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THE EU AS A PEACE BUILDING SYSTEM: DECONSTRUCTING NATIONALISM IN AN ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

It is surprising that in the field of International Peace and Conflict Studies, little attention is given to the European Union (EU). This article explores the EU's evolution and polity from the vantage point of its relevance and contribution to international peace, democracy and security. The EU's political edifice is examined in the backdrop of Europe's historical legacy of ethno-centric nationalism and adversarial conceptions of national interest and foreign relations. From the perspective of peace and conflict studies, the EU's institutional, cultural and conceptual reframing of democracy, security and civil society are assessed and analyzed as conflict-transcending and peace-enhancing factors.

Introduction

With the exception of certain specialized academic circles, the historical significance of the European Union (EU) as the most ambitious experiment in regional peace and democracy has only belatedly caught the attention of the intellectual establishment in the USA. Works such as Jeremy Rifkin's (2004) *The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream,* Mark Leonard's (2005) *Why the European Union will Run the 21st Century,* and T. R. Reid's (2005) *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy* appeared on the international intellectual scene as contributions motivated by the need to inform world opinion (especially American opinion) of the importance of the EU.

However, of all the sectors of American academia that has missed the importance of the EU, the most perplexing, and perhaps most unjustified, is the professional and intellectual community engaged in the field of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution. Barash and Webel's (2002) *Peace Studies*, one of the most comprehensive university textbooks in the field, makes only scant references to the EU.

One of the unique features of the EU is that in its historical evolution it introduced institutionalized inter- and trans-state entities and processes that elaborate and link democracy to peace. In an era of globalization, the means and ends of European integration, as pertinent factors of inter-state and inter-societal peace, introduce an array of significant new perspectives and instruments that warrant explicit attention, as these would add to and further enrich those hitherto included in Alger's (1996) "Tool Chest for Peacebuilders."

Alger's analysis presents instruments that are classified under negative and positive peace. The former include: from the 19th century, diplomacy and balance of power; from the 20th century, collective security, peaceful settlement, and disarmament/arms control as elaborated by the League of Nations and the UN; since the 1950s peacekeeping, humanitarian intervention and preventive diplomacy as practiced by the UN, and track II diplomacy, conversion, and defensive defense as initiated by citizen movements and organizations. Under positive peace are included: since the end of World War II, functionalism, self-determination, human rights, economic development, economic equity (under the UN "New International Economic Order"), communication equity, ecological balance and governance for commons, all within the framework of the UN; and non-violence, citizen defense, self reliance, feminist perspectives and peace education as initiated by civil society organizations and movements (Alger, 1999).

Interestingly, the entire edifice of peace tools centers on two main agents, nation-states (extending to the UN) and citizens. The EU however, while comprised of nation-states and citizens, has given rise to peace enhancing structure and processes that have not only complemented but have superseded and reframed both the nation-state and nation-based citizenship. Alger noted that throughout the 20th century more has been academically learned about instruments of peace than has tended to be applied. In the case of the EU the opposite has been the case. More has been implemented in the interest of peace than has been academically noticed and analytically explicated. In historical perspective and contrast to Europe's belligerent past, the subsequent analysis aims at explicating some of the EU's most innovative and unique instruments of peace.

The Historical Rationale of the European Project

In the aftermath of World War II, the major objective of the European project was to remove the short and long-term causes of war and secure common processes and structures of democratic cooperation, decision-making, and consensus building (Peterson & Bomber, 1999; Wood & Yesilada, 2006). The causes of war to be superseded were: nationalism as an ethno-centric and belligerent world and life view; the nationalist mode of institutional organization and behavior of European nation-states; the fierce adversarial competition between national economies (often referred to as economic nationalism); the exclusive association of national security with military might; the power differential

between European states; and the relentless competition for colonies (McCormick, 2005). Throughout the decades that followed the end of World War II, the European response to these underlying causes of war has been both unique and creative in regard to the search for peace. It was a first attempt to move beyond the Westphalian world order of nation-states and the 19th century nationalism that accompanied it to a form of governance that could effectively sustain peace, particularly under increasingly globalizing conditions. (Falk, 2002).

This is not the place to delve into the intricacies of nationalism. It suffices to say that, among other things, nationalism entailed a projection of ethnic identity, real and/or imagined, onto the nation-state, premised on an absolute claim to mono-ethnic statehood and nationhood, and on a presumed mono-ethnic socio-cultural morphology (Anderson, 1995; Hobsbawm, 1990, 1994). In this mental construct, the nation was not only conflated with the state and ethnicity but was also exalted to a sacred entity which, while precluding any compromise or diminution, commanded absolute loyalty, including the offering and the taking of human life (Alter, 1994; Anderson, 1995; Breuilly, 1994; Howard, 1994).

Thus configured, nationalism furnished an unprecedented basis for the collective legitimization of aggression and violence as necessary instruments of national policy. Irrespective of whether they identified their domestic polity as fascist, communist or liberal democracy, the states of Europe prior to 1945 employed an array of nationalist foreign policy instruments that included propaganda, coercive tactics, isolation, power plays, threats, and a readiness to resort to the use of force in the name of *the nation* (Goff et al., 2001). In the process of building the EU, such instruments of foreign policy have been considerably demoted, abandoned altogether, and in many respects even deemed illegitimate and illegal. These nationalistically conditioned foreign policy approaches have been replaced by the prioritization of on-going negotiations, consensus building, reciprocity, participation, inclusiveness, mutuality and joint inter- and trans- national institution building (Peterson & Bomber, 1999; Reid, 2005; Rifkin, 2004). In comparison to the *modus operandi* of the states in old Europe, that which now prevails among states in new Europe exemplifies a fundamental paradigm shift in the beliefs and norms by which states conduct their affairs in relation to each other. Even though this shift took place gradually, it marks the progressive erosion of nationalist approaches to national interest in favor of post-nationalist perspectives, which as such are decisively conducive to building and sustaining peaceful relationships between European states. Within the framework of European integration this change resulted in the demotion and eradication of bellicose approaches to settling interstate differences. This process has been emboldened by an accompanying system of supra-national, regional law—what is commonly referred to as Europe's *Acquis Communautaire*.

European Integration as a Function of and Contributor to Peace: Confronting the Emerging Globalizing World

The malady that befell Europe during the first half of the 20th century was not merely the result of the usurpation of nationalist sentiments by bad leaders as Smith (1993) suggests. The absolutist and self-centered approaches of ethno-centric nationalism, prevalent in nearly all European states, lagged behind the inter-national and inter-societal interdependencies that techno-economic inter-connectivity had structurally brought about vis-à-vis the globalizing technologies of the so called advanced nations (Ellul, 1967). The European states became embedded in a world where *the centrifugal psycho-political forces of nationalism were operating in direct contradiction to the imploding structural forces of globalization.* The global impact of the economic depression that hit the world markets in 1929 brought this negative dynamic pattern into full force (Goff et al., 2001). In this perspective, Angell's much discussed predictions in the 1910s and thereafter that economic interdependency, in and of itself, would render war impossible failed bitterly (Angell, 1911). In the context of rampant nationalism, economic interdependency was in fact one of the central factors that drew the nation states of pre-1945 Europe into war. In the absence of multilateral cooperation among nation-states, economic interdependency became a curse not a blessing.

As the launching pad of European economic integration the Coal and Steel Community of 1951, did not merely exemplify the first cooperative, trans-national economic management of vital industries across European states. It also represented the first institutionalized attempt to jointly manage the industries of war—coal and steel. As such, it was structured as the first trans-national, democratic decision-making institution for the purpose of jointly governing and prudently integrating vital national interests around common industries. The same was the case with further landmarks of European integrations such as: the 1957 Treaty of Rome, creating the European Atomic Energy Community and the European Economic Community; the 1967 establishment of a single European Commission, a single Council of Ministers and a European Parliament; and the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, establishing the European Union.

Through a series of historical steps, entailing Treaties, institution-building and decision-making processes, the logic of European economic integration had a twofold, fundamental affect in the evolution of Europe. The first was that in pursuing the deepening interdependence between national economies, through jointly structuring and managing their economic interests, European states rendered warfare between them untenable and clearly irrational. The second was that economic integration greatly contributed to eliminating cutthroat competition between national economies and to reducing economic disparities within as well as between member countries, thus raising economic wellbeing across European societies (*Communication from the Commission, 2005 Enlargement Strategy Paper*, 2005; McCormick, 2005; Rifkin, 2004).

Within the general framework of economic integration, the EU Structural and Cohesion Funds have been established as unique inter- and transnational instruments by which to guide sustainable socio-economic development across European societies. These funds account for over one third of the EU budget under four specific categories which include the Regional Development Fund, the Social Fund, the Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, and the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance. They aim at reducing economic disparities among the regions of the EU by supporting regional growth and conversion, developing infrastructure and telecommunications, developing human resources, supporting research and development, and by financing and guiding environmentally sound practices conducive to sustainable economic growth.

Clearly, success in economic integration is never absolute. However, countries that formerly lagged behind in economic development attained levels of higher prosperity, in some cases surpassing the European average standard of living, at a rate that they could have not attained outside European integration (McCormick, 2005). The cases of Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Greece have been exemplary of this process, while the new members of Central/Eastern Europe are the most recent beneficiaries of economic integration.

It ought to be stressed that European integration is not the same as neo-liberalism's classical laissez fair system (Falk, 2002). It does not coincide with Friedman's (2000) golden arches theory which suggests that international expansion of McDonald-like franchises and global electronic interconnectivity introduces a "Golden Straightjacket" that increases conflict prevention. Friedman's theory has not only been superseded by recent history, particularly in the Middle East, but is founded on the false assumption that the rising density of international trade through unimpeded global market forces have the magical quality of introducing rationality and peace.

While the free market system was a cornerstone by which Europeans fostered economic integration, it was not the free market system in and of itself that secured European peace. Rather it was *the institutionalized, joint democratic management* of economic integration that secured peace, which in turn rendered the free market into a catalyst for peace. While frequently overlooked, this fundamental historical fact is indispensable for understanding the association between European economic integration and European peace.

Looking at the process of economic integration today, it can be argued that the EU has now surpassed even the functionalist approach to integration—the original instrument and theory by which peace-promoting integration was pursued. David Mitrany (1966), the key exponent of the theory of functionalism, argued that the most appropriate agents for fostering cooperation are not government representatives but technical experts. He advocated for the creation of separate international bodies with authority over functionally specific fields that would break away from the traditional association of authority to territory. Followed by the founders of European integration, the idea was that functionally specific transnational bodies would furnish more efficient ways of providing

welfare than governments, shift loyalties away from the state and thus reduce the likelihood of inter-state conflict (Mitrany, 1966).

Dominant in the 1950s and 1960s, the neo-functionalist theory of integration, which expanded Mitrany's functionalist theory, entailed among other things the assertion that even the most technical forms of integration were founded on antecedent political principles that emanated from the historical search for European peace. It was argued that the prospect for peace-enhancing integration was not merely technical, as it depended on the shift in public opinion away from nationalism toward inter-national cooperation, the political will of political elites to pursue integration for pragmatic reasons, and the transference of power to a new supranational authority (Rosamond, 2000). These realizations were indicative of the fact that socio-political processes had moved forward, ahead of merely technical ones.

By the mid 1980s functionalism was no longer the vanguard of European integration as was originally the case, but rather a substratum of an overall, regional political process. As the apogee of economic integration, the introduction of the Euro was celebrated not merely as a European-wide means of economic efficiency and sound fiscal management, but also as another vital landmark of European peace, despite the many frustrations and setbacks along the way. It was not the free market system by itself that led to the Euro. Nor was it merely the work of technical experts. Rather, it was the joint and sustained political decision-making process at EU level to introduce the Euro that deepened economic integration in the interest of peace and prosperity among European societies. Having evolved beyond techo-functionalism, economic integration through institutionalized, cooperative democratic management of the trans-national and international aspects of national economies thus furnished a unique instrument of peace appropriate for an era of globalization.

Confronting the Nationalist Notion of Sovereignty with the Requirements of Inter-State Peace

World War II, in particular, gave rise to the keen awareness that the projection of nationalist ethno-centrism into world affairs through the power of the state, which was the common practice of European states up until the middle of the 20th century, had weakened, eroded, and finally destroyed international law. The harsh lessons of the past compelled Europeans to acknowledge that in the real world, national sovereignty can never be absolute, as nationalism presumed, let alone ethno-centrically conditioned. After all, what did national sovereignty mean in the face of 60,000,000 dead, thousands of orphans, widows, missing persons, flattened cities and destroyed economies? World War II had revealed in a spectacularly tragic way that no nation had control over its destiny.

A nation-state's sovereignty was now understood as entailing the peaceful management of *relationships* to other states. From its inception, the entire history of

European integration is characterized by the willingness of nation-states to gradually dissociate from the nationalist notion of absolute sovereignty and progressively adopt the concept of *redistributed, shared or overlapping sovereignty* (McCormick, 2005). Or, to use the EU's own words, the *"pooling of sovereignty."* But what constitutes the essence of this new concept? According to the EU's official website,

> Pooling sovereignty means, in practice, that the member states delegate some of their decision-making powers to shared institutions they have created, so that decisions on specific matters of joint interest can be made democratically at European level (*EU Institutions and Other Bodies*, 2006).

More than any other political and historical development, this hitherto unprecedented reframing of national sovereignty has been the cornerstone of European peace, security and rising prosperity for over half a century.

The Logic of EU Institutions: Deconstructing Nationalism Through Shared Sovereignty as a form of Inter-National Peace

The array of treaties that paved the way for European integration went beyond the classical concept of piece-meal inter-state agreements, pacts and trade arrangements. Rather, the uniqueness of the European treaties lies in the fact that in facilitating European integration, they entailed, among other things, institutionalizing at the supra-national and inter-governmental levels the perpetual democratic management of trans-national phenomena that, by their very nature, could no longer be effectively attended unilaterally or bilaterally by individual states. Inevitably, this implied *the perpetual and joint democratic management of the relationships between European states, and between their respective societies at numerous economic, social and political levels.* As Rifkin (2004: 220) noted, this process does not rest on hierarchical or hegemonic relationships between states but rather on "process politics"—a novel form of "governance without a center," grounded on on-going inter- and trans-state democratic processes and rotating presidency. Rifkin's concept coincides with McCormick's assertion that while the EU is a system of governance, it is not a government in the conventional sense (McCormick, 2005).

The structure and logic of EU institutions are indicative of the unique manner in which the European experiment historically amplified, deepened and expanded democracy in direct association with conflict prevention and peace building, above and beyond the competitive and adversarial nature of past nationalisms.

At the peak of EU institutions, the European Council forges the parameters for the shared enhancement of a cross societal system of democracy, security and wellbeing. Having the power of *initiative* the Commission is mandated with the task of preparing

and recommending bills for enactment into EU law, which it passes to the European Parliament and to the Council of the EU for final decision. While incorporating and integrating divers national interests of the member states, the Commission supersedes the national interests of individual member states by focusing on the "common good" of the EU as a whole. Here, the democratic process is thus institutionalized and conducted in the trans-national dimension of politics. In the Council of the EU, each Minister, appropriate to the issue at hand, participates as the representative spokesperson of the national concerns and priorities of his/her country. At the Council level the democratic process thus assumes an inter-governmental structure. National interests, though in competition, and on occasion in rivalry with each other, cease to be pursued ethno-centrically and unilaterally, but rather jointly and multilaterally in an on-going fashion.

The most impressive aspect of post-nationalist Europe is manifested in its multi-lingual/multi-cultural European Parliament. Here, each party brings together Germans, French, Dutch, Greeks, Italians, etc., elaborating citizen-based party politics across societies, ethnicities, cultures and languages, and, most importantly, across nation-states. The increasing powers allotted to the European Parliament following the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht entails a reinforcement of the EU's post-nationalist, citizen-based system of regional democracy. Finally, the European Court of Justice, in its sphere of competency, raises the rule of law above the limitations of national law, while strengthening the rule of law within each of the member states. Like the Commissioners, the judges of the European Court are expected to transcend the national interests of their nation-state.

It can never be stressed enough that, as long as European states conducted their domestic and international politics in the mode of ethno-centric nationalism, democracy was at best constricted to being merely an intra-ethnic and intra-national system of governance, but never an inter-ethnic or inter-national one, let alone a trans-national one. By contrast, the EU's trans-national and inter-governmental aspects of democracy secure and reinforce inter-national/inter-state peace. The aforementioned explication of the logic of EU institutions does not imply that the EU is free of problems, tensions and disagreements, and even periodic deadlocks. The EU constitution, the budget, agricultural policy, free movement of labor, further enlargement, economic challenges due to globalization, EU social policy, are but a few of the many issues around which Europeans are strongly polarized. However, while divisions and disputes abound, the EU institutions keep the disputes within a robust political framework, preventing them from evolving into alienating and escalating unmanageable conflicts.

The institutionalization of shared sovereignty thus emerges as a significant historical innovation that expanded democracy beyond the nation-state. It did so in a manner that reframed inter-state and inter-societal relations in a manner that both empowered and amplified that capacity of the EU member states to pursue and sustain peaceful relationships of perpetual symbiosis and cooperation. In this sense, the sharing of sovereignty through the EU institutions and decision-making processes marks the most extraordinary adaptation of the old Westphalian-based state order to a new pro-active,

peace-pursuing and peace-inducing regional order that is far better suited to the challenges of globalization than the nationalist oriented nation-states ever were.

Knowing War and Peace: The Emergent Political Culture of the EU

However, none of the above-mentioned historical changes in European relations can be fully comprehended without an appreciation of the accompanying impact that war and peace had on the evolution of Europe's political culture. Europeans have known modern war like no other. This first-hand historical knowledge of war, and its totalitarian impact on society, is an integral element of the political credentials of Europe. Europeans have developed a deep-seated aversion to war. This stance however did not follow automatically from their war-time experience. It evolved through a historical process that combined stark acknowledgements as to the true nature of war and fundamental decisions to move away from war/violence-prone policies and values—an orientation that facilitated the progressive abandonment of nationalist perspectives on the meaning of war.

Those who accuse the Europeans for being "soft," for lacking in toughness, for not spending enough on their military, do so by arguing that Europeans are unrealistic about the real world. What is completely missed in this argument is that the Europeans have in effect developed the most realistic view of the military option and the most realistic view of war as a possible instrument of state policy (Rifkin, 2004). In general, the European understanding is in fact exactly the opposite of that of their critics. In European eyes it is not the skeptics but the enthusiast of the military option that are completely unrealistic and out of touch with the objective reality of war. According to the European perception, it is the people who prioritize the military/violence option, with a readiness to resort to it, who suffer from ideological blinders. It is not the "doves" but the "hawks" of the world that evade confronting the messiness and meaninglessness of war: the suffering it induces, its long term paralyzing affects, the residue of rage and hatred it generates for years to come. Furthermore, advocates of "hard power" tend to neglect the fact that the use of force/violence rarely meets the original political objectives it sets out to fulfill. They fail to acknowledge that the military/violence option almost always ends up dealing with an extraordinary array of side-effects that heavily burden and often hugely deviate from the political end originally intended.

Culture of Peace in Remembering World War II

Although Europeans celebrated and continue to celebrate the end of World War II, the war itself in no way constitutes a model to be emulated, but rather a supreme tragedy to be avoided henceforth. This understanding was symbolically highlighted at that particular memorial event that Europeans viewed on their television screens when former

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his counterpart French President François Mitteran jointly laid a wreath for *all the fallen of the war*—in line with the established post-war tradition of reconciliation. For Europeans, the highest honor to be bestowed on the war dead does not necessarily lie in imitating their wartime example, in valor and bravery. Rather, it lies in securing peace for the war generations' children, grand children and subsequent generations of Europeans. This has been the European way of honoring those who have fallen in their devastating wars of the past. And this is one of the most striking indicators of the deconstruction of nationalism in the political cultures of European nation-states, as elaborated explicitly and tacitly through the long process of European integration. The essence of this particular way Europeans reframed their perception of their belligerent past was echoed in the words of the late French President François Mitteran when in hindsight declared that in the World Wars, Europe was fighting itself!

Prior to 1945, the prevalent culture of nationalism in European societies predisposed populations and national leaders alike to a presumed "naturalness" of inter-national conflicts and wars. This attitude rendered relatively easy the mobilization of the masses for war, reproducing and repeating the ethno-centrically conditioned conflicts of the past which nationalism both induced and aggrandized as moments of "national glory." The readiness of the masses to go to war at the command of their leaders gave a semblance of national unity, and even "democracy," when in reality it merely reflected a public opinion that had internalized populist elaborations of militant nationalism. This nationalism identified militancy with national interest, and the readiness to engage in war with a national "moral imperative" and "historic calling."

By contrast, post-war Europe fundamentally severed ties with nationalism's belligerent historiography and glorified interpretations of past violent conflicts. At the end of World War II, unlike the end of World War I, western European states began a serious historic quest for post-nationalist politics and foreign policy approaches toward each other. At the highest level of state politics, the outcome of this quest was the long process of European integration through inter- and trans-national institution building. At the societal level the outcome was European-wide economic cooperation, civil-society development, inter-ethnic and inter-societal reconciliation, and cross border collaboration (Rifkin, 2004; McCormick, 2005). Over the years, this multilevel process had a profound effect on the demythologization of belligerent nationalism, and by extension, of nationalism's prototypes of both national leader and citizen.

The old nationalist pattern of self-victimization, blaming "the other" and rationalizing renewed hostilities slowly gave way to a more somber interpretation of past conflicts. Gradually, yet persistently, the new approach begun to cultivate a multifaceted and even conciliatory approach to the past rivalries, as it became grounded in mutual acknowledgments of the suffering each side inflicted on the other in the course of the wars through the violence they unleashed on each other (Phillips, 2001). A by-product of this process of wakening and realization was the systematic removal of all nationalist

stereotypes and enemy images from the textbooks of history in European schools—a remarkably striking contrast to the pre-World War II era.

One of the most extraordinary and long-lasting shifts from ethno-national rivalry to inter-national peace was the process of Franco-German reconciliation. To the visionaries of European integration it was very clear that unless France and Germany transcended their traditional hatred and nationalist rivalries Europe would have no future (McCormick, 2005). During the years following the end of World War II, progressive steps in Franco-German rapprochement led to the 1963 Treaty of Franco-German Co-operation (Elysée Treaty). Among other things, both governments agreed to regular consultations on foreign policy. Even though Germany continued to be divided, the treaty emboldened the broader process of integration in the European Economic Community. This unique experiment in conflict transformation was so successful that it not only freed Franco-German relations from their fiercely belligerent past, but also established the lasting and influential Franco-German friendship. It is noteworthy that in the decades that followed, the strength of Franco-German relations came to be known as the "engine" of European integration, leading the way in expanding and consolidating European democracy, peace and cooperation. What was historically discovered through the French-German initiative is that partnering for peace *through the means of peace* can be mutually empowering and profoundly transformative (Phillips, 2001).

However, the quest for European peace did not stop with high-level politics. It was accompanied by a series of complementing peace-enhancing initiatives undertaken by civil society at various levels of European societies. In his work *The Forgiveness Factor: Stories of Hope in a World of Conflict,* Michael Henderson (1996) recounts cases of how European citizens became engaged with each other across ethno-national lines, at the level of both formal politics and civil society, in innumerable post-war successes in conflict-resolution and reconciliation. The thousands of multi-ethnic citizen groups working with their former foes on peace-building projects; the twinning of cities and towns among formerly enemy nations; the progressive eradication of the stereotypical nationalist enemy images from school textbooks and public media culture; and the increasing inter-societal interaction through free trade, travel and exchange, all have contributed to the creation of new and unparalleled conditions conducive to inter-national cooperation, symbiosis and peace.

Even with the complexities of the cold war and post-cold war era, the history of Europe following the end of World War II is also highlighted by a series of public declarations and gestures of contrition, which added one of the cultural/spiritual ingredients of reconciliation to the process of European integration. In the immediate aftermath of World War II, Christian Churches in Germany begged the forgiveness of their European brothers and sister in the faith for uncritically supporting Nazism and falling pray to "the idolatry of nationalism." As early as the 1960s historical wounds started to be addressed, even across the Iron Curtain, as West Germans initiated a process of rapprochement toward the Hungarian and Polish people. Most intriguing was the fact

that in certain cases the suffering of the German people was also acknowledged. In 1965 the German Evangelische Kirche invited its eastern neighbors to a dialogue of healing and reconciliation, while simultaneously raising the question concerning the plight of the Germans expellees. The Polish bishops responded soon after, offering the Germans forgiveness and asking for forgiveness in return (Phillips, 2001).

The harsh Czech regime precluded early rapprochement. But with the fall of the Soviet bloc Germans and Czechs mutually engaged in dialogue about their past history, eventually placing German-Czech relations on a progressively conciliatory footing. In the late 1980's, the inclination for reform in the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers Party revived historical friendships with Germans, while West Germany subsequently offered 500 million DM in aid and support for Hungary's efforts toward EU membership. In 1990, following German reunification in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet system, Germany signed a treaty with Poland settling the age-old Oder-Neisse border issue, defining security guarantees and asserting the inviolability of their common border. Between 1991 and 1992 a series of Treaties of Friendship with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary were also signed (Goff et al., 2001; Phillips, 2001) Superseding the historical residue of both World War II and the Cold War these treaties provided a catalyst for reconciliation that simultaneously prepared the ground for the envisioned integration of Central and Eastern Europe into the EU.

As Dogan (1994) has shown in her work *The Erosion of Nationalism in the Western European Community*, the shift of European opinion away from nationalism has been formidable and integral to the European process of integration, in the interest of peace and stability. The apogee of the European turning away from nationalism and toward a culture of peace is no better manifested than in the eradication of capital punishment throughout the EU. More than any other shift in European political mentality, rendering capital punishment unconditionally illegal exemplifies the most explicit attempt by European societies to radically dissociate the state's powers from the use of violence, specifically in regard to taking of the life of citizens—any of the state's citizens. The central issue here is not what would become of hardened criminals and murderers if they do not receive the death penalty, but rather what would become of the state and democracy if national governments were accorded the right to be executioners on behalf of society.

From the European perspective the value of human life decisively supersedes and eclipses lethal forms of retribution even in the face of capital offenses. The right to life has been elevated to a foundational human right that is free from any diminution or exception. Indicative of the significance that Europeans attach to this pro-life value is the European Commission's initiative of June 2007 for the promotion of the universal abolition of capital punishment. Launching the effort it asserted that "this stance is rooted in the belief in the inherent dignity of all human beings and the inviolability of the human person, regardless of the crime committed" (*EU's Human Rights and Democratization Policy*, 2007).

Creating Consent in the Interest of Peace and Stability: EU Enlargement

In 1951 European integration started with just six countries. By 2007 the European family included 27 countries. It is noteworthy that in this long, persistent and arduous process of enlargement no member state of today's EU has reformed and joined as a result of coercion or force. Without exception, all member states have joined by way of willful political deliberation.

When the Soviet bloc collapsed, during the late 1980s and 1990s, many analysts were predicting a relapse of European instability and even wars, while others anticipated that with reunification Germany would regress back to its old nationalism and hegemonic aspirations (Leonard, 2005). Certainly, the Balkan crisis of the 1990s may be presented as substantiating this theory. However, while media attention was engrossed with the vicious inter-ethnic conflicts of the Balkans, public opinion, particularly in the US, missed other significant developments which played a crucial role in containing the dangers that emanated from the broader collapse of the Soviet bloc. Immediately following the collapse, the EU reached out to the eastern European countries, proposing an engaging process of arms reduction under conditions of mutual supervision and surveillance. A total of 30 European countries signed the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces. Within five years the objective had been achieved. Working together with the former cold-war adversaries, EU member states managed to reduce the arsenals, on equal terms, across Europe, thus rendering easier the management of military power across the continent. But more importantly, in the process of working together, western and eastern European countries started to build functional relationships, increased the level of trust, and paved the way for what eventually led to the largest wave of EU enlargement (Leonard, 2005). This EU initiated development ought not to be underappreciated as a factor in stabilizing Eastern Europe, particularly when viewed against the backdrop of the evolving Balkan crisis and the possible broader impact it could have had.

The EU pulled toward it the former Soviet bloc countries of Eastern Europe at the very moment they were emancipated from the Soviet monolith, and at the very moment they were in search of a tangible future. These former Soviet bloc countries turned to the EU seeking membership, as they understood that the EU, and its approach to Eastern Europe, did not constitute a threat, but rather a helping hand in their hour of need. Cases in point were Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia, and later Romania.

The creation of conditions that render participation into the European experiment desirable, and hence voluntary, is one of the most remarkable achievements of post-war Europe. The question that naturally arises is whether in deciding to join the EU individual countries diminished or bolstered their capacity to determine their own affairs, to pursue their national interest and to chart a viable future for their people? As already mentioned, the historical inception and subsequent evolution of European integration was founded on removing the short and long-term causes of war, on fostering mutual economic growth

and on building sustainable democracies in a framework of peace-enhancing inter-state cooperation and institution building at European level. Particularly among European leaders, this orientation gradually gave rise to an emerging cross-national political culture and accompanying array of inter- and trans-national democratic institutions which effectively offered member states an expanded market for viable and sustainable economic growth. It afforded the member states the privilege of democratically co-deciding the shaping of European-wide policies, a strong sense of political solidarity with European states, and the historical opportunity to be part of the most innovative experiment in expanding and deepening democracy through conciliatory means (Peterson & Bomber, 1999; Reid, 2005).

Thus understood, the cornerstone of the EU's power of persuasion is the principle of *mutuality*. That is, the EU expects of candidate and acceding countries whatever it expects of its member states, and in incorporating new countries it offers them the same responsibilities, rights and privileges as those enjoyed by its member states. Thereby, non-member states view the process, conditions and requirements for enlargement, which they must comply with in order to join the EU, as essentially non-threatening, in spite of the power that the EU yields.

This entire political dynamic gave rise to the growing experience and awareness that regional peace, wellbeing and security is integral to the process of European integration. Certainly, this process has not been characterized by linear historical progress, but rather by one that encountered numerous setbacks and regressions, from the resignation of one of the founding father of European integration, to the paralysis of the 1970s, to the Danes initial rejection of the Maastricht Treaty, to the French and the Dutch vote against the proposed EU constitution. Yet, even in the face of obstacles and slowdowns, the process of European integration and the associated benefits of European membership have proven to be an attraction powerful enough to induce an increasing number of nation-states to opt for joining Europe—a choice that was judged wiser and preferable to continuing in the classical, esoteric mode of unilateral nationalism with its absolutist approach to national sovereignty.

Throughout its historical development, the process of enlargement assumed an increasingly central and dynamic role in deepening, broadening and intensifying European integration. By the Copenhagen Summit of 1993, the process of EU enlargement evolved into a sophisticated, streamlined and standardized process, creating a firm basis for setting harmonization milestones for acceding countries.

The decisions made in March 1999 by the Berlin European Council, embodied in the declaration entitled *Agenda 2000*, was a landmark political decision by the EU member states to proceed with the largest ever wave of enlargement. In the form of twenty legislative texts, *Agenda 2000* laid out a program of action aimed at strengthening Community policies and giving the EU a new financial framework for 2000-2006 intended to facilitate enlargement (Presidency Conclusions, Berlin European Council, 1999). Certainly, there are questions as to whether the EU has fully met all the objectives

it set. However, by 2004, another ten countries joined the EU following the intensive process of harmonization to the EU, and the progressive adoption of the entire body of European Law as established in the *Acquis Communautaire*. With all its deficiencies and shortcomings, this unprecedented process of integrating ten new countries into the EU cannot be underestimated as a contributor to extending and embedding peace and democracy in Europe. The low-key, gradual and largely unpublicized, decade-long process of harmonization of the new countries to EU standards of governance has tended to bar public opinion from fully appreciating the historical significance of these developments, particularly their meaning regarding peace and stability.

What is often forgotten when attending merely the technical aspects of enlargement is that central to its process has been the expansion and deepening of democracy through non-aggressive, peace-promoting and peace-securing means. The prime mover of this process has been Europe's historical ability to generate increasing consent among non-member countries—consent to aspire and pursue closer relations with the EU and to eventually achieve full membership through a willingness to change; to becoming European in accordance with the EU's high standards of democracy, human rights, and all the associated administrative and legal reforms that this entails.

How has the EU managed to attain this level of influence? By presenting itself as exemplary of the benefits of cooperative wellbeing, democracy, the rule of law and inter-state peace, and inviting other countries to participate under the same terms and conditions. The fundamental assumption in this approach is that if what the EU offers is viable, beneficial and contributory to the wellbeing of societies it ought to speak for itself, independently of the requirement to rationalize it, impose or enforce it onto others. As such, the underpinnings of the enlargement process stand in sharp contrast to the pre-war nationalism of European states by which the assertion of ethno-cultural superiority was rendered a justification for hegemonic foreign policies within Europe and expansionist colonial rule over non-European people the world over.

What is innovative about EU enlargement is that both its premises and instruments operate *not by pushing* countries into democracy but, *by pulling them* into democracy, through the natural attraction of the EU—by what some have termed "The Magic of Membership" (*The Economist*, 2003). Key to the EU's approach to external relations is not to directly meddle in the internal affairs of non-EU countries, but rather to stand "outside" the countries and engage them, by conducting proactive dialogue with them, leading to step-by-step negotiations, agreements and cooperation. Moreover, in conducting inter-state dialogue, the EU simultaneously projects its democratic values and instruments, presenting them to non-EU members as the path and condition for securing and increasing the economic and political benefits that come from establishing relationships with the EU.

The EU engages countries through a range of structured relationships that reflect each country's degree of closeness to the EU. These relationships to other countries may start from establishing with them the most elementary form of trade, to granting them

associate status, to accepting them as candidates for future membership, to entering into secession negotiation with them for the purpose of harmonization to EU standards, to fully integrating them as EU member states. As the EU engages various countries at each of these stages, or as it helps countries move from one stage to another, it always links the economic assistance and political benefits it offers each country to a deepening process of normative democratic reforms and increasing cooperation and closeness to the EU.

This process underlies the EU's mode of conducting its external relations. At each of these stages, the EU principle of *conditionality,* linking benefits to obligations, becomes increasingly weightier and demanding, while being coupled with progressive EU support, financial assistance, and political privileges. The underlying message of the EU enlargement process is: we assist and support as you cooperatively and democratically reform.

In so doing, the EU achieves the gradual building of relationships with non-EU countries through democratic inter-state deliberations, where the engagement is propelled not by coercion but by the invitation to partake of the benefits that the EU demonstrably presents, on the same terms as its own members do. The EU has pursued this approach even with states that were not full democracies in their domestic form of governance. The EU's policy approach to external relations, whereby it maintains a posture of non-interference while presenting democratization as the path for establishing relations with the EU, has historically played a catalytic role in helping transform even dictatorships. The case of Portugal, Spain and Greece are cases in point. Among other internal factors, the EU process, model and standards of democracy induced internal political changes that helped to gradually overhaul authoritarian regimes non-violently.

Within geographical Europe, enlargement has been a powerful transformational process for all countries that establish relations with the EU. The prospect of EU membership has often stimulated constructive and reform-oriented political dialogue between national parties within associate and candidate states. The hope of joining the EU provided a central point of reference and a credible vision of the future in term of which national political debates and reflections had taken place. This was evident is all the Eastern European countries that are now enjoying full membership. The current political developments within Turkey, Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro are also cases in point. The European approach is fundamentally non-interventionist and non-coercive in nature. It is rather an approach that engages through dialogue, persuades by example, compels through incentives and induces through peaceful means.

Coupled with economic assistance, the enhancement of peace, democracy and wellbeing through peaceful and democratic means lies at the heart of the enlargement process. Such means came to define what has been termed Europe's "soft power." When speaking of Europe's *modus operandi* in the international political arena, Joseph Nye Jr. (2002: 8) makes reference to the EU's persuasive soft-power approach, in contrast to hard power, by arguing that,

> a country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries may want to follow it, admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness. In this sense, it is just as important to set the agenda in world politics and attract others as it is to force them to change through threat or use of military and economic weapons.

Over the last three decades, the benefits of European integration have become so apparent and unquestionable that countries wishing to join have been willing to embark on sweeping administrative and legal reforms, in many cases difficult and painful, as well as to accept close EU supervision and regular evaluation of their progress toward harmonization. The difficult and rigorous acceding process, from the initial *Acquis Screening,* to the now required 35 chapters of socio-economic and political reform attest to both the challenge and extent of the EU's mode of enhancing democracy, wellbeing and peace in the era of globalization. The EU's systematic technical and financial assistance to candidate and acceding countries throughout the process of harmonization, offsets the burden of reform, while the economic and political benefits that result at each stage create a dynamic mechanism of incentives and empowerment for the EU hopefuls.

In a 2005 strategy paper on the EU's enlargement policy, the European Commission noted that,

> Enlargement is one of the EU's most powerful policy tools. The pull of the EU has helped transform Central Europe from communist regimes to modern, well-functioning democracies. More recently, it has inspired tremendous reforms in Turkey, Croatia and the Western Balkans. All European citizens benefit from having neighbors that are stable democracies and prosperous market economies. It is vitally important for the EU to ensure a carefully managed enlargement process that extends peace, stability, prosperity, democracy, human rights and the rule of law across Europe. (*Communication from the Commission, 2005 Enlargement Strategy Paper*, 2005)

One of the most significant impacts of EU enlargement has been the manner in which its process and means has led the acceding countries to willfully adopt new concepts of politics, statehood, administration, law, and civil society. The essence of all the changes and reforms that the EU induces in the countries it attracts and integrates lies in the systematic dissociation of governance from traditional nationalism, and the assemblage of democracy in reference to a poly-ethnic and multinational peace system. Within the EU framework, national interests are decisively dissociated from unilateral, ethno-centric and belligerent nationalism. They are redefined in term of deepening and expanding democracy through the multilateral engagement of each EU country in a sustainable system of institutionalized peace and cooperation with all other EU counties, as well as with neighboring non-EU countries. The enlargement process thus discloses, in

tangible terms, the wisdom of compromising and forgoing the adversarial and militant means of statecraft, and of adopting non-aggressive, dialogic, conciliatory and cooperative modes of intra- and inter-state conduct through joint participation in inter- and trans-national democratic institutions.

In this sense, joining the EU involves the accelerated and guided socio-political and historical development of the countries concerned in the direction of the most sophisticated, state-of-the-art model of democracy, at both the local, the national and regional level. The process of EU integration is therefore also a process of learning and training in peace-founded democracy (Keridis & Triantaphyllou, 2001). European integration is essentially a peace-building process, unlike anything seen in modern times.

Conclusion Enriching the "Tool Chest for Peacebuilders"

Against the backdrop of the historical quest for European peace, the arduous process of European integration that commenced and evolved in the aftermath of World War II gave rise to an array of specific peace-enhancing instruments that may now be added to Alger's "Tool Chest for Peacebuilders." In light of the preceding analysis, these new peacebuilding instruments may be identified as follows:

1. Economic integration through institutionalized, joint democratic management of competing and common national interests.
2. Shared sovereignty through institutionalized inter-governmental and trans-national democracy.
3. Regionalization of the rule of law across societies and above nation-states.
4. Enlargement as a proactive process fostering socio-economic reform, democratization, conciliation, peace-enhancing norms and integration.
5. Endorsement and promotion of politico-cultural values of inter-societal/inter-state peace in the public domain (assumed among the EU political leadership and gradually emerging in public opinion) Highlighted, the emergent European values may be identified as follows:
   a. War is the apogee of human failure; remembrance of war is a recollection of the tragic not the exemplary.
   b. Inter-national/inter-ethnic reconciliation is a process of putting the belligerent past to rest and of opening the way for non-military approaches to security and wellbeing.
   c. Democracy, prosperity and security are intrinsically linked to peace.
   d. Inter-state and inter-societal peace-enhancing cooperation is mutually empowering, transformative and liberating.
   e. The value of human life supersedes capital punishment even for capital offenses.

These new instruments may now be added to Alger's chest of "tools" for peacebuilders, particularly in light of their relevance in an era of globalizing phenomena

and trends. Unlike numerous "tools" in Alger's chest that are classified under "negative peace," all of the abovementioned EU peace instruments fall decisively in the category of "positive peace." This clearly underscores the fact that in its long and difficult history of integration the EU has and continues to be a peacebuilding system.

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