, on the other hand, stand firmly against the preservation of the current cantonal and entity police structures, and thus, the police reform has stalled.

Overall, despite the EU's linking of the signing of the SAA with the adoption of constitutional amendments, the implementation of the police reform and the country's cooperation with the ICTY, the nationalists seem unwilling to retract their current intransigent positions.

CONCLUSIONS

This article has presented the struggle among the nationalists and the international community in the Bosnian peace process. This struggle has been fuelled by the inconsistencies of the Dayton accords and, more importantly, by the presumption that power-sharing mechanisms would almost automatically work on their own to foster political stability. However, the Lijphart-inspired consociational model has not succeeded in Bosnia's case. As Schneckener (2002: 215–216) illustrated, successful power-sharing settlements require that the involved parties are satisfied by the agreed status-quo. In Bosnia, the nationalists moved in the post-war era with the same divergent aspirations that they had nurtured when they conducted the civil war. Perhaps it is no exaggeration to paraphrase Clausewitz and claim that all three Bosnian ethnic groups viewed the peace process as a continuation of war by other means.

Theoretically, the role of individuals in peace processes has been framed by the so-called "agent-structure debate". While Stedman (1997: 5–53) has emphasized the role of "spoilers" in the failure of peace settlements, Greenhill and Major (2006/2007: 7–40) highlighted the importance of structural factors permitting the emergence of spoilers in the first place. In Bosnia's case, this article has chosen to side with the "structure" side of the debate, since it demonstrated that obstructionists have come to emerge as "defenders" of the Dayton framework that provides Entities and cantons with certain state-like prerogatives.

This article by no means implies that the partition solution would have been a more appropriate conflict regulation strategy for Bosnia. This option may be dismissed, primarily, on ethical grounds. Neither does the study argue that the Bosnian peace process should not have included power-sharing mechanisms. Their existence in the Dayton accords facilitated the conclusion of agreement among the warring parties and represented a constant guarantee of the three ethnic groups' political equality during the post-war period. Instead this article claims that the peace settlement has been deficient – firstly, in integrative elements (i.e. joint common institutions) and, secondly, in electoral and political incentives for cooperation.

The international dual strategy of awarding "imperial powers" to the HR and transforming the Dayton framework into a "flexible process" has contributed to the increase and the strengthening of the country's central institutions. The advantage of this strategy has been that its implementation has not required the approval of the nationalists. In this respect, central governance has been improved, and the disinclination of ethnic parties to work together has been by-passed. Yet, the scope of this policy seems to have reached its limits. Aid dependency and passivity have plagued domestic politics, raising questions about the ownership of the process. What is more, the rationalisation of the country's administrative system cannot be pursued

within the “Dayton as a process” approach. Hence, the requirement for cooperation and convergent approaches by the three ethnic groups inevitably comes again into play.

The policy methodology of viewing “Dayton as a process” has increasingly gained momentum since it was linked to the advancement of the country’s Euro-Atlantic accession. However, the current impasse over the revision of the constitution and the implementation of the police reform demonstrated that while the ethnic parties are willing to explore ways of advancing the country’s European path, they are not ready to sacrifice much of what they have already acquired.

On the other hand, one might argue that this path has just gotten started and its destination seems remote. Many Bosnians doubt the intentions of the EU to accept their country within its ranks. In this regard, the more the Euro-Atlantic integration of the country proceeds and becomes materialised, the greater the motivation for the ethnic parties to abandon their current positions and concede to the implementation of essential reforms for the viability of their state will be. To sum things up, the availability of incentives and common grounds for cooperation seems to be the only way out of a situation in which the parties seem disinclined to constructively work together.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The author would like to thank Efstathios T. Fakiolas, Asteris Huliaras, Michael Innes, the journal’s editor and three anonymous referees for their comments and suggestions on previous versions of the article. The author would also like to acknowledge that his research for this article was conducted with the support of a post-doctoral scholarship provided by the Hellenic Scholarships Foundation (IKY).
- ² The terms “Bosnian Muslims”, “Muslim” and “Bosniaks” are interchangeably used throughout the article as synonymous.
- ³ The HR reports only to the Peace Implementation Council (PIC). This is a biennial gathering of 55 representatives of countries and agencies that is chaired by the HR.

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***Haizam Amirah Fernández and Richard Youngs (eds.):
The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Assessing the
First Decade***

Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, FRIDE, 2005, 164 pages.

Expectations were high at the launching of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Policy in 1995. Yet, when the European Union and its southern neighbours celebrated the EMP's Tenth Anniversary in 2005, partners on both sides of the Mediterranean woke up with a hangover. During the lead up to the celebrations, there was much discussion and writing on the merits and shortcomings of the partnership. Of particular interest on this topic is the book *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Assessing the First Decade*. It is the outcome of a workshop held in Madrid in May 2005. Its editors, Haizam Amirah Fernández and Richard Youngs, who are researchers on the region at the Real Instituto Elcano des Estudios Internacionales y Estratégicos and the Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE), were able to assemble contributions by experts on the Euro-Med partnership from various member states.

The objective of the volume, according to its introduction, is „to inform debate (...) by shedding a critical light on what has and has not been achieved in key thematic areas of the EMP, as well as on the different perspectives that persist in relation to such debates“.¹ As compared to other publications on the issue, the focus on these two aspects is the distinctive feature of this book.

To place these issues in context, the introduction draws a rough picture of the general trends in the decade from 1995 to 2005 that had an impact on the EMP. Development in the Arab World is characterised by deepening tensions in the Middle East, persistent human development deficits and ongoing – and, after 9/11, worsened – authoritarian governance structures. The most relevant changes that occurred in the EU are its growing international presence, the stagnation of the institutional reform process, enlargement and, most importantly, the new European Neighbourhood Policy. With the ENP offering closer integration and basing itself on „everything except the institutions“ logic, it is unclear how it will affect the EMP.

Against this background, single chapters provide an overview of the measures taken and the general stances towards the EMP by various partner countries. All authors voice severe disappointment with the EMP's ten-year record; not only do they agree that too little is done but that the structures of the cooperation need revision also. They conclude with some recommendations for policy amendments

The first section covers the main topics of the EMP. In the first chapter, Eberhard Kienle highlights that „historically, economic liberalisation only had an impact on political liberalisation when and where it favoured or prompted the emergence of new power centres able and willing to challenge

the respective ruling regime“.² He deduces that economic reform and liberalisation alone are not sufficient to generate political liberalisation in the Arab world but that the EU has to support economic *and* political reform simultaneously. Georg Joffé outlines the EU’s desire to foster economic development on the Southern brink of the Mediterranean through increased foreign investment and discusses the current lack of investment, with insufficient physical and human infrastructure, that renders the region unattractive beyond the oil and gas sector. Thus, he recommends that the EU create the right conditions for investment, which the private sector will not do.

Concerning the unsatisfactory progress of human rights and democracy in the Mediterranean, Roberto Aliboni argues that European states focus too exclusively on human rights without taking into consideration that their realisation depends upon a democratic environment. Furthermore, Europeans reluctantly apply negative conditionality to Arab states, distribute the little money they provide for democracy and human rights related projects inappropriately and prefer indirect policies where both indirect *and* direct measures are needed. According to Aliboni, democracy and human rights records can only be improved through a long-term indirect strategy embedded in a broad foreign policy approach, which effectively pressures Arab states to adjust their governance systems.

Michelle Pace presents a variety of cultural initiatives introduced to develop human resources and promote mutual understanding such as Euro-Med Heritage, the Anna Lindh Foundation or the Euro-Mediterranean Civil Society Forum. According to her, more efforts „are needed to highlight the multi-faceted nature of cultural programmes and their interconnectedness with almost every aspect of the first and second baskets of the EMP. The cultural dimension of the EMP could be one way of regulating power relations within Mediterranean countries by maximising the opportunities for individuals to influence the conditions in which they live.“³

Fred Tanner analyses how the EU’s increasing focus on terrorism, organised crime, drug and human trafficking has shifted the security agenda towards cooperation in the justice and home affairs framework at the cost of neglecting operational cooperation and broader reforms of security forces and institutions in the Southern Mediterranean countries. To improve the EU’s approach to security, cooperation measures should be taken to strengthen democratic governance in the security sector, human rights protection and human security at all levels of cooperation.

According to Bichara Khader, criminalisation and the prioritisation of European security characterises the EU’s basic attitude towards migration. In stark contrast to ageing Europe’s real need for immigrants, the EMP aims for ever-stricter immigration control. Considering this, Khader argues that immigration policies are not only a question of obligation (to protect all people) but that it is also in the EU’s self-interest to realise the positive impact that migration can have in Europe.

Following this overview of the main policy areas, the volume’s second section is devoted to national perspectives.

Dorothee Schmid observes that since colonial times, France has constantly tried to uphold close political and cultural relations with the Arab world, mostly through bilateral channels. Only in the 1990s did the French adopt a regional notion of the Mediterranean as a counterstrategy to the feared loss of regional power and became an important contributor to the Barcelona process. But even today, France maintains strong bilateral relations in the region. Schmid interprets this ambiguous course as the former great power's attempt to both maintain a strong influence and adapt to a changing international environment. Unfortunately, the chapter's section about French policy priorities in the EMP is printed only partly.

Spain, as emphasised by Núñez Villaverde, is the European country that is the most sensitive to developments in the Southern Mediterranean due to various political, economic, geographical, historical and cultural relations. Owing to its inability to handle the region's development and security problems alone, Spain became one of the driving forces behind the EMP. In the last ten years, however, two changes of government resulted in priorities being diverted away from the EMP and towards other policy issues or bilateral relations. Such developments can also partly be explained by the overall standstill of the EMP. Núñez Villaverde sees the necessary revival of the process as Spain's task. Yet, the underlying rationale of this demand remains unclear. As he stated earlier, the „[r]e-launching of the EMP does not depend on the determination of one or more European governments“.⁴

Annette Jünemann explains that the struggle for security is Germany's main motivation for contributing to the EMP framework. Even its strong interest in free trade with the Arab countries is seen as a means to an end, contributing to security by socio economic development processes. The Germans have only very reluctantly accepted cultural cooperation as a valuable „bottom up“ instrument for democratisation and stabilisation.

Italy naturally pursues interests in the Mediterranean, which range from securing energy supplies to reducing illegal migration, and official statements emphasise the importance of the EMP. But in practice – and this is probably the most astonishing thesis put forward by Rosa Balfour – it has focused on continental Europe and, in the 1990s, on the Balkans, casting doubt on the overall effectiveness of the EMP. Additionally, Italy's initiatives in the region have been increasingly dominated by its strong alignment with the US and a focus on bilateral activities outside the EMP framework.

In Egypt, political reforms are taking place slowly and gradually, and even though restrictions on democratic freedoms prevail, a new quality of the pluralistic moment can be observed. Amr Hamzawy recommends that Europeans address the Egyptian government to allow for more political liberties, to strengthen opposition parties in low-profile policy areas where government intervention is not expected right away and finally to train moderate Islamists on matters such as human rights in order to include them in the policy process.

Abu-Dalbouh outlines economic and financial development as the most important aspect of the EMP Association Agreement with Jordan. Yet, in some key respects, Jordan performs worse today than when the EMP was launched. Indeed, even though the country has received large sums from the

EU for modernising its economy, liberalisation has largely favoured the EU to the detriment of the Jordanian enterprises. Political reform has received only a minor fraction of the attention devoted to economic reform, and after 9/11, the EU has largely ignored decreasing democratic standards in the kingdom. Abu-Dalbouh concludes that Jordan's political and economic development will not benefit from the Barcelona process as long as its founders are not prepared to revisit its basic principles.

In Morocco, according to Fouad Ammor, the EMP is broadly appreciated due to its important contribution to socio-economic reforms. In contrast to American initiatives in the region, Europe's engagement is perceived by international law and Moroccan culture as more respectful. On the other hand, the EMP is also understood as an intervention in Morocco's internal affairs. The economic situation in Morocco is still bad, and unemployment rates are high. Finally, European migration policies are security centred, and the fight against terrorism after 9/11 tends to neglect human rights, civil liberties and good governance. In order for the EMP to be more fruitful, Ammor demands more cooperation in general and emphasises wide-ranging reforms in the promotion of human rights and the positioning of highly qualified people in well-managed and transparent state institutions in particular.

The conclusion of the book draws together the main challenges that have been identified by its authors and the basic solutions they suggest. Altogether, it turns out that the agenda lying ahead of the Union at the EMP's 10th anniversary is challenging. But the „EU is currently in a good position to encourage Arab countries to reaffirm their commitment to the Barcelona principles, which are viewed by many as less interventionist and more respectful to national sovereignty than the policies of the Bush administration“.⁵ Thus, if the EU is ready to seize the moment and to invest in this innovative endeavour, it is not yet too late. If, however, it is not willing to take action, prospects look grim.

Taking this into account, although it is two years after the anniversary summit for which it was originally written, the book is still worth reading. Besides providing a concise overview of different thematic aspects and the development of seven countries in the Euro-Med framework, the volume (as well as its single chapters) draws attention to the many sore spots that still need improvement today.

Ina Lehmann

ENDNOTES

¹ Amirah Fernández, Haizam and Youngs, Richards (2005), „Introduction“. In: Haizam Amirah Fernández and Richard Youngs (eds.): *The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Assessing the First Decade*. Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, FRIDE, p. 14 (www.realinstitutoelcano.org/publicaciones/libros/Barcelona10_eng.pdf).

² Kienle, Eberhard (2005), „Political Reform through Economic Reform? The Southern Mediterranean States Ten Years after Barcelona“. In: Haizam Amirah Fernández and Richard Youngs, op. cit., p. 32.

³ Pace, Michelle (2005), „EMP Cultural Initiatives: What Political Relevance“. In: Haizam Amirah Fernández and Richard Youngs, op. cit., p. 65.

- ⁴ Núñez Villaverde, Jesús A. (2005), „Spanish Policy towards the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership“. In: Haizam Amirah Fernández and Richard Youngs, op. cit., p. 108.
- ⁵ Amirah Fernández, Haizam and Youngs, Richards (2005), „Conclusions“. In: Haizam Amirah Fernández and Richard Youngs, op. cit., p. 163.

***Jan Hallenberg and Håkan Karlsson (eds.):
Changing Transatlantic Security Relations
Do the US, the EU and Russia Form a New Strategic
Triangle?***

New York: Routledge, 2006, xii + 249 pages, ISBN: 0-415-39116-4.

For more than 15 years now, the debate continues over an appropriate security construct being able to replace the old Cold War bipolarity framework, which has served its purpose as a relatively easy framework for analyses. The editors Jan Hallenberg and Håkan Karlsson contribute to the present discussion in resurrecting the metaphor of a strategic triangle, which already existed in the second half of the Cold War (formed by the USA, the Soviet Union and China), with their publication *Changing Transatlantic Security Relations. Do the US, the EU and Russia form a new strategic triangle?* The book itself, part of the Contemporary Security Studies published by Routledge, is the result of cooperation among scholars from the Department of Security and Strategic Studies at the Swedish National Defence College and the contributions of two scholars from the United States and one scholar from the United Kingdom.

Following the introduction, the book is divided into three sections, whereby the focus of each section is on one of the actors of this new strategic triangle. The first part consists of four chapters, and provides an overview of different aspects of the EU's latest development. It tries to assess the extent to which the EU can be called an actor in the context of this strategic triangle. In the second section of this book, attention falls on Russia, with two chapters looking closer at Russia's relations with the EU and two of its neighbours, Belarus and the Ukraine. Finally, the third part casts a glance at the US. This part is comprised of three chapters, which highlight its relations with the other two actors in the context of this strategic triangle. The final chapter concludes with analyses and tries to assess the circumstances in which a new strategic triangle may exist or could arise.

The editors Jan Hallenberg and Håkan Karlsson wrote the introduction. Jan Hallenberg is a professor of political science at the Swedish National Defence College. He specialises in US foreign policy and transatlantic security relations. Håkan Karlsson is a Ph.D. in political science and a Research Associate at the Swedish National Defence College; he is also a specialist on US strategy and nuclear weapons. Together, they provide the reader with the basic information needed to follow the succeeding analyses. First of all, they determine the criterion for the existence of a strategic triangle, which exists if „all three actors, in formulating their policies in a given issue area, take each other into consideration“ (p. 2). Hallenberg and Karlsson look at the differences between the former and the new strategic triangle, and introduce the actors briefly. Finally, they provide us with an overview of the structure of the book. Moreover, the introduction deals with possible criticism of the upcoming analysis. It faces, for example, the question of limited geographical

coverage of this new strategic triangle and it explains why all three actors are not treated in the same way in this volume.

Following the introduction, in the second chapter, Magnus Ekengren and Kjell Engelbrekt examine the impact of the EU enlargement on its „actorness“. Seeing actorness as a „function of capacity and cohesiveness“ (p. 20), they draw a complex picture of the latest EU enlargement in their analysis. The new member states lead to an enhanced capacity for the EU, while challenging the cohesiveness of the Union at the same time through the number of new member states and their diversity. In the end, they come to the conclusion that fear of negative impact from the enlargement process (on the EU actorness) seems to be exaggerated and propose four possible future scenarios, with regard to the Union’s actorness, and their implications on the strategic triangle.

In chapter three, Arita Eriksson looks to another topic which affects the actorness of the EU: namely, the build-up of EU military capability. While giving a brief overview on the development of the EU in this issue area since 1999, Eriksson discusses the internal and external implications of this Europeanisation process in greater depth. In one case study, she shows how the process is influencing Sweden’s security and defence policy and addresses the external implications of the overall process in regard to NATO. This leads her to the conclusion that the Europeanisation process will enhance the possibilities of the EU for an effective CFSP and may decrease the importance of NATO in the future.

In the fourth chapter, Fredrik Bynander examines the difficult positioning of the Czech Republic and Poland between both institutions (the EU and NATO). Again, he looks at the process of enlargement and its implications for the EU’s actorness. He discusses the choices both countries have made for the EU and NATO and shows why both countries differ to some extent in their choices: while Poland is more orientated towards NATO at the expense of the EU due to the low credibility of the EU in military security, the Czech Republic, with its aim to become a „rapidly modernizing state“ (p. 77), is more orientated towards the EU.

In the last chapter of this first part, Adrian Hyde-Price tries to answer the question „Is strategic coercion a possible tool for the EU or rather for Europe’s major powers?“ After providing a short analysis of the European strategic environment and Europe’s security agenda, he examines the meaning and nature of strategic coercion, considering its implications and complications. These deliberations lead to the reasoning that despite problems, the tool of strategic coercion is an attractive option. It is, however, unlikely that the EU itself will engage in collective strategic coercion. Consequently, it is more likely that major member states, like France or the UK, will form smaller coalitions, sometimes acting in the name of Europe.

The second part of this volume, which provides a closer look at Russia, begins with the sixth chapter by Charlotte Wagnsson. She explores the question „Why, despite enough possibilities and attempts, has so little been achieved in terms of cooperation between Russia and the EU in the area of security?“ Through her analysis of the differences in actorness, diverging threat perceptions and the role of the US, she discusses the impediments on

the path to closer cooperation. Nevertheless, these obstacles are, in her view, no substantial hindrance for further EU-Russian rapprochement.

Following this analysis, Bertil Nygren focuses on Russia and its relationships with the Ukraine and Belarus. Nygren provides the reader with several examples of profound changes in Russian foreign policy attitudes towards their neighbour countries since Vladimir Putin came into office in 2000. He does so by highlighting the shift from a geo-political focus to a geo-economic one. While looking at both dimensions, he shows how Russian-Belarus relations were marked by a descending spin and how Russia pursued a pragmatic foreign policy towards the Ukraine.

Finally, the third part of the book focuses on the United States and starts with a contribution by Peter Dombrowski and Andrew L. Ross. While focusing on the US's grand strategy debate, they introduce five major options for the future of US foreign policy (neo-isolationism, selective engagement, liberal internationalism, primacy and empire), and they discuss each of these grand strategies with regard to the new strategic triangle. Finally, they come to the conclusion that only under the strategy of liberal internationalism is the prerequisite for a new strategic triangle given. Moreover, while looking upon the policy of the current Bush administration, Dombrowski and Ross reason that prospects for a new strategic triangle were undermined by this administration during its term of office.

Hereafter, the economic relations between the three dyads of the strategic triangle are in the centre of the ninth chapter, which is written by Jan Hallenberg. After starting with a brief overview of the economic grand strategies of the three actors, Hallenberg takes a closer look at trade and monetary relations as well as at the Foreign Direct Investments among the three dyads. He comes to the conclusion that they differ a lot in the strength of their economic ties (i.e. with strong ties between the EU and the US, moderate ties among the EU and Russia and weak ties between the US and Russia). Therefore, in the economic field, Hallenberg sees a very weak, but nevertheless slowly strengthening, triangle among the three actors, whereby strong economic ties are able to stabilise relations among the actors in other issue areas.

The third part of this volume ends with Håkan Karlsson's contribution, in which he analyses the „clash of strategic visions“ (p. 184) between the US and Russia. While examining the grand strategies of the Clinton and Bush administrations at the end of the Cold War, Karlsson shows how both administrations tried to perpetuate unipolarity in the international system. Moreover, he explains how Russia attempted to counterbalance the dominant US position. After focusing on security issues like missile defence, NATO enlargement or the strategic arms control, he concludes that, behind their partnership in combating terrorism, the US and Russia have „diametrically opposite approaches to the shaping of the future world order“ (p. 200).

This analysis is followed by the conclusion of the book, written by Hallenberg and Karlsson. Here, they look briefly at each of the three actors and recapitulate the major findings of the preceding chapters. In their view, there is a „nascent strategic triangle in the economic realm“ (p. 212). And, as other cases like the events in the Ukraine after the presidential elections in

late 2004 show, there are also indications that relations among the EU, Russia and the US „have been at least partly governed by what we might call triangular logic“ (p. 212). The editors conclude that although all three actors have not taken each other into account in their security policies in recent years, the metaphor of the strategic triangle can help understand the security policy relations between them. Moreover, provided that each of the three actors undergoes some changes, the US pursuing a global strategy, the EU developing its internal legitimacy and Russia improving in the fields of economy and democracy, the editors reckon that this strategic triangle may take on greater significance in the future, especially for understanding Trans-Atlantic security relations.

This volume offers a fresh and interesting approach in the study of the Trans-Atlantic security relations and encourages the reader to think about these relations in the perspective of a new strategic triangle. Although the book achieves its aim, that „each chapter makes at least some contribution towards a better understanding of the relationships among the three actors, even if the emphasis in some of the chapters is strongly on one or two of the three actors“ (p. 6), it may also disappoint some of its readers. Keeping the title in mind, one could expect a more or less clear affiliation of all of the chapters with the idea of a new strategic triangle (for example, whether and how the actors take each other’s policies into consideration). However, this is not the case. In chapters like the second, fifth or seventh, the focus lies explicitly on specific aspects of the respective actor, and thus it may lead to some irritation among the readers. Despite the possible „expectation gap“, this volume is easy to read. The chapters are well structured and give useful cross-references to the other chapters, so that the reader can follow the analyses without many problems. It is useful for those researching and studying security policies or international relations, and it may open doors for future research, especially if this new strategic triangle becomes a starting point for understanding Trans-Atlantic security relations.

Sebastian Kruse

Eric O. Hanson:
Religion and Politics in the International System Today

Cambridge et al: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 358 pages, ISBN: 0-521-61781-2.

Throughout much of the second half of the 2nd millennium, people of the Western world were convinced that with more and more technological advances, the importance of religion would decrease and perhaps ultimately cease to exist. The 20th century – although technological progress didn't stop – has shown a much different picture. Clearly, religiously inspired events, like the Iranian revolution in the late 1970s, made people aware of the importance of religion in most national political systems, although many remained unconvinced of its importance in international affairs. It was only after September 11th that people began to take notice of the interrelation between religion and the international political system. If 9/11 proved anything, it was the enormously influential role that religion plays in contemporary affairs.

With his book *Religion and Politics in the International System Today* Eric O. Hanson follows a recent trend in scholarly discussion on this new role of religion that followed the attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon in 2001. The author is a professor of Political Science at Santa Clara University, a Jesuit university situated in Silicon Valley, where he has been teaching Chinese political culture and religion in politics for twenty years. His book is divided into two major parts, which are further subdivided into four and six chapters, respectively. In the first part, "Religion and politics in the new global paradigm", Hanson presents the paradigm that the book proposes and takes a look at religion and politics from a religious as well as a political viewpoint. In the second part, „Religion in contemporary world politics“, the author focuses on actual case studies, from „the globe's most secular society“ (p. 177) Japan to "Islamist Iran" (p. 7). In the end, he presents his outlook to the future in the chapter "Religion and politics for the new millennium".

Hanson "proposes a post-Cold War paradigm based on the interaction between the contemporary globalisation of the political, economic, military, and communication (political plus EMC) systems" (p. 1) and the growing influence of religion in those systems. He agrees with Samuel P. Huntington's theory that religion is the main factor in holding together civilizations¹ and defines it as a "pattern of beliefs and activities that express ultimate meaning in a person's life" (p. 70). In contrast, politics is defined by Hanson as a "pattern of beliefs and activities that determine who gets what, when, how" (p. 76). However, Huntington, according to Hanson, falls short of providing the concrete influence that religion and politics have on each other in these cultures; Huntington's *Clash* remained a theory that was at least challenged by empirical data. In this book, Hanson draws back on Huntington's analysis of cultural identity but hopes to match it with *Realpolitik*. His aim is to provide "the generally educated population" (p.

12), such as his students, academic scholars and practitioners, with a new model for understanding post-Cold War politics.

The first part of the book focuses more on a theoretical approach to religion. Others, such as Joseph Nye², have made an approach to analysing national power sources like Hanson's EMC systems but have failed to include religion as a factor. However, Hanson does not include religion as a system like the other four because religious systems of nations are not necessarily as linked as, for example, their economic systems.

At the national level, Hanson sees four possible relationships between religion and politics: "dominant religions" such as the US's civil religion that serve to legitimise state power, religious and political organisations competing for "institutional and expressive power", various religions competing for influence within one nation and religious groups fighting for control of the national culture. Each of the three EMC systems works in a way that tries to reduce the weight of the other two EMC systems and the political system. "Religion and politics thus constitute a 'united front against the EMC systems'" (p. 45). Religious and political leaders should thus work together to defend the society from such "monopolistic" practices of the EMC.

Hanson subsequently discusses the seven main religions, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and also Maoist Marxism, which he counts as a "religion [...] of public life,, (p. 70), and takes a closer look at those spiritual practices that are most likely to influence politics. This serves as the basis for the second and much longer part of the book, where Hanson applies the theoretical analyses from the first part to global *Realpolitik*. His categorisation of regions doesn't follow Huntington's earlier mentioned approach but distinguishes it from a geographical point of view, placing Israel within the chapter on the Middle East and Russia in the West.

Since it is the author's academic specialty, we will take a closer look at the section on China.

Judging from the media presence, the first thought likely to come up in the minds of many people is the image of the ever-present Dalai Lama and his fight against the repression of Tibetan Buddhism. But there is very little on that matter in Hanson's book. Hanson instead opts for devoting a major part of this chapter to the persecution of members of Falun Gong.

The economic reforms of the 1980s created new hardships for many Chinese, especially among the country's middle-aged population. Subsequently, traditional Chinese social networks gained more and more influence, including religious ones. „This religious resurgence included, first of all, the spectacular growth of Chinese folk religion,“ (p. 167) which led to the rise of Falun Gong and other *qigong* sects. *Qigong* as practices, according to Hanson, are viewed by most Chinese as a medical practice rather than religiously motivated. As medical care costs became unbearable for many Chinese families, they turned to their *qigong* masters for medical relief. For some time, the Chinese government not only accepted but also supported these *qigong* movements as valuable „indigenous medicine“ (p. 174). But Falun Gong also attracted many members of the Chinese administration and has proven to be very hard to destroy, despite severe

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persecution by the Chinese government. The persistence of the sect and its continued public appearances and demonstrations has directly challenged the Chinese Communist Party's grip on the Chinese people. If Maoist Marxism can be considered a „religion [...] of public life“ (p. 70), as Hanson considers it, it obviously cannot accept any other movement to challenge its position.

At various times, Hanson emphasizes the „global“ claim of his book (not just in the chapter on China). Hanson has possibly managed to show the interrelation of global actions by pointing out certain connections. For example, he shows how 9/11, an event not closely related to Chinese national politics in most peoples minds, has affected the Communist party's fight against religious groups by loosely labelling them as „terrorists“ (p. 168). It is those details that set the book apart from merely descriptive histories and make it especially interesting and valuable.

Since religion is an emotional topic, even more so today, it is not easy to write a scientific study about it. As Hanson himself admits himself in his introduction, his background as a Silicon Valley Lutheran certainly influences his views on these topics; yet he has actually managed to maintain a neutral position in regard to the different religions. Still, his religious upbringing can be noted from time to time. An example of this can be seen when he talks about the religious background of many Nobel-Peace-Prize winners, whereas there are probably just as many who did not have a religious background. This book is certainly not a critical look at the role religion has played and plays in the world. It does, however, offer a critique of current foreign politics of the US, which „focus [es] more on [its] own national good rather than on the health of the international systems“ (p. 59). Hanson's point of view becomes even more obvious when he writes that the U.S.'s neglect of the important role of religious leadership in Iraq and its reliance on the secular Ahmed Chalabi „was a U.S. defense department fantasy“ (p. 296).

With more than 300 pages, the book comprises a huge amount of facts without being unreadable. It is well structured, and the reader can follow Hanson's arguments without being overloaded with theoretical approaches. The result is a book that brings out the importance of religion and carries the potential to make a significant contribution to our understanding of post-Cold War international relations.

Nina Westermann

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Huntington, Samuel P. (1996), *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, p. 20.
- ² Nye, Joseph F. (2002), *The Paradox of American Power: Why the world's only superpower Can't Go It Alone*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

***Barbara Lippert and Gaby Umbach:
The Pressure of Europeanisation: From
Post-Communist State Administrations to Normal
Players in the EU System***

Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2005, 203 pages, ISBN: 3-8329-1230-4.

The Pressure of Europeanisation was written by Dr. Barbara Lippert and Gaby Umbach, M.A. Lippert is the Deputy Director of the Institute für Europäische Politik (Berlin), the managing editor of the quarterly journal *Integration* and a lecturer at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Umbach is a Research Associate at the Jean-Monnet Chair for Political Science at the University of Cologne.

The research conducted in this book focuses on the development of the state administration in five post-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) (CEEC-5). The authors present three theses in the book. The first thesis “supposes that the pressure of the EU on the candidate countries increased according to the intensification of bilateral relations from association to membership negotiations”.¹ To answer this thesis, the authors study different phases of Europeanisation and define Europeanisation and key decisions and initiatives. The second thesis is „that the CEEC-5 react in different ways to the same demands and pressures of the EU on the domestic administration“.² The third thesis is related to “unconsolidated EU-related decision-making systems”,³ where the authors expect the process of decision-making to adapt to the accession and the new opportunity structures arising from membership. Lippert and Umbach use a neo-institutionalist approach as the background for their research, and they emphasise, “the impact of European institutions and rule setting on national institutions”.⁴

The book is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is called *Public administrations as key players of Europeanisation*. Here, the Authors define the objective of their study and the approach they are going to use. They also present their three theses and define the concept of Europeanisation. They define Europeanisation “as the shift of attention of all national institutions and their increasing participation – in terms of the number of actors and the intensity – in the EC/EU decision-making cycle”.⁵

The second chapter is called, *Phases of Europeanisation: EU increases pressure on candidates*. In this chapter, the authors present and analyse five phases. They show that during the membership negotiations, the pressure on candidate countries increased significantly as the EU enlargement was approaching. The first phase occurred between 1988 and 1991, when the communist regimes were breaking down in Central and Eastern Europe and the EU launched the assistance program PHARE in 1989 in Poland and Hungary. Countries, in order to absorb the money from PHARE, had to learn how to deal with the EU institutions. The ministries in the Central and Eastern European countries had to develop units dealing with the EU affairs. The second phase occurred in 1992–1994. During this phase, the Europe

Agreements were signed with Hungary (1991), Poland (1991) and the Czech Republic (1993). Estonia and Slovenia signed the Agreements later, in 1995 and 1996, respectively. The Agreements included the perspective of eventual EU membership and „introduced corresponding processes of optional and ‘anticipatory adaptation’“.⁶ At the Copenhagen summit in 1993, the EU declared that „all associated countries that fulfilled the political and economic criteria of EU membership could become members“.⁷ The third phase continued between the years 1995 and 1997. During this phase the CEEC-5 increased their relations with the EU, and especially with the Commission, by sending a mission to Brussels. The Commission sent a questionnaire to the CEEC-5 regarding the „necessary information for the preparation of the opinions on the membership applications and subsequent screening process“.⁸ This led to the involvement of other ministries, not just the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The fourth phase occurred within the period between 1998 and 2002, when the proper membership negotiations and the screening process happened. The CEEC-5 had to increase administrative capacities, in terms of quantity and quality, and strengthen the coordination links between administrative structures dealing with negotiations and administrative units involved in the preparation for membership. The last and fifth phase started in 2003 and still continues. Acceding countries were given the opportunity to become active observers in all EU institutions from April 2003 till May 2004, when the enlargement took place. The CEEC-5 already had to have the missions in Brussels after the accession; these missions were transformed into permanent representations.

The third chapter is called *Uniform pressure of Europeanisation – differentiated national solutions*. In this chapter, the authors try to show that the CEEC-5 would act differently to the adaptation pressure from the EU. They analyse the political transformation and the features of political systems in the CEEC-5 in order to see the development of executive and public administrations.

The authors examine the way of transition from a Communist to a Democratic system during the first two phases of Europeanisation. The way of transition was different in the countries. For instance, while in Poland and Hungary, the transition was the result of negotiations between the old and new elites, in Czechoslovakia, the breakdown of Communism happened after short round table talks when the opposition had no real opponents in the old elites. In Estonia, the Estonian Communist party, which wanted independence from the Soviet Union, led the transition. And in Slovenia, opposition intellectuals and reformers in the Communist party led the movement. But during the first phase and the beginning of the second phase of Europeanisation, communist regimes were abolished in all CEEC-5. The historical traditions and political bargaining between old and new elites influenced the constitution-making process. During the second phase of Europeanisation, all CEEC-5 had “the European constitution”.

Regarding public administration, the CEEC-5 have different traditions. The authors present three types of public administration – the Prussian-German, the French and the Anglo-Saxon model. For example Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia are influenced, according to Lippert and

Umbach, by the Germanic model. In contrast, Estonia tends more towards the Anglo-Saxon model.

Then they describe the change of public administration during the Communist period and after the transition, the creation of the EU units within the CEEC-5 public administration and the management of EU affairs by the administration. In all CEEC-5, the foreign ministers represented the countries in accession negotiations. For example, in Hungary, the key figure regarding EU decision-making and coordination with the EU was the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the case of Poland, the leading role was more complicated because there were shifts of power within the triad of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the plenipotentiary for European integration and foreign assistance. But after the 2001 elections, the decision-making in EU related issues shifted more towards the Foreign Minister.

Next, the authors describe and analyse the missions of CEEC-5 to the EU. All the missions were headed by the ambassador and were divided into sections. For instance, the Hungarian mission had three sections. The head of the mission was the chief negotiator and ambassador. Similarly, the Czech and Polish missions consisted of sections and the heads were the ambassadors. But the Estonian and Slovenian missions had only an informal division into sections. As the missions shifted to permanent representations, the authors observed that the number of sections and staff had risen. The number of A-level staff from permanent representations varies from 41 (Slovenia) to 68 (the Czech Republic). They found that uniform pressure and demands from the EU do not lead to a single type of administration and uniform response from the CEEC-5. The main differences are in the agendas and time frames of the national administrative reforms and the leading roles of the political elites. All CEEC-5 dealt with problems in their own individual way.

The fourth chapter is called *Unconsolidated EU decision-making systems: new opportunity structures and new demands in the period of membership*. In this chapter, the authors assume that real EU membership influences the changes and adaptation of the EU-related institutions within the CEEC-5. They study new opportunity structures and demands. The first opportunity came with the Convention on the future of the EU in 2002, in which the CEEC-5 were involved as active observers. This meant that although delegates could not vote, they could present their opinions. Even during the observation period, there were changes and reforms to the design of the decision-making structures within the CEEC-5. The trend is toward the centralisation of horizontal coordination systems and functional decentralisation through the involvement of more actors. This leads to the question of „how would the new member states influence the process of Europeanisation?“ Lippert and Umbach present three possible scenarios on future development within the CEEC-5. The first scenario is normalisation or positive scenario, where the new member states would successfully cope with their problems and become normal players. The second scenario is a mixed scenario, where the structural shortcomings would remain and make the new members sub-standard players. The last scenario is a negative one, where the administration would fail and make the new member states failed

players. The authors claim that the first positive scenario is expected to happen in the CEEC-5. In the CEEC-5, the development of structures and institutions can already be seen, and even „the period of formation of executive EU decision-making systems is completed at the central level“.⁹

The fifth chapter is called *Conclusions*. In this chapter, the authors revise all three theses of the research and face them with the findings of their research and analysis. The first thesis, regarding the increase of pressure from the EU towards the CEEC-5, was supported by the five phases of Europeanisation, through which the authors show how pressure and demands from the EU increased on the acceding countries. The authors “observe three major trends”¹⁰ within the CEEC-5 administrations – enlargement and complementation of the institutions, building of structures to coordinate the work of the actors involved and the establishment of programs for EU-specific training. In the second thesis, the authors expected that the CEEC-5 would all react differently. During their research, they found that there were national solutions and differentiation in timing and reforms in the CEEC-5. The third thesis expected that demands on system adaptation and the reformation of the CEEC-5 administration were needed in order to cooperate with the EU. Here, the authors observe “centralisation of the horizontal coordination systems and stronger functional decentralisation through inclusion of new players”¹¹ in the CEEC-5. The results of this analysis lead the authors to a final question, “How will the full integration of new member states into EU policy-making influence the process of Europeanisation?”, in which they provide three scenarios. They conclude that the first positive scenario “is most likely to occur”.¹²

This book is an interesting and concrete study of the influence of the EU on the new member states and of the demands and changes regarding the negotiations with and membership in the EU as observed by the CEEC-5. The accessible with and self-explanatory diagrams and charts used in the book make it neat and well arranged. The text is written in a way that is accessible for students and useful for academics and politicians as well.

Marcela Jindrová

ENDNOTES

¹ Lippert, Barbara; Umbach, Gaby (2005), *The Pressure of Europeanisation: From post-communist state administrations to normal players in the EU system*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, p. 28.

² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

¹² *Ibid.*

***Miroslav Nožina, Jiří Šitler and Karel Kučera:
Royal Ties: King Norodom Sihanouk and the History of
Czech-Cambodian Relations***

Prague: Euromedia Group – Knižní klub, 2006, 188 pages, ISBN: 80-86938-75-1.

This book commemorates the state visit of King Norodom Sihanouk to the Czech Republic in September 2006. The King, who speaks Czech fluently, spent his childhood and youth in Prague. The principal author of the book, Dr Nožina, studied ethnology at the T. G. Masaryk University in Brno. He is a research worker at the Institute of International Relations in Prague, the author of three books on Southeast Asia, and the co-writer of scenarios for two documentary films on Cambodia. Dr. Šitler, a diplomat and historian, studied in Prague and at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. He is currently the Czech ambassador to Thailand, Cambodia, Burma and Laos. Mr. Kučera is a doctoral student of ethnology at the Charles University in Prague and specialises in social and ethnic relations in Indochina.

Royal Ties is a remarkable book, beautifully produced and profusely illustrated, worthy of the state visit it commemorates. It traces the troubled history of this small country in which there are a number of parallels with the troubled history of the Czech lands. Interwoven into this chronicle is a very human story of a prince who, mainly through the kindness and dedication of his teachers during his formative years, came to love Prague, the Czech countryside, its people, its language and its culture.

The book comprises ten chapters, all annotated with references. To that extent, it is a scholarly work, useful to other researchers working in the field of Czechoslovak- Cambodian affairs. One of the authors, Dr Šitler, was instrumental in gaining access to the archives of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the other end of the scale, the Communist Party newspaper *Rudé právo* is well represented in the list of references (pp. 177–187). An appendix lists the names and tenure of the Czechoslovak and Cambodian ambassadors and *chargés d'affaires* dating from 1957 (pp. 174–176). This could be the basis of an interesting study, tracing the careers and fate of the diplomats against a background of political change. I found the book to be politically neutral. Texts from the era of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic have not been expunged from the record, nor have President Zápotocký and President Novotný been airbrushed out of the illustrations.

The early chapters describe the activities of Christian missionaries from the Czech lands operating in Cambodia during the 17th and 18th centuries and of other Czech travellers in the 20th century. The country became a French protectorate from the end of the 19th century until 1953, when it gained full independence. Prince Sihanouk had been elected King of Cambodia in 1941 but abdicated in 1955 in favour of his father and became prime minister. The father died in 1960 and Sihanouk became head of state,

remaining in this role until 1970. Flamboyant and charismatic, Sihanouk adopted a policy of neutrality in foreign affairs, developed friendly relations with countries in the Soviet bloc, China and France and became estranged from the United States. Czechoslovakia and Cambodia established diplomatic relations in 1956, presaging an extensive programme of cultural exchanges: scholars specialising in oriental studies, art exhibitions and sports travelled to the other country, and Czechoslovak scholarships for Cambodian students were offered. Later, in 1956, Prince Sihanouk paid a state visit and was received by the then President of the Republic, Antonín Zápotocký.

Sihanouk paid a second state visit to Czechoslovakia in 1960 at the invitation of the then President of the Republic, Antonín Novotný. During the visit, Sihanouk said that though Cambodia was a kingdom, its head of state (himself) was elected by parliament, and therefore, it was virtually a republic and that he would draw on Czechoslovakia's experience, especially that of Slovakia (p. 73).

Sihanouk's son, Prince Sihamoni, was born in 1953. Initially, the boy went to a French school in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, but his father decided that he should study abroad and sought the help of President Novotný. Convinced that Czechoslovakia's education system was superior in developing civil and moral attitudes in young people, Sihanouk requested that his son be enrolled in a Prague primary school, where he would be taught alongside Czechoslovak children. The prince was less than nine years old when he arrived in Prague in 1962. Uprooted from a life of oriental privilege and not knowing one word of Czech, he was enrolled in the third form of a primary school in Prague. After only one term in the school, responding to the kindness and encouragement of the headmistress and the form teacher, the prince showed demonstrable progress in spoken and written Czech. In extra-curricular activities, ballet inspired him the most. The prince finished at the primary school in 1967 and subsequently continued his education at the Prague Academy of Performing Arts (AMU), where he studied dance, music and theatre. His thesis, „Utilising European Classical Dance in the Cambodian Dance Culture“, enabled him to graduate with distinction in 1975 (p. 132).

At about the same time, Sihanouk, the prince's father, was adjusting his political affiliations. As the Sino-Soviet rift deepened, Sihanouk gravitated towards China and suppressed extremist factions in Cambodia seeking to overthrow his government. Moreover, the world was divided politically by the Cold War, and a hot war was raging in neighbouring Vietnam. For a small country to maintain a neutralist policy in a region where the great powers confronted each other was to walk a political tightrope. In 1970, during Sihanouk's absence in France for a medical check-up, Lon Nol, a Cambodian army general backed by the United States, staged a *coup d'état*, later proclaiming the formation of a Khmer Republic. Under an agreement with the new government, American and South Vietnamese troops launched massive military operations on Cambodian territory. Virtually overnight, Sihanouk became a stateless exile.

Lon Nol became prime minister of the Khmer Republic in 1971, and then president in 1972. His regime was opposed by followers of the exiled

Sihanouk and by the communist Khmer Rouge, the two factions merging to form a united front. A civil war developed, and despite aid from the United States, Lon Nol's government fell in 1975. The country was renamed Kampuchea with Sihanouk as its head of state, but after only one year, he was deposed by the notorious Khmer Rouge, and he fled to North Korea.

In 1976, for reasons unclear to me, Sihanouk and his family returned to Phnom Penh. On arrival, soldiers of the Kmer Rouge seized Sihanoni's luggage. His books, his Czech school certificates and his collection of classical gramophone records were piled in a heap and burnt in front of him. The family were taken to the royal palace and held there under house arrest. Sihanoni was ordered to work in the rice fields and prevented from practising his profession in the theatre. In 1979, Vietnamese troops invaded Cambodia and toppled the Khmer Rouge regime. The Chinese government arranged to fly Sihanouk and his family to Beijing, where Sihanoni spent six months as a Buddhist monk. From 1981, he lived in Paris and founded a school of dance there.

The demise of the Communist administration in Czechoslovakia in 1989 coincided with protracted political upheaval in Cambodia. When the conditions of the peace agreement between the warring factions were finally resolved in 1992, Sihanoni was chosen to be Cambodia's permanent representative at the United Nations. One year later, he was appointed Cambodian ambassador to UNESCO in Paris. In 2004, he became King of Cambodia.

During a visit to Prague in 2002, Sihanoni met the Czech painter Jaromír Skřivánek. In their conversation, Sihanoni recalled that his studies in Prague and his encounters with the Czech environment had left indelible marks on him. These marks were not only professional, artistic and intellectual but also emotional. Skřivánek wrote, „In comparison with other foreign students, Sihanoni's approach to Czech culture was truly exceptional. His command of the Czech language equals that of any native Czech. He loves Czech music, sings our folk songs, and I was moved to hear him say that his infatuation with the Czech environment equalled his warm relationship with his mother“ (p. 163, ref 192). Asked about his memories of his earlier stay, Sihanoni said, „...As I walked by the Mánes Bridge, I looked across to the other bank of the river, with the panoramic view of Hradčany Castle, the silhouettes of the spires, and the cathedral. The dramatically illuminated palaces, the darkened gardens, and the starry sky above... I have walked down there quite often, always reliving moments of enormous enchantment and happiness. My heart sings here. It is as though all my childhood desire for beauty came to fruition in these places. I have always had the urge to thank fate for my privilege to spend my youth here. This is a fairy tale that never ends. I have not seen the likes of this in Paris or anywhere else“ (p. 165, ref 193).

Sihanoni's reflections show that a country's culture can transcend the transient politics of the day, even though in Czechoslovakia, that day lasted for forty years. The King's abiding impressions of Czechoslovakia are about human warmth, about the way he was encouraged by teachers in the primary school and in the Academy, and about the spirituality of the country

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embodied in its language, its music, its architecture and the countryside. A cautionary lesson to be learnt from Sihamoni's experience is that in replacing one political system by another, care must be taken not to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Stanley Moody

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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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Dates and numbers:

25 February 1999; February 1999; 25 February; the 1990s.

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