'Old' versus 'New' Europe:: the 2002–08 Straitjacket of European Geopolitics
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'Old' versus 'New' Europe: the 2002-08 Straitjacket of European Geopolitics

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ABSTRACT

A model state of 'Outer Europe' is Atlanticist, it is hawkish in connection with controversial Russian behaviour, and it is enthusiastic about EU widening but sceptical in relation to its deepening and ESDP. A model state of 'Inner Europe' is characterized by an opposite profile (the outer/inner distinction here replacing the famous, but ambiguous and normative 'old/new Europe' labels). By analysing state positioning in a series of key situations and issues it is shown that such a division dominated European geopolitics over 2002–08: for no less than 22 out of 27 states *either* the logic of inner *or* of outer Europe was followed. Thus while there was heterogenerity or even bifurcation between states in Europe, there was ultrastability in the positioning of each individual state: only two clear transitions from Inner to Outer Europe, or vice versa, took place among the 27 countries analysed (Spain in 2004 and Sweden in 2006). The inner/outer divide seems to have disappeared after 2008, chiefly due to the dramatic US power decline in the autumn of 2008 and its policy redirections dating from about the same time. At the end of the paper, the IR theoretical implications of the findings are briefly discussed.

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INTRODUCTION[1]

There have been three geopolitical 'mega issues' for nearly all European states in the post-Cold War era: (1) how to relate to the US, the only remaining superpower; (2) how to relate to Europe's nearest great power, Russia; and (3) how to participate in European integration, both in its deepening and its widening – i.e. should Europe *itself* become a coherent geopolitical player, and if so which states should such a great power include?[2] The twin theses of this paper are the following: (a) these three geopolitical mega issues have been tightly connected: a state's position on one of them has been a reliable predictor of its position on the other two; and (b) positions have been stable over time: states only rarely switch positions.

There have been two main stances adopted by states in relation to the geopolitical mega issues, roughly corresponding to 'old Europe' and 'new Europe' as coined by US Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld.[3] Whereas the first serious appearance of this bifurcation was in 2002, it now seems that its final blooming was in 2008. European state positioning on specific issues belonging to each of the mega issues across the period 2002-08 will be mapped in this paper. Whereas most of the literature on old versus new Europe has been written *ad hoc* in relation to the 2002-03 Iraq crisis, this paper thus sets out to present a fuller picture and to analyse state positioning on a whole *series* of situations or issues, some of which may appear to be remote from security policy concerns.

Moreover, the two underlying geopolitical preconditions for the bifurcation will be analysed: namely the existence of a sole superpower, and its following of a unilateralist course; both conditions that now no longer seem to be present. This is due to the recent dramatic power decline of the US and the policy redirection implemented by President Obama starting in 2009. Finally there is a discussion of which new patterns can be expected to replace the old/new divide analysed in the present paper.

The mere description/interpretation of the 2002-08 geopolitical bifurcation is a vital and controversial, but also space consuming, task. The analysis of its likely underlying conditions constitutes the necessary context, but will be kept in a briefer and looser style. In other words: the justification for the very *existence* of old and new Europe is the main purpose of this paper.

The European countries that will be classified are those that (i) were members of both the EU and NATO or (ii) were members of *either* the EU or NATO from 2007 at the latest and which have more than 1 million inhabitants.[4]

[1] I am grateful to Henrik Lindbo Larsen, *Danish Institute for International Studies*, for much of the data collection and valuable comments to previous versions of the present paper.

[2] Geopolitics is here understood to mean relations between states in a geographic (spatial) context. The terrorist issue has been less spatial than the three mentioned mega issues and has, to some extent, been subsumed under relations to the US – the leader of the 'war on terror' after 9/11. Moreover, there have of course been other important geopolitical issues related to more specific groups of European states. Also, as we shall see, the Russia mega issue in particular has in fact not been so 'mega' for all European states.

[3] Rumsfeld, in a successful attempt to play the two Europes off against each other during the European Iraq conflict in 2003, distinguished between an 'old' and a 'new' Europe. cf., for instance, Evangelista & Parsi, 2005; Gustenau, Höll & Nowotny, 2005; Joenniemi, 2005; Lansford & Tashev, 2005; Levy et al., 2005; Sedivy & Zaborowski, 2005; Forsberg & Herd, 2006; Mouritzen, 2006; Coşkun 2007; Anderson et al., 2008; or Mälksoo, 2009.

[4] The United States is regarded geopolitically also as a European state, meaning that it was engaged militarily (with bases) and politically in and around Europe. Therefore, it will be subject to classification in this paper.

Figure 1. Inner versus outer Europe: state profiles regarding geopolitical mega issues 2002-08.

State profile in relation to / State belonging to		Outer Europe	Inner Europe
Russia	Foreign policy towards Russia	Hawk	Dove
	Democracy promotion eastwards	High value profile	Low value profile
The United States		Atlanticist	Continentalist
Europe	EU deepening and an independent ESDP*	Sceptical	Enthusiastic
	EU and NATO widening	Enthusiastic	Sceptical

* ESDP = European Security and Defence Policy

INNER VERSUS OUTER EUROPE: TWO IDEAL TYPES

Relabeling the distinction between old and new Europe, we shall instead distinguish here between 'inner' and 'outer' Europe.[5] The age terminology is avoided due to its normative Rumsfeldian implications – the 'new' as the young and fresh in comparison to the 'old' as the obsolescent. Also, the 'new Europe' label sometimes designates the *whole* of Europe in the post-Cold War era, at other times simply the new 2004/07 member states of the EU, thus causing confusion in relation to the meaning here. The 'inner' versus 'outer' terminology is inspired by geography, cf. the map in figure 3 where outer Europe appears as a crescent or shield around inner Europe.

[5] As distinct from concept essentialism, there is no such thing as the 'real' meaning of a concept as understood here (defined by the discourse prevailing among politicians or something else). Concept definitions can be made by the analyst, but they are not arbitrary: practical or theoretical reasons can be given for one or the other definition.

A paradigm state of *outer Europe* (cf. fig. 1) would see Russia as a political or even a military threat and this makes it a 'hawk' in relation to Russia. Moreover, outer Europe has a high ideological profile regarding criticism of internal Russian developments, as well as being active in democracy promotion in the whole post-Soviet space, in principle, in competition with Russia. A paradigm state in outer Europe would also be Atlanticist, since it would believe that Atlantic cohesion, including an American military and political presence in Europe, is vital to balancing Russia. Atlanticism, in turn, would make such a state suspicious of any deepening of European integration and an independent 'European security and defence policy' (ESDP), which would be perceived as competing with the all-important Atlantic relationship. The EU is thought to be too weak to counterbalance Russia in any case. EU and NATO *widening*, conversely, are seen as instrumental for the stabilisation and democratisation of Europe and its neighbourhood. In particular, this is seen as a means to

contain Russia and prevent it from dominating its neighbours.

A paradigm state of *inner Europe*, by contrast, seeks a deepening integration and an independent ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy) – i.e. independent from the US superpower ('Continentalism'). Unsurprisingly, the nucleus of inner Europe is constituted by the EC founding fathers of the 1950s. Widening is not necessarily seen as a good thing, since it may endanger deepening and the efficiency of established institutions. Moreover, the perception is that NATO widening may provoke Russia.

Inner Europe consists of doves in relation to controversial Russian behaviour, since inner Europe prioritises common (continental) interests with Russia, including geo-economic ones. With this pragmatic approach, inner Europe also abstains from criticising internal Russian developments; in general it is low key in terms of democracy promotion in the post-Soviet space.

THE UNDERLYING DYNAMICS: THE RISE OF THE INNER/OUTER DIVIDE

In the post-Cold War era two main parameters laid the ground for the inner/outer bifurcation. The first one was the power status of the US as sole superpower. This status increasingly became a challenge to European states, for good or for bad.[6] In spite of the 1991 dissolution of the Soviet Union, the US remained a European power. Its military and political capacity turned out to be

indispensable, even on the EU's own 'doorstep' as demonstrated in the conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia during the 1990s. Moreover, the US extended its power projection eastwards with two NATO enlargements (NATO traditionally being the US 'darling' organisation), the second one even encompassing post-Soviet territory by including the three Baltic countries. Moreover, the NATO and EU newcomers were generally hardcore Atlanticists. With the balance of power in Europe thus favouring the US superpower more than ever before, how to relate to this 'hyperpower' challenge became a major dividing line between European states.

However, the *substance* of the American grand strategy was also crucial. As long as the US and European states could agree on the stabilisation and democratisation of Europe as a first priority, European bifurcation could be avoided. The Dayton accord of 1995 and the Kosovo war of 1999 took place in official Euro-Atlantic agreement, although there was much disharmony and jealousy behind the façade.[7] The problem for the EU in these 'doorstep' conflicts was not bifurcation, but rather its own impotence and ensuing humiliation.

Although not challenging the US superpower position, the large-scale terrorism of 9/11 was the single factor affecting US behaviour most in the post-Cold War era. Not surprisingly the attacks on the US homeland which affected the everyday lives of Americans and carried a strong symbolic message fuelled US patriotism and centralisation at all levels. A national 'mobilisation of adrenalin' took place. Being the sole superpower, these domestic fluctuations spilled over into US external behaviour with wide-ranging effects. The US did not have the patience

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[6] This challenge developed later as initially, just after the Cold War, much of the agenda in European capitals was taken up by so-called 'German' or 'Russian' problems. For instance, America as a challenge to Europe is not among the scenarios considered by Buzan et al., 1990.

[7] cf. Fawn, 2001 for instance.

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required by European multilateralism; speed and (perceived) efficiency were seen as more important than multilateral legitimacy.

'Either you are with us [entering into "preventive" wars, if necessary without a UN mandate], or you are with the terrorists', as formulated by US President Bush, became a challenge common to all of Europe in the years ahead. Such (thinly veiled) threats from a sole superpower are important to any state but, nevertheless, reactions to them were often decided by power relations close to the state's European home. Even though geopolitics was most fierce at the fringes of the EU/Europe, it also, contrary to state rhetoric and 'EU speak', persisted at its very heart. So instead of a common European posture vis-à-vis the US challenge, the result was a split down the middle – inner versus outer Europe – that made its first clear appearance in connection with the Iraq war. This will be illustrated below.

FROM BAGHDAD TO TSKHINVALI – WITH SEVERAL INTERMEDIATE WAY STATIONS

Inner versus outer Europe – or 'old versus new' – is a difficult distinction to get a grip on, since it is seldom part of official rhetoric. The empirical approach here to this alleged bifurcation will be (1) *synchronic*, i.e. it will focus on situations where (in principle all) European states faced one and the same specific challenge; (2) it will focus on situations entailing serious *dilemmas* for states, and (3) it will be focused preferably on *dramatic* situations. The first criterion safeguards rich comparative materials. The second one means that we prefer situations where good reasons (albeit varying from state to state) can be given for mutually ex-

clusive options. For instance, September 11 and the days that followed would hardly be a fruitful situation from this point of view: practically all European states, even France, embraced the US and expressed their sympathies; there was no dilemma and differentiation among reactions was virtually impossible. The third criterion, drama, puts a dilemma at its peak. As mentioned, inner versus outer Europe persisted somewhat beneath a still, opaque surface and was only visible in those dramatic situations in which states were forced to make their priorities explicit. For instance, in a normal situation a state can express both its UN loyalty and its 'warm feelings' towards the US as they are in no mutual contradiction. However, as the Iraq crisis peaked with the US obviously intending to go to war without a clear UN mandate, unequivocal priorities had to be decided upon. Moments such as this are providential for research.

State positionings in relation to the selected situations will now be analysed; the situations will be structured according to the geopolitical mega issues in a (roughly) temporal order.

Relation to the US: Atlanticists versus Continentalists

The Iraq conflict 2002-3 divided Europe along geopolitical lines.[8] Inner Europe, the Continentalists, were critical of the US coalition operating against Iraq: Germany, France, Austria, Luxembourg, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Sweden and Finland. Outer Europe, the Atlanticists, participated in the operation (the UK, Denmark, and Poland) or were strong war supporters (Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Roma-

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[8] Mouritzen, 2006.

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nia, Slovakia, and Spain).[9] To put it in power terms, Germany, France and Russia balanced the US. Whereas this expressed a traditional course for Russia (Gorbachev's 'European home') and France (de Gaulle's 'Europe of nations'); balancing the US was new for Germany. During the Cold War the French-German axis had mainly pertained to EC low politics. However, in the German analysis, balancing the unprecedented US power status and US unilateralist arrogance could hopefully underpin a common European security policy.[10] However, the triple alliance of France, Germany and Russia was in turn balanced by the UK and a range of smaller Atlanticist countries, precisely fearing such an unprecedented continental alliance. For the UK, the traditional 'holder of the (European) balance', balancing any tendency towards a continental power concentration was almost instinctive. 'Open letters' signed by Atlanticist heads of government were published not only in support of the US 'wounded tiger', but presumably also to balance the triple alliance. Still, as appears from figure 2, several smaller continental countries nevertheless identified with inner Europe.

Relation to Russia: hawks versus doves

We now turn to the second geopolitical mega-issue – relations to Europe's nearest great power. These relations had become increasingly weighted and tense during president Putin's second term in office, as a recovered Russian economy permitted a more assertive Russian foreign policy. At the annual *Munich Conference* on security policy in February 2007 Putin gave a highly controversial speech.[11] The US was criticised for its 'uncontained hyper use of force – military force – in international relations' as being disrespectful of international law. NATO expansion represented a serious provocation that reduced the level of mutual trust. 'And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended?' This speech represented the major instance of Russian assertiveness since the end of the Cold War. In one press evaluation, 'not since Nikita Khrushchev banged his shoe on the table at the United Nations in 1960 has an international gathering heard such an icy blast from Moscow's leadership.'[12] Reactions to the speech do not represent a full-fledged European pattern since not all countries commented on it. Still, we can discern the contours of the inner/outer Europe from the Iraq dispute; the reactions comprised hawks and doves; the hawks belonging to outer Europe and the doves to inner Europe. Among the hawkish ones were Poland[13], the Czech Republic,[14] Estonia and Sweden. Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt found that 'this was the real Russia of now and possibly in four or five years time it could

[9] Remaining categories were 'moderate war supporters' and a few 'vague or contradictory' (e.g. the Czech Republic).

[10] Possibly this view was fuelled by German domestic politics due to the upcoming elections; the resistance to American 'bellicose' unilateralism in particular was popular (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2005). On the pacifist 'lesson of the past' in German political culture, cf. Berger, 2002.

[11] www.securityconference.de. Speech at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy, 10 February, 2007.

[12] *The Times* (London), referred in *Deutsche Welle*, 'European Press Review: A Hint of the Cold War in Munich', 12 February 2007.

[13] 'In Munich, the Russian President showed his true face to the West', according to Polish defence minister Aleksander Szczyglo, who hoped that 'the speech would make the West realize what Russia is really up to', *The Warsaw Voice*, 'Echoes from Munich', 21 February 2007.

[14] Czech foreign minister Karel Schwarzenberg ironically thanked Putin for spelling out the reasons why NATO should enlarge in his speech at the same conference. cf. www.securityconference.de at the 43rd Munich Conference on Security Policy, 11 February 2007.

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go further in this direction. We have to have a dialogue with Russia, but we must be hard-nosed and realistic. We must stand up for our values.'[15] The US, despite being the primary target of the speech, was moderate in its reaction.[16] The dovish reactions came from Germany, France and Norway, where the speech was downplayed as being a signal to Putin's domestic audience.

To further elucidate the theme of hawks versus doves, we now turn towards the escalation of tension in the southern Caucasus in the spring of 2008. During May 2008 relations between Russia and Georgia worsened, particularly regarding Abkhazia. For instance, a Russian Presidential decree allowed direct official relations with the secessionist authorities. Also, additional Russian troops with heavy armaments were deployed in Abkhazia and a Georgian unmanned aerial reconnaissance vehicle was shot down over Abkhazia by Russian forces. On the 26th and 27th of May, five days before Russia's deployment of railway troops into Abkhazia, the *EU External Relations Council* met routinely and commented, *inter alia*, on these events.[17] The Council affirmed its commitment to Georgian 'sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.' It underlined the need to avoid further escalation and recommended steps towards the 'normalisation of relations.' All parties should 'tone down public rhetoric and abstain from provocations.' The interesting point here, however, is that the EU's new member states and Sweden tried

to express disapproval of Russia's conduct.[18] These formulations, however, were blocked by 'inner Europe', and the above symmetric formulations were what was decided upon.

In relation to the *Russo-Georgia War* of August 2008 [19] one can observe the following reaction profiles vis-à-vis the Russian power assertion: 'mainstream hawks', 'emotional hawks', 'doves' and even one 'Russia supporter.'[20] The core strategy of the hawks, be they mainstream (the US, the UK, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Romania), or emotional (Poland and the Baltic countries), was to balance the Russian power assertion; Russia should somehow be 'punished.' The mainstream hawks had, as a secondary concern, that lines of communication with Russia should not be totally broken off. The core strategy of the doves (Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Hungary, Slovakia,[21] Slovenia, Greece, and Turkey) was the pragmatic 'Einbindung' (binding) of Russia with the purpose of its long-term socialisation to European values. Identification with Russia (Putin) could be found in the case of Italy, Berlusconi being the only obvious 'Russia

[18] Vladimir Socor, 'Euro-appeasement: The EU's answer to Russia's assault on Georgia', *Eurasia Daily Monitor,* 4 June 2008.

[19] To obtain a 'neutral' analysis of war events, a report was published in September 2009 by the *Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia*, established by the Council of the European Union. cf. also Antonenko, 2008; Jahn, 2008; Blandy, 2009; Cornell & Starr, 2009; Rich, 2010 and Asmus, 2010.

[20] There is no intentional value bias in using these terms in the present context. The results below are based on Mouritzen (forthcoming) and the references therein. The term 'emotional hawks' refers to their own colourful rhetoric in the situation, for instance by calling themselves 'former captive nations of the Soviet Union' (cf. *ibid.*)

[21] There was some disagreement between the Slovak Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, but not enough to jeopardise this reaction profile.

[15] The *Daily Telegraph*, 'Europe wary after Putin tirade', 12 February 2007.

[16] 'Bush downplays Putin's criticism of US', *Europe News*, 14 February 2007.

[17] Council of the European Union, 2870th Council meeting, General Affairs and External Relations, Brussels 26-27 May 2008.

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supporter.'[22] Apart from the few paradigm cases mentioned under each ideal type, there were, of course, cases falling in between. For instance the Netherlands, Austria and Bulgaria seemed halfway between dove and hawk. Moreover, the Czech Republic did not display a unified reaction profile in the first place, since the President and the Prime Minister took opposing positions.[23]

The case of France implies certain classification difficulties, mainly because it held the EU chair at this critical time. This makes it difficult to disentangle its EU role from any 'real' French position. Foreign Minister Kouchner made some controversial statements regarding ethnic cleansing in the breakaway regions and the need for sanctions against Russia. However, he was corrected by President Sarkozy for whom broader concerns were crucial. He would bend over backwards to identify a common EU position allowing for mediation. This latter consideration brought France close to the doves. The EU position was one of the lowest common denominator, but failing to locate it would have been detrimental to the EU's status as an international actor. With the withdrawal of Russian troops to the breakaway regions, Sarkozy and the EU managed to be seen as a first class international mediator – although the withdrawal may simply have been due to a feeling of 'mission accomplished' on the Russian side.

Democracy promotion eastwards

'Democracy promotion' refers to the furthering of democracy abroad as part of a country's foreign policy priorities and to the actual measures towards this priority.[24] 'Eastwards' here means in relation to (a) Russia, in practice criticism of authoritarian developments in Russian rule during the Putin and Medvedev presidencies, or (b) the post-Soviet territory minus Russia and minus the Baltic states; in practice Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and the South Caucasus republics. European democracy promotion in these countries typically took place in rivalry with Russia who perceived it as a pretext for Western power projection. Hence since both (a) and (b) challenged Russia, be it directly or indirectly, there is no reason to distinguish between them in the following classification of European countries.

Among the countries with a *high* democracy profile eastwards can be found, firstly, Poland and the Baltic countries – in particular Poland and Lithuania due to their larger resources and their neighbourhoods (they have been labelled the 'new Cold War warriors'[25]). For instance, Poland played a very active role in supporting the 'Orange Revolution' in Ukraine and also by engaging the US in these events. Apart from current rivalries with Russia, the memories of Soviet oppression ('lessons of the past') combined with their own recent democratisation experiences have provided the four countries with extra motivation to create a 'ring of (democratic) friends' eastwards. While their external aid funds remain low, the importance of democracy promotion as a foreign policy goal is striking compared to older member states (Young, 2008).

Secondly, still within the confines of a high priority, we find the 'frosty pragmatists',[26] who are pragmatically oriented towards busi-

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[22] With a little good will Greece might also be counted in this category; its public statements, though, were much less explicit than the Italian ones. Greece offered assistance to Ossetian refugees.

[23] Ukraine, not part of the investigation here, experienced a similar split.

[24] On democracy promotion and its subtypes cf. Carothers, 2009.

[25] Leonard & Popescu, 2008, p. 48.

[26] Leonard & Popescu, 2008, p. 42.

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ness interests, but consistently raise concerns about democracy and human rights. They encompass the US,[27] Britain,[28] the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway.[29]

As should already be apparent, the outer Europe ideal type holds true empirically also for this issue. The only exceptions are Norway and the Netherlands. They traditionally belong to the world's most dedicated democracy promoters (Youngs, 2008), both in budget terms and in diplomacy; their general belongingness to 'inner Europe' has simply been unable to curb this forceful tradition.

Turning to countries with a *low* democracy profile eastwards, we find at least three categories: firstly the 'friendly pragmatists'[30] emphasising economic interests with a low political profile: Austria, Belgium, Finland, Hungary, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Slovenia, Portugal and Romania.[31] Secondly, we find Russia's 'strate-

gic partners': large or middle-sized powers that prioritise strong political and economic bilateral relationships with Russia as the overall goal. They encompass Germany, France,[32] Italy, and Spain. The third category among these 'low profile' countries comprises two outright 'Russia supporters',[33] who allegedly seek to advance Russian interests within the EU's own ranks at every possible occasion: Greece and Cyprus[34] (the reason probably being that Russia is their traditional ally vis-à-vis the Ottoman/Turkish 'hereditary enemy'). Bulgaria may constitute a category of its own, since democracy promotion is not even among its foreign policy priorities; its unfinished achievements in consolidating democracy at home probably still hamper its activism.[35]

The countries mentioned here fit with the inner Europe ideal type, by and large. At first sight we might expect a somewhat higher profile among certain 'friendly pragmatists': Slovenia, Hungary and, perhaps, Romania. After all, they share a historic experience with Poland and the Baltic countries of non-democratic rule, albeit under varying degrees of oppression. However, given their borders with ex-Yugoslav territory, at least Slovenia and Hungary are more preoccupied with favouring democracy in this direction than eastwards.

EU Deepening: the ESDP

We now turn to the third mega issue – if and how Europe itself should become a great

[27] Goldsmith, 2008. cf. also 'Russia rejects US human rights criticism',

http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2008-03-13-voa31-66744587.html?rss=europe , or 'Russia rejects West's criticism on democracy', http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200601/s1551561.htm. As a non-EU country the US is not part of the Leonard & Popescu classification.

[28] Britain holds a special position among the 'frosty pragmatists'. It earlier saw Moscow almost as a strategic partner, but there is now outspoken criticism of the state of democracy in Russia with the harassment of the British Council, the British Ambassador and the murder of Alexander Litvinenko (Leonard/Popescu, 2008: 42).

[29] Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre, speech on relations between Norway and Russia at the *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, Oslo, 18 June 2008. As a non-EU country, Norway is not part of the Leonard & Popescu classification. Moreover, in their classification Estonia and Latvia belong to the current category.

[30] Leonard & Popescu, 2008, p. 36.

[31] Regarding Romania, cf. Jonavicius, 2008, p. 13. Romania has practiced democracy promotion in relation to Moldova in particular, although also other interests have been at stake in this tense relationship. Romania is classified here as a borderline case regarding democracy promotion that is likely, however, to move towards increased promotion with the slow consolidation of its own democracy.

[32] France has given little weight to the state of democracy in Russia and ranges a whole set of strategic interests as top priorities: energy, investments, trade, financial cooperation and the visa issue (Sarkozy, 2008).

[33] Labelled 'Trojan horses' by Leonard & Popescu, 2008, p. 27.

[34] Not part of the investigation here, though.

[35] Jonavicius, 2008, p. 14. Italy may join this category, since it does not have an aid category for democracy assistance (Youngs, 2008, p. 12).

power. Firstly, we focus on ESDP, one of the most controversial aspects of EU deepening. We shall distinguish between those states which in 2002-08 saw the ESDP as merely a useful complement to NATO, and those which wished it to develop as a force in its own right, underpinning an independent EU foreign and security policy (i.e. independent from the US). In order to make the survey truly comparative we shall only include states that were members of both the EU and NATO.

The ESDP and its predecessors has always been a 'darling project' of France. France has exerted a constant pressure for the creation of a strong ESDP and represents the driving force behind missions, especially in Francophone Africa,[36] as well as increased ESDP capabilities, including a separate military headquarters and an internal European military market.

On the opposite wing we find the UK, which has the most modern forces for out-of-area interventions.[37] However, in the wake of the Franco-British deal in St. Malo of 1998 laying the foundations for the ESDP, the UK has only approved ESDP deepening when it has been perceived as a burden-sharing complement to NATO. Britain has been seen as the American 'Trojan horse' in the ESDP, American interests being channelled through Britain (Dumbrell, 2009).

Germany joined the Franco-British St. Malo plans and France, Britain, and Germany were the initiators behind the *battle group* concept.[38] Germany has a clear preference for low key and non-controversial missions, but has shown increasing willingness to engage in military action provided it is based on multilateralism and international legality. Germany has mainly allied with the French as, for instance, in connection with the French-German-Belgian-Luxembourgian meeting (April 2003) where, among other initiatives,[39] the establishment of a separate military headquarters for the ESDP was discussed. As this happened at the height of the European Iraq strife, the British condescendingly labelled it the 'chocolate meeting' and the American NATO ambassador called it 'the most serious threat to the future of NATO.' Since this culmination of disagreements, some less dramatic 'pulling and hauling' has taken place between the two major ESDP wings, often over seemingly petty details such as the nature of an ESDP headquarters. The mantra of the UK wing has been to avoid NATO-ESDP 'duplication.' This sounds, of course, like common sense and a good managerial point. However, it is based on the tacit assumption that NATO and the ESDP strive towards the same goal – which is exactly the contested issue as described above.

Apart from Belgium and Luxembourg which have already been mentioned, countries like Spain [40] and Greece [41] have tended to support the French position. The Netherlands and Portugal, originally belonging to the 'British' wing, have gradually shifted towards the French; the Portuguese have obviously

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[36] Africa can be seen as the litmus test for ESDP cooperation independent of NATO structures – a Europeanisation of French Africa Policy.

[37] Even acknowledged by France, cf. Posen, 2004: 13.

[38] 1,500 man strong readiness brigades for quick deployment (5-10 days) to conflict zones. The EU has two such battle groups constantly ready for deployment.

[39] Molis, 2006: 93-4.

[40] '… Spain has promoted the development of an authentic EU defense policy, which is an essential element of effective EU foreign action … the ESDP is a sign of true solidarity to both member states and to the entire world', cf. http://www.maec.es/en/MenuPpal/Asuntos/SeguridadInternacional/Paginas/Seguridad%20Internacional.aspx .

[41] Molis, 2006: 91.

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moved a step further than the Dutch.[42] Italy seems to stand in between.[43] The 'British' view has been supported by the Baltic countries,[44] the Visegrad countries,[45] Slovenia,[46] Romania,[47] and Bulgaria.[48] Denmark also belongs to this camp, since it has been committed by popular referendums concerning the Maastricht Treaty (1992 and 1993) to opt out of all military aspects of the EU.

It should be obvious that the French wing and its adherents fit neatly with inner Europe, whereas the UK and its followers fit with outer Europe. Inner Europe also constitutes the countries which, by and large, have traditionally worked for EC and EU deepening, in low politics as well as in the high politics arena. In the final section, however, we shall see that from 2008 a new development in ESDP-NATO relations took place.

EU and NATO Widening

We should now turn to the widening aspect of the third geopolitical mega issue. Regarding EU widening, the positions on *Turkish* membership have been selected, since this is the most controversial among EU enlargements. According to the ideal typical reasoning, inner Europe, including the EC founding fathers, should fear EU institutional overstretch even more in the case of the populous and 'alien' Turkey than in the case of minor applicants in the past. Outer Europe, by contrast, should be keen on Turkish membership, entailing Turkey as a stability projector extending as far as the Middle East, Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus. To this would be added an EU stabilisation of Turkish democracy and Turkey as a model of Western/Muslim coexistence. Such a model might pre-empt Islamic terrorism against the West (outer Europe has been particularly threatened by and exposed to terrorism).[49] In addition, there have been several non-geopolitical arguments in the European debate for and against Turkish membership, the latter being most crucial for inner European countries (politicians' and popular enlargement fatigue, popular scepticism/xenophobia, etc.)

After an exceptionally drawn out process, reflecting strongly divergent member state views, the EU hesitantly decided to start membership negotiations with Turkey by 2005. Since then, however, negotiations have been slow and by 2010 only a few of the 35 acquis chapters have been closed. The UK has been acting as leader of the pro-Turkey EU countries, continuously trying to speed up negotiations.[50]

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[42] The Netherlands has intensified its relationship with Germany, notably through the creation of a common battle group, cf. Molis, 2006, p. 88. The Portuguese participated in the 'Artemis' operation in D.R Congo 'in an attempt to contribute to the development of the 'global' aims of the EU'; cf. Molis, 2006 p. 90.

[43] 'It is crucial for a medium-sized power like Italy to have "sure" points of reference in such a fluid and uncertain international context. The European Union and NATO are our sure points of reference. (…) It is within this strategic context – Europe, Euro-Atlantic and multilateral – that our security priorities are located' (*The European strategic scenario and Italy's security*, http://www.esteri.it/MAE/EN/Sala_Stampa/ArchivioNotizie/Interventi/2007/03/200703_DAlema_Intervento_2).

[44] Molis, 2006, p.88.

[45] Dangerfield, 2008, p.654.

[46] Slovenia repeats the mantra that 'ESDP should evolve in such a direction as not to cause duplication of workload with NATO.' ,cf. Kajnc, 2004 or Molins, 2006, p. 90.

[47] The President, 'The National Security Strategy of Romania', Bucharest 2007, mentioning the 'complementary functionalities … of NATO and the European Union' (p. 27).

[48] As stated applaudingly by the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2010): 'The Reform Treaty meets the objectives of developing a flexible, military-secure, and "NATO-friendly" ESDP.'

[49] Counting here 9/11, Madrid on 11 March 2004 (as Spain was still in outer Europe then), London on 5 July 2005, and minor attacks and threats against Denmark as examples.

[50] David Miliband: "Turning Turkey away from EU 'unconscionable'", *EurActiv*, 27/10/2009.

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Poland,[51] the Baltic countries, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary,[52] Slovenia,[53] Romania,[54] Bulgaria,[55] Finland,[56] Sweden,[57] Ireland,[58] Portugal,[59] Spain[60] and Italy[61] have been positive towards Turkish membership. Remarkably, in various phases of the process, the US outsider has interfered and tried to push the Europeans forward towards accepting Turkish membership[62] (creating more irritation than results, though). The most negative states have been France,[63]

Germany,[64] Austria[65] and Greece,[66] some of them invoking the argument of a limited EU 'absorption capacity.'[67] To them should be added, however, a group of reluctant states: Denmark,[68] Holland,[69] Belgium[70] and Luxembourg.[71]

It is striking how well this distribution fits with the ideal typical divide between outer and inner Europe. On the positive side we find the whole 'armada' of outer Europe, led by the UK and, de facto, the US. As we remember, Sweden and (partly) Finland have shifted to this category. Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Italy may be slightly surprising in this company. For the three latter it seems that the 'South factor' – the wish to compensate for the big 'Eastern' enlargement of 2004 with a new 'Southern' member – has overruled any inner Europe logic.

Regarding the negative/reluctant states, the expectations are also neatly fulfilled. However, there is one big surprise: Denmark. Belonging to outer Europe, Denmark has all

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[51] 'EU-Turkey relations', EurActiv.com, 4 December 2009

[52] For the three latter and the Baltic countries, cf. 'The EU-25's view of Turkey's membership bid', EurActiv.com, 17 December 2004.

[53] 'Turkey's friend Slovenia to take over EU presidency', http://www.todayszaman.com, 31 December 2007.

[54] Interview with Romanian foreign minister Cristian Diaconescu 26/8/2009, http://www.todayszaman.com.

[55] 'Turkey must become Full-fledged Member of the EU', speech by Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev, 10 October 2009.

[56] 'EU membership issues central … ', Foreign Ministry, Finland, 13 May 2008.

[57] "Sarkozy cancels Sweden visit over Turkey", *EU Observer*, 29/05/2009.

[58] 'Minister Treacy comments on EU enlargement and the negotiations with Turkey', Dep. Of Foreign Affairs, 15 November 2006.

[59] Portugal as the EU chair refused to hold a major debate on EU borders and Turkey's EU membership, despite strong French objections; Lisbon remains a strong supporter of Ankara's EU bid, www.iol.co.za, 28/06/2007.

[60] Prime Minister Zapatero: Spain's support for Turkish EU membership is "firm, clear, solid", "Spain Supports Turkey's Candidature to the EU", *La Moncloa*, 05/04/2009.

[61] Prime Minister Berlusconi: "Regarding the opposition shown by certain countries – some of which are important countries – I am confident we will be able to convince them of the strategic importance of Turkey, within the European framework, as a country bordering the Middle East", *Euronews*, 13/11/2008.

[62] "US president reiterates support for Turkey's EU bid", *EU Observer*, 09/01/2008. cf. also "Obama and Sarkozy not Sharing Same Views on Turkey's EU bid", *Turkish Weekly*, 08/06/2009.

[63] "Ce que je tiens à offrir à la Turquie un vrai partenariat avec l'Europe, ce n'est pas l'intégration à l'Europe." See Sarkozy, 'La France et l'Asie mineure', 16 January 2008, http://turquieeuropeenne.eu/article2371.html.

[64] Chancellor Merkel has expressed that accession is not a one way street and that Germany prefers a "privileged partnership" with Turkey, "EU-Turkey Relations", *EurActiv*, 23/09/2009.

[65] "Turkey's EU Bid", *Council on Foreign Relations*, 30/09/2005.

[66] "EU-Turkey Relations", *EurActiv*, 4 December 2009. Turkey being Greece's traditional foe has, maybe for this reason, tended to hold a distance to debates on Turkish EU membership. Greece has, though, also acknowledged the advantages of Turkey being disciplined by EU rules.

[67] On this concept cf. Emerson et al. (2006).

[68] "Danish PM expresses doubt over Turkish EU membership", *EU Observer*, 27/09/2005.

[69] Struggling with the integration of its Muslim communities which is pushing the country's leaders towards the French approach, "The EU-25 views of Turkey's EU membership bid", *EurActiv*, 17/12/2004.

[70] "Belgium in favour of opening EU accession talks with Turkey", *Belgian Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs*, 02/12/2004. In spite of the heading of this document, it includes so many preconditions for negotiations that Belgium can be characterised as reluctant.

[71] "EU-Turkey Relations", *EurActiv*, 4 December 2009.

along been an ardent supporter of EU and NATO enlargement. When it comes to Turkey, however, scepticism has taken over. The main reason for this is very specific: the key parliamentary position of the 'Danish People's Party', which has acted as a safety net under the liberal-conservative government since 2001. Even though popular reluctance towards Turkish EU membership[72] is ingrained in political parties across most of the political spectrum, it is especially outspoken in the case of the 'Danish People's Party' and its voters.

Turning to NATO widening, NATO's *summit meeting in Bucharest in April 2008* has been selected here as an indicator of dividing lines. One of the main issues addressed was whether Georgia and Ukraine should be granted 'Membership Action Plans' (MAPs). The almost empty summit formulation – that NATO was 'in principle' open to membership for the two countries – was a compromise between two camps. Essentially, the inner/outer divide was once again apparent. The US, Denmark and the new East European members ('outer Europe') were in favour of initiating Georgian and Ukrainian MAPs, whereas Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the three Benelux countries ('inner Europe') were against. As stated by French Prime Minister Fillon: 'We are opposed to the entry of Georgia and Ukraine because we think it is not the right response to the balance of power in Europe and between Europe and Russia, and we want to have a dialogue on this subject with Russia.'[73] What was remarkable was that the UK, traditionally a paradigmatic

Atlanticist, acted as 'honest broker' between the two camps. Nonetheless, the outcome was characterised as 'a remarkable rejection of American policy.'[74] The French-German high politics axis, which had been born in defiance of the Iraq operation, reappeared – and prevailed. A joint Franco-German press meeting was held after the summit as a symbolic illustration of their cohesion.

EUROPEAN VARIETY AND NATIONAL ULTRASTABILITY

The mapping of European state positionings in the above analysis has been depicted in figure 2. Obviously there is no mechanical way to aggregate the findings shown in figure 2 to a comprehensive characteristic of belongingness for each state. If all findings support the same belonging, be it to inner or outer Europe, there is evidently no doubt. If there are one or two deviant observations, the classification depends on the nature of these: can they be 'excused' through an independent and credible explanation, or is this impossible? In the latter case, the state has no clear belonging. Among the 27 investigated states, however, 22 can be unequivocally classified as following one or the other logic (11 outer Europe versus 11 inner Europe).

For the 22 classifiable states there are only 11 'deviant' observations out of a total of 142. There is reason to briefly recapitulate these and to indicate if and how they can be excused:

– Being classified as inner Europe, Italy's 'moderate war support' (Mouritzen 2006) in relation to the Iraq operation is slightly surprising. However, it can be

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[72] The question: 'Do you think Turkey should be admitted into the EU?' was answered by 30.1% yes and 58.5% no in a Danish opinion poll (October 2007); cf. *Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook* 2008, p. 180.

[73] "France won't back Ukraine and Georgia NATO bids", *Reuters*, 01/04/2008, as quoted in Lindbo Larsen (2009).

[74] *New York Times*, 4 April 2008.

accounted for by Berlusconi's personal affection for the US and President Bush: 'I am on whatever side America is on, even before I know what it is.'[75] With Berlusconi's strong personal leadership, an idiosyncratic explanation should be legitimate in this particular case.

– Portugal is classified here as belonging to inner Europe. However, its support for, though not participation in, the Iraq operation in 2003 is a problem in relation to this. The excuse here is the following: that Portugal with its Atlantic location can offer the Azores as, literally, a US stepping stone to the wider Middle East[76] – which it actually did in connection with the Iraq operation. The financial reward from this could easily override Portugal's belonging to inner Europe as interpreted here. In view of this arrangement, it was also natural for Portugal to support the US-led operation diplomatically.

– The Dutch and Norwegian high levels of democracy promotion in spite of their belonging to inner Europe should be explicable by their traditional high profiles in this regard as part of their Third World aid policies since as far back as the 1960s. Conversely, Bulgaria's lack of experience in democracy promotion, combined with its own short democratic lifetime, should account for its very low profile in this regard, irrespective of its belonging to outer Europe.

– As Portugal, Spain, and Italy are classified here as inner Europe, they should oppose Turkish EU membership in terms

of the ideal typical reasoning. However, the 'south' factor in relation to Turkish EU membership interferes here: as a counterweight to the large eastern enlargement of 2004, 'southern' countries tend to support southern enlargements. This factor overrules the three countries' inner Europe logic as interpreted here.

– Denmark's obvious belonging to outer Europe should make it continue its pro-enlargement course, also in relation to Turkish EU membership. However, the unique parliamentary position, in a European perspective, of the 'Danish People's Party' explains a good deal of Denmark's *de facto* reluctance towards Turkish EU membership.

The aggregate classifications for all states are geographically depicted in figure 3. in which the outer Europe 'crescent' around inner Europe is visible with a little good will.

There is reason to comment briefly on the five non-classifiable states: Slovenia, Hungary, Slovakia, Finland and Ireland. Ireland is so geographically distant from Russia that the ideal typical Russia-US logic becomes irrelevant – both in terms of balancing and of binding strategies vis-à-vis Russia. This is reflected also in its traditional policy of neutrality. Moreover, Ireland is not an EC founding father, something that could have made it part of inner Europe.

Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia all give priority to NATO, but – unlike the Balts and Poland – not as a bulwark against Russia. For these three countries Russia is not a geopolitical 'mega issue', as has previously been assumed. All three do stress the importance of NATO widening, but this pertains more to countries in the Ex-Yugoslav space than to Georgia. Stability and democracy projection to the salient south is a primary

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objective for them. Also, NATO is crucial diplomatically as it gives them a direct link to the US on a formally equal footing, as distinct from going through the EU.

Whereas Finland obviously belonged to inner Europe at the outset of our period, its forceful diplomatic reaction to Russia's conduct in the Caucasus war pointed clearly towards outer Europe. However, Finland is less active than, for instance, the Scandinavians regarding democracy promotion eastwards, so the classification cannot be made unequivocally.

If we had turned to non-geopolitical issue areas, the European patterns of alignment would surely have been different. However, when dealing with geopolitical mega issues – relations to the only superpower, to the nearest great power, and questions regarding Europe's own governance – the picture that emerges from the above comparison is one of amazing state consistency. For no less than 22 out of 27 states, *either* the logic of inner *or* of outer Europe is followed – very different logics, as should have appeared. Since the European great powers were, moreover, among the 22, two in inner and one in outer Europe, it is not unfair to conclude that European geopolitics in the period 2002-08 was dominated by the inner/outer divide.

Whereas there is thus significant variety *among* European states, there is stability for each particular state. For instance, in nearly all situations the UK belonged to outer Europe and France as well as Germany to inner Europe. They did not switch roles; as already mentioned there were only *two* transitions among the 27 states:

– For Spain, a transition from outer Europe to inner Europe took place in 2004. The shift of Government, from conservative to socialist, and massive manifestations

of public opinion against the Iraq war, combined with the terrorist attacks on Madrid of 11 March 2004 – a few days before the parliamentary elections – may serve as *ad hoc* explanations for this transition (Gillespie, 2007).

– For the Swedish transition in 2006, the Carl Bildt factor was decisive: a knowledgeable ex-prime minister became foreign minister. Being experienced in EU and UN top jobs, self-confident and with a significant reputation both within and outside Sweden, he ignored any collegial/prime ministerial or Foreign Ministry advice. Sweden was well anchored in inner Europe in connection with the Iraq conflict 2002-03. However, in the remaining situations Sweden has belonged unequivocally to outer Europe. Some more than other of these situations display the personal imprint of Carl Bildt.[77]

Nonetheless, two transitions among 27 countries in the course of six years (2002-08) is not much, to say the least. Computing the number of 'foreign policy years', we get two transitions in 162 years. This should justifiably be seen as 'ultrastability' in relation to the number of more or less ideological government shifts during these years. In other words, we see stability not only across the three geopolitical mega-issues (thesis [a]), but also over time (thesis [b]).

Although the errand here is not primarily theoretical, it should be emphasised that the pattern displayed is hardly compatible with neorealism or other systemic theories, which would predict largely uniform state positioning in relation to the sole superpower (at any rate states with roughly equal capabilities).

[77] Cf. Mouritzen (forthcoming)

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Figure 2. Inner versus Outer Europe: state profiles in specific geopolitical issues 2002-08. In the top bar, to provide an overview, it has been indicated how the issues fit into the geopolitical mega issues.[78]

Geopolitical mega issues	Relation to the US	Relation to Russia				Conception of Europe		
						European deepening	European widening	
Specific geopolitical issues / State in IE or OE	The European Iraq conflict 2002-2003	Putin's Munich speech February 2007	The Georgia escalation May 2008	The Georgia war August 2008	Democracy promotion eastward	An independent ESDP?	Turkey's would-be EU accession	NATO enlargement (Bucharest April 2008)
USA	OE	OE	-	OE	OE	-	OE	OE
UK	OE	-	-	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE/IE
Denmark	OE	-	-	OE	OE	OE	IE	OE
Poland	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE
Bulgaria	OE	-	-	OE/IE	IE	OE	OE	OE
Netherlands	OE/IE	-	IE	OE/IE	OE	OE/IE	IE	IE
Italy	OE/IE	-	IE	IE	IE	OE/IE	OE	IE
Latvia	OE	-	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE
Lithuania	OE	-	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE
Portugal	OE	-	-	IE	IE	IE	OE	IE
Romania	OE	-	-	OE	OE/IE	OE	OE	OE
Slovakia	OE	-	-	IE	IE	OE	OE	OE
Spain	OE	-	IE	IE	IE	IE	OE	IE
Czech Rep.	split	OE	-	split	OE	OE	OE	OE
Hungary	OE	-	-	IE	IE	OE	OE	OE
Estonia	OE	-	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE	OE
Ireland	OE/IE	-	-	IE	OE	-	OE	-
Belgium	IE	-	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE
Finland	IE	-	-	OE	IE	-	OE	-
Greece	IE	-	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE
Luxembourg	IE	-	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE
Norway	IE	-	-	IE	OE	-	-	IE
Slovenia	IE	-	-	IE	IE	OE	OE	OE
Sweden	IE	OE	OE	OE	OE	-	OE	-
France	IE	-	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE
Germany	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE	IE
Austria	IE	-	IE	OE/IE	IE	-	IE	-

[78] *IE:* Inner Europe; *OE:* Outer Europe. *'OE/IE'* means that the state profile is between OE and IE. *'Split'* means that different state representatives have sent out contrasting signals. '-' means that there is no observation, typically because the state is not a member of the forum in question. Included in the scheme are European states that (i) were members of both the EU and NATO or (ii) were members of either the EU or NATO from 2007 at the latest and had more than one million inhabitants. The United States is regarded as geopolitically a European state. In the ESDP column, only states that were members of both the EU and NATO were included (see the relevant paragraph).

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Figure 3. Inner versus Outer Europe: aggregate state profiles 2002-08

'Inner Europe' states

In-between

'Outer Europe' states (including the US)

Others

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Neither is it compatible with most *intra-state* explanations, since the regular shifts of government/officials or fluctuations in the public mood would, according to their assumptions, lead to much less state consistency over time than has been observed here (one explanation of this type, though, may be relevant: namely one based on culture/'lessons of the past', a slowly, if at all, changing factor). [79]

As viewed from the *inter-state* level, however, the pattern displayed comes as no surprise. Anarchical international politics combined with states' literal non-mobility (Mouritzen, 1998) and the principle that 'power wanes with distance' (Boulding, 1962, ch. 12) means that their salient environments are heterogeneous. This theoretical foundation belongs to a broader realist tradition in which proximate power balancing rather than systemic power carries the burden of explanation (e.g. Levy & Thompson, 2005).[80] Proximate power, in the light of which state balancing takes place, varies across and around Europe. This effect is exacerbated by Europe's geopolitical patchwork nature: made up as it is of many small independent territories with historical identities of their own. Whereas salient environments, thus, varies significantly *between* states, they tend to be long-lasting for each individual state. This makes it meaningful to operate with characteristic state behaviours or profiles, rather than with discrete behaviour in this or that situation. Except for extraordinary situations, states keep the same neighbours and are subject to slowly changing power relations. This tendency may even, for some of them, be reinforced by their respective and long-lived heritages from the

past (and thus admittedly involve the intra-state level as an intervening variable). In other words: state behaviour is stabilised primarily by (inter-state) geopolitics and (sometimes also) by history.

Judging from the emergence of the inner/outer divide in the first years of the new millennium it seems, as previously analysed, that the US status as sole superpower combined with its increasing unilateralism were important factors behind the divide. They were relevant parameters for the whole of Europe. However, *specifically* which countries belong to which category seems to be decided by proximity to Russia. In the case of the 2008 Caucasus war, for instance, 'proximate balancing' vis à vis Russia worked as an explanation for ten out of thirteen expected European positionings (Mouritzen, forthcoming.) More broadly speaking, proximity to Russia is axiomatic for outer Europe: autonomous states close to Russia are likely to belong to outer Europe, other things being equal. In some cases this factor is reinforced by 'lessons' of past Russian/Soviet hegemony (Poland and the Baltic countries in particular).

THE UNDERLYING DYNAMICS REVISITED: THE DEMISE OF INNER/OUTER EUROPE

By 2008/9 two essential parameters favouring the European bifurcation analysed above disappeared. We saw *both* a decline in the US power position and a substantial US policy revision. Like at the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, the autumn of 2008 came to mark a major redistribution in great power capabilities. The parameter for the above analysis – the US as the sole superpower – no longer seemed to hold water. The

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[79] Cf., e.g., Levy, 1994.

[80] Much of the balance of power literature, though, is about systemic rather than proximate balancing. Cf. also Levy & Thompson, 2010, and the survey of literature therein.

Western 'triple shock' of August/ September 2008 encompassed:

– the US financial meltdown
– the Russian power assertion in Southern Caucasus
– two prestige victories for China: its first spacewalk and the successful Beijing Olympics

Of course, the erosion of its status as sole superpower to being one of 'first among equals' (i.e. among the great powers) had been under way for some years (Zakaria, 2008) as indicated by increasing failures in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, the events of August/ September 2008 were drastic and sudden and brought this inference home to many significant actors and experts. Arguably, the abdication from superpower status took place symbolically when, on 6 March 2009 at a small gathering in a Geneva hotel, Secretary of State Clinton handed over a small gift to Lavrov, her Russian counterpart – a 'reset button' for his desk.[81] This wish to reset US-Russia relations to a fresh start can be interpreted in a power perspective: 'we, the US, are still dissatisfied with your Caucasus power assertion, but we recognise that this is your sphere of interest and that our dissatisfaction should not block the way for cooperation on our common interests in other regards.' In other words the US is no longer the kind of 'world policeman' that a unipole should be; indeed it is no longer a unipole.

Already in President Bush's second term, a US policy revision was under way. The need to mend fences with inner Europe after the Iraq *debacle* was obvious when Bush became, in 2005, the first US President to visit the EU

institutions in Brussels. In 2008 a 'Copernican revolution' (Dumbrell, 2009) could be seen in the US perception of the ESDP: from being a competitor it was now seen as a co-contributor to the purposes of NATO. The British 'US Trojan horse' in the ESDP was from then on encouraged by the Americans to participate more constructively.

To this should be added President Obama's new policy direction, presumably strongly affected by the US power decline, of setting a more 'friendly' course all over the world, including a pragmatic approach with little or no Western value promotion.[82] As part of the accommodation with Russia the plans for US missile defence bases in Poland and the Czech Republic were abolished (directed against Iran, but forcefully criticised by Russia).

For the Europeans a need to be 'friendly' to the Americans has sprung from the US power decline – even for the French and others in inner Europe. After all, inner Europe has also traditionally found it essential to keep the US in Europe, politically and militarily. With the US in economic decline American threats to leave Europe are no longer as empty as previously. Moreover, in view of a more general decline of the West, there are increased incentives for more Atlantic cohesion and greater pressures on Europe to 'do more' militarily. With revised US perceptions of the ESDP this could well take the form of its significant strengthening; outer Europe's reservations should disappear with those of the US. In addition,

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[81] On this episode, cf. http://www.reuters.com/article/id-USN06402140.

[82] 'Democracy cannot be imposed on any nation from the outside. Each society must search for its own path, and no path is perfect. Each country will pursue a path rooted in the culture of its people and in its past traditions. And I admit that America has too often been selective in its promotion of democracy. But that does not weaken our commitment; it only reinforces it.' Remarks by President Obama to the UN General Assembly, 23 September 2009.

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with the US abandonment of democracy promotion outer Europe now has no standard bearer in this respect. And the US's accommodating course towards Russia is likely to be followed by the 'mainstream hawks' – as distinct from the 'emotional hawks'.

The overall result of these likely trends will be that Europe will be composed on the one hand of a large Euro-Atlantic 'hotchpotch' of (increasingly cohesive) pragmatists. On the other hand, one can expect a few disillusioned anti-Russian 'outcasts' (the Baltic states, Poland, and Georgia), feeling more or less let down. In this hotchpotch states will all:

– be Russia doves,
– have a low value profile eastwards
– be 'Obama-Atlanticists',
– be supportive of the ESDP, and
– be sceptical about further NATO widening. However, EU widening to include Turkey is not necessarily affected by these trends as, by contrast, a general Western decline should speak for the adding of some 'new blood' to Europe, not least for demographic reasons.[83]

At any rate, the inner/outer divide which has characterised and even dominated the second half of the post-Cold War era in Europe will be dissolved. It is unlikely that the pendulum will swing all the way back in the future. Even if the US policy revision is reversible, its relative power decline is hardly so. Of course, Russian power assertiveness towards Ukraine, Belarus or Georgia (again) might encourage a renewed bifurcation. Should this happen, essentially the same distribution of countries as

analysed above would repeat itself. This would be ensured by their respective locations and, possibly, legacies of the past.

CONCLUSIONS

States do not carry badges showing whether they belong to 'old' or 'new' Europe or, as here, 'inner' or 'outer Europe.' These labels are evidently diplomatically sensitive, meaning that the analyst should study state dilemmas, preferably in dramatic situations, in a comparative synchronic perspective to justify a state's belonging to one category or the other. Most studies of old versus new Europe have been made *ad hoc* in relation to the Iraq conflict and its aftermath, including Rumsfeld's famous statements. In the present paper, however, a whole series of situations/issue areas have been analysed for each European country: some pertain to relations with the sole superpower, some to relations with the nearest great power, and some to Europe's own governance, its deepening as well as its widening. An ideal typical state of outer Europe is a hawk in relation to Russia, keeps a high profile on democracy promotion eastwards, and looks to the US rather than to the EU as a guarantor of its security. It is sceptical towards EU deepening, including the ESDP, being seen as a competitor to NATO, but supports EU and NATO widening. By contrast, a paragon state of inner Europe is characterised by an opposite profile (cf. fig. 1).

It has been demonstrated in this paper that the division between inner and outer Europe dominated European geopolitics 2002-08. For no fewer than 22 out of 27 states *either* the logic of inner *or* of outer Europe was followed (11 versus 11). In other words, both sets of logic proved strong (fig. 2 and fig. 3).

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[83] This is not to deny the continued relevance of European enlargement fatigue, xenophobia or other factors retarding or inhibiting Turkish EU membership.

Moreover, the European great powers figure among the 22, two in inner and one in outer Europe. While there was thus much European variety, there was ultrastability for each individual state. Only two transitions between inner and outer Europe (Spain and Sweden) took place among the 27 countries analysed during a period of six years, i.e. during 162 foreign policy years. Among the five non-classifiable states, three were more preoccupied with the fate of ex-Yugoslav territory than with Russia.

Whereas the emergence of the above pattern was favoured by the US's status as sole superpower in combination with its increasingly unilateralist policies after 2001, it seems to have disappeared with the dramatic US power decline in the autumn of 2008 and its policy redirections dating from about the same time. The prediction here is that we will be facing a big Euro-Atlantic consensus largely following the logic of the previous inner Europe, accompanied by only a few anti-Russian outsiders (Poland and the Baltic countries). Lastly, although theory testing has not been the aim of this paper, it was noted that the heterogeneous but stable 2002-08 European pattern conflicts with both the expectations of systemic theory and intra-state reasoning. By contrast, it seems to fit nicely with inter-state theory and explanation.

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