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This special issue of *Studia Europæa* gathers the first group of the most relevant of the proceedings of the International Conference on “The New Frontiers of Europe, International, Inter-ethnic and Inter-confessional Relations in Central and Eastern Europe”, organized by the Faculty of European Studies (Babeş-Bolyai University) in Cluj (April 2006). The next issue of *Studia Europæa* (No. 3/2007) will gather the second group of papers presented within this international conference.

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CONSTANTIN DOBROGEANU-GHEREA: WRONG TIME, WRONG FACE, WRONG PLACE

Michael Shafir

Abstract

Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea might have become an internationally famous socialist thinker and/or one of the founding fathers of the sociology of knowledge. He became neither, and this was largely due to his having settled in a country where socialism was regarded as a “foreign plant” and where his Jewish origins were a serious hindrance, of which he was keenly aware. Advocating assimilation, Gherea was not a Zionist. Advocating gradual socio-economic development, he was suspicious of Leninist voluntarism. There is a striking resemblance between Gherea and “young Karl Marx”, to whose writings he is unlikely to have had access. His perceptions of the role intellectuals play in society place him along such later figures as Antonio Gramsci, Karl Mannheim or Roberto Michels.

REMAPPING THE MIND: EAST AND WEST IN POST - COMMUNIST EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

Attila Pók

Abstract

The world of academia is on the move in science just as much as in social sciences and humanities. Borders, at least in this sphere of life, seem to be vanishing. One semester here, another there, joining project teams paralelly in various parts of the world, talking to publishers via Internet, submitting manuscripts without paper from a distant hideaway are natural elements of contemporary academic life - East and West alike. For my generation of East Central European intellectuals, when

we, the so called 1968-er generation¹, started our careers in the first half of the 1970s, the probability of this way of life was identical with having week-end houses on the Moon or the Mars. From a purely technical-scientific point of view, even life on these distant planets seemed to be feasible-sooner or later. The real question was what kind of a passport and visas shall we need in order to get there, to what an extent the political tensions of the bipolar Cold War world will allow us to travel there. The two decisive political experiences that basically shaped our minds took place in 1968: the student revolts in the West and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

In this paper I would like to address a seemingly simple issue that, however, like a drop of the seawater reflects the composition of the ocean, mirrors the remapping of the minds of numerous intellectuals in Eastern and Central Europe during the last nearly four decades: the changing contents of the concepts of East and West in these minds.

CONSTRUCTING A BETTER DEMOCRATIC PEACE THEORY

Zoltán I. Búzás

Abstract

At the risk of oversimplification we can distinguish between pessimist and optimist research programs on European security. In the present paper I focus on the optimistic democratic peace theory, since the empirical evidence seems more supportive of it. After reviewing the democratic peace literature, I find that the normative/cultural strand provides most of the explanatory power of this research program. I suggest that constructivism has the potential to improve this component because it is specialized to deal with norms. Finally, I draw hypotheses based on this social constructivist interpretation of the normative/cultural strand, and specify a test for it regarding European enlargement. As a caveat, the paper is a first draft and as such a work in progress, and thus it certainly needs further work to overcome its present limitations.

¹ Cf. the website: www.single-generation.de/kohorten/68er.htm that gives an interesting list of some better known, mainly German members (writers and scholars) of this generation and hosts a debate on their achievements.

**PATTERNS OF COOPERATION AND CONFLICT:
ROMANIAN-UKRAINIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS, 1992-2006**

Ruxandra Ivan

Abstract

The Eastern European space proves itself full of instable spots and old disputes between States, regions, populations. The peaceful relations are constructed here by overcoming these legacies of the past, and through cooperation on multilateral levels. The relations between Romania and Ukraine are an example of this twofold trend. Inheriting a disputed border since the Ribbentrop – Molotov pact, and large minorities on their territories, the two States signed a Treaty of friendship and good neighborhood in 1997, when Romania was under pressure to fulfill the NATO accession criteria. After that, disputes re-emerged concerning the delimitation of the continental shelf in the Black Sea, and the question was brought before the International Court of Justice in 2004. On the other hand, Romania and Ukraine were partners in the attempts to give a solution to the Transnistrean conflict or in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

Observing the development of the relations between Romania and Ukraine since 1992, when the two countries established diplomatic relations, to 2004, we will argue that these relations follow a pattern of cooperation when conducted in a multilateral framework or when pressured by international organizations, while they are more prone to conflict when no other international actors are directly involved. These empirical findings support a liberal institutionalist approach to international relations in Eastern Europe, which will be the main theoretical approach adopted in our paper.

The empirical research will be based upon interviews with former Romanian Ministers of Foreign Affairs and secretaries of State, official documents, and press articles.

**WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE VISEGRAD GROUP AS AN EXAMPLE OF
REGIONAL COOPERATION**

Anna Czyż

Abstract

After the fall of communism in 1989 Central and Eastern European countries started to change their political systems towards democracy. They also had to

define their main aims in foreign policy. In 1991 Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland decided to create the Visegrad Triangle to be able to develop and to become members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Union. After dissolution of Czechoslovakia their mutual initiative was called the Visegrad Group. During nineties XX century this regional co-operation between Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia experienced different vicissitudes. Finally their dream about integration came true- they became the part of Western organizations. So now when they reached their most important goals they have to determine the direction of mutual co-operation. As neighbouring countries with similar historical tradition and thinking they can search together for the solution of current problems in Europe.

**EUROPEAN IDENTITY IN THE AGE OF THE INTERNET:
A TOCQUEVILLIAN PERSPECTIVE**

Jonathan Mendilow

Abstract

The recent rejection of the proposed EU constitution gives credence to the conclusion that the goal of "ever closer union" will not be achieved by legal or economic means alone, and that the forging of a community (as against a common market) requires the promotion of a widespread sense of "Europeanness" among the citizens of the member states. The expansion of Union to include countries not traditionally associated with "Western Europe" rendered such project ever more necessary yet complex. The question has been examined from several vantage points: the horizontal (the impact of tourism, and the closer meshing of political and economic systems), bottom-up (the contribution of local level experiences to wider concepts of community), and top to -bottom (the effect of common institutions on the way people understand their identity).It seems odd that a dimension critical to all these perspectives has hitherto been neglected: the impact of the Internet on the production and communication of knowledge and symbols that could serve as basis for a projected pan European "imagined community" (Benedict Anderson) .

The appeal of de Tocqueville in this regard lies in the connection he had made in Democracy in America between space and community building. Despite the obvious difference between the cyberspace and the geographical dimensions he had in mind, his ideas can be applied to the modern situation. A less well-known

thesis advanced in The Old Regime and the French Revolution is however no less relevant. There he argued that underlying the sense of community is a narrative that directs the citizen's understanding and hence behavior in the 'real world'. Because it operates on the 'here and now' such a narrative is in constant flux. Old premises are discarded and new ones incorporated to become part of the general consciousness. What causes legitimacy crises is lack of synchronization between such shared narratives and the world of the here and now.

The Internet extends the range while shortening the process of communication. Global in reach, it recreates the multi directional one on one communications that defines groups of people who link up with one another to pursue common interests. This may be conducive to the European project. Yet such communities may well be built on specialized interests, establishing spheres in which the broader public has little say. From the temporal perspective, this may lead to growing disjunction between two measures of time: one marking the tempo of change in the realm of individuals, the other the tempo of change in the operation of public structures. Collective Narratives take time to establish themselves, percolate through society, become translated into symbols and activities, and eventually change. Yet a situation may develop where the growing rapidity of the production and assimilation of knowledge will create a situation where it is only assimilable by limited groups. The impact on social norms and identity may increasingly vary, reflecting a plethora of narratives gradually nibbling away at the common one. Should such conditions develop, the public may well be defined by its individuals primarily in terms of the consumption of the same services and the ability to produce an imagined territorially based community will be hampered.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION. A QUEST FOR A NEW PARADIGM

Frank Delmartino and Valérie Pattyn

Abstract

The first quinquennium of the 21st century started in a promising way for the EU's institutional development, but is ending in uncertainty regarding its future. After the Nice- (2000) and Laeken (2001) declarations and the innovative and successful Convention (2002-2003), finally an agreement on a Constitutional Treaty was reached in the Intergovernmental Conference.

In October 2004 this Treaty was solemnly signed by all member states and the candidate countries. Despite this apparent breakthrough, during the ratification process all demons of the past re-emerged. The nicely formulated parts 1 and 2 of the draft Constitution could not dissimulate the fundamental lack of clarity in the 'finalité politique' of the Union.

Is the EU in 'crisis' (Juncker, Delors), or is this just a setback as there have been many in the 55 years of European integration? Can we go on with 'business as usual', neglecting the signal of so many citizens, especially if one takes into account the very probable 'no' in the rather eurosceptic countries where a referendum was on the agenda?

The political class has learned to live with rather vague definitions as "an ever closer union" that dissimulate the lack of consensus among the member states on the very nature of the project and its institutional development. The problem is not new: exactly 30 years ago, the Belgian Prime Minister Leo Tindemans formally raised the issue in the newly born European Council (1975). His colleagues were most embarrassed and found a way-out by commissioning a report that, although well elaborated and very much to the point, was never seriously discussed.

This time the debate no longer takes place behind closed doors or in academia. By organizing referenda, the general public has been invited to participate in a decisive way. Although in depth sociological studies on the negative response are not available yet, it is clear that for some voters the EU is perceived as a threat to national identity and sovereignty. For others, it paves the way to an ongoing process of enlargement that jeopardizes the existing welfare state model. A few groups, on the contrary, have regretted the lack of a 'social model', of a 'projet de société'.

Whatever the arguments might have been for the citizens' negative reactions and whatever our opinion might be on their validity, one cannot deny the serious clash between the 'inner circle' of European policy-and decision-makers- both at the national and European level- and the general public, even in strongholds of 'believers' such as Luxembourg. The European Commission announced a period of reflection and launched its Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate.

It this contribution we would like to embark on a more structural approach. In our view the fundamental problem lies with the refusal by some member states of clarifying the state concept behind the Union. Of course, the European experience is a unique feature and its structures are 'sui generis'. However, an unbiased analysis of the EU's institutions, its decision-making processes and its policy formation, reveals quite a number of federal-type

arrangements. Far from expecting any solution from an explicit qualification of the Union as a European Federation, we nevertheless start from the assumption that a more transparent and constitutionally entrenched division of tasks between member states and Union would contribute to clarifying the issue. Reference could be made to well-established federations, such as Germany, however without taking it as a model.

In this article, we would firstly like to enumerate the many federal-type arrangements that can be observed in the EU's present-day functioning. Confronted with the theories on federalism and federation developed in literature (M. Burgess e.a.), the EU appears as a quasi-federation, lacking the political philosophy of federalism. This imperfection should not prevent us from presenting the EU as a federal arrangement, since this model is widely appreciated for its clear division of competences and the constitutional guarantees it offers to the (hard core of) national sovereignty.

Belgium is known for the strong federalist views of its political leadership and most of its citizens. Since Tindemans and Martens, prime-ministers as J.-L. Dehaene and, presently, Guy Verhofstadt, have played a pro-active role in promoting the process of constitutionalisation of the Union. Recently, M. Verhofstadt published an essay with the somewhat provocative title "The United States of Europe". Those countries that would be unwilling to join the ongoing process of integration, should, in his eyes, be left out from the 'avant-garde' (Delors) and just take part in a free trade zone, called 'Organization of European States'.

Our contribution is not aiming at defending and propagating any particular Belgian view or position. However, in the current period of 'reflection' it may be interesting to notice the benefits of a structural approach, trying to elucidate the weaknesses of the present model instead of blaming the uninformed citizens.

It was Robert Schuman who already had a federation in mind when presenting his Coal-and Steel Community. After realizing a 'Pax Belgica' in their highly complex country, many Belgians think that a federal solution would indeed be meaningful for Europe as a whole, combining a clearly defined 'self rule' for the member states with forms of 'shared rule' for the Union.

Giving a name to the game would in any case make the exercise more transparent and, hopefully, more enjoyable.

NEW AND OLD FRONTIERS OF EUROPE - RHETORIC OF EMOTION IN THE MEDIA

Katharina Niemeyer and Valentina Pricopie

Abstract

Fear or enjoyment?

This paper proposes a comparing analysis of French, German and Romanian media and their discourses concerning the European integration of Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey.

How does the printing press present the integration of these countries? Referring to the period of October 2005, this study will base its interest on the different levels of fear and enjoyment appearing in the national media discourses. A discourse analysis of Le Monde, Die Franfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Ziua reveals several ways of speaking about the integration and points out, at the same time, various stereotypes of emotions like fear, enjoyment, ignorance and confidence which close and open mental frontiers in Europe.

THE CASE FOR COMPETITIVE AREAS OF INTEGRATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Valentin Cojanu

Abstract

The work attempts to substantiate the conjecture of an optimum competitive area, tentatively referred to as a certain pattern of spatially-defined areas conducive to competitive development for industries or firms in such a way that benefits from competition are maximized.

This paper does not provide a theoretical exposition of the existence of an optimum competitive area, but the framework against which this sort of economic phenomenon may be investigated. It attempts to expound by means of an overview of the existing theoretical literature if one could plausibly consider it. There are arguments that speak for the meaningfulness of the quest for the geographical scale at which the sources of competitive advantages are optimally exploited.

There are however reasons to believe that no strict spatial definitions of competitive economic areas exist; instead, one should tackle with spaces of variable

geometry depending on factors like economic similarities, geography, cultural traditions or social habits. Even if this sort of definitions is deemed to remain rather vague, this material suggests that an economic definition is not only realistically substantiated by several characteristics, but also pragmatically required because of its tangible policy implications for development.

IT STRATEGIES IN INCREASING BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

Alina Andreica

Abstract

Within the framework of the present information & knowledge-based society, business competitiveness necessarily requires adequate IT strategies. The paper focuses on proficient principles of designing IT strategies and implementing adequate software systems. The implementation of dedicated software systems - the top level of any IT strategy - has to comply modern management and business requirements; therefore business software should model & integrate activities from all business compartments, distributely access the company's integrated database and offer relevant synthesis for management levels. The paper underlines the most important principles in implementing such dedicated software systems and discusses their advantages in increasing business competitiveness.

EXPORTS AND GROWTH IN ROMANIA – A CAUSAL RELATION?

Monica Ioana Pop Silaghi

Abstract

Is there a causal relation between exports and growth in Romania? This is the question to which in this paper we will try to answer. To separate a deterministic relation of a causal one is a very important task of the economists. A positive correlation between two phenomena does not necessarily imply the existence of a causality between them. The findings of the econometric analysis suggest that an outward-looking must be correlated with a good structure of exports in order to obtain a high level of economic growth.